How are we training our mainstream teachers to meet the needs of EAL learners? The case of two University Schools of Education in Scotland.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

There are currently more than a million pupils between the ages of 5-18 years in mainstream schools in the United Kingdom (UK) who, amongst them, speak in excess of 360 languages in addition to English, a number which has more than doubled between 1997 and 2012 (PLASC, DfE, 1997-2012). NALDIC figures report that numbers are markedly higher in England (one in six primary school pupils in England - 612,160 - do not have English as their first language). In secondary schools the figure stands at 436,150 (just over 12.6% of all pupils), and in Wales and Northern Ireland numbers are 31,132 (6.7 % of all pupils) and 10,357 (3.2 % of all pupils) respectively. Data from the 2013 annual pupil census in publicly funded schools in Scotland indicate that in 2014 there were 32,509 bilingual primary and secondary school children in Scotland (4.4% of all pupils) (http://www.naldic.org.uk/research-and-information/eal-statistics/eal-pupils).

Although in the past two decades there has been a significant increase in the number of research studies which have focused on the teaching and learning of English as an Additional Language (EAL), considerably less attention has been paid to Initial Teacher Education (ITE) programmes particularly within the Scottish context. There are very few papers that report on research into how university Schools of Education prepare ITE students to meet the increasingly varied and diverse needs of EAL learners in mainstream subject classrooms (Bernhard, Diaz and Allgood, 2005; Grant and Gilette, 2006; Butcher, Sinka and Troman, 2007; Murakami, 2008, Cajkler and Hall, 2009; Skinner, 2010) and explore the conceptual underpinnings of university EAL courses; and there are only a few studies that require student teachers to evaluate the usefulness of their university-based EAL courses.

The current study extends our preceding efforts (Foley et al., 2013) to begin to fill this gap in the literature by investigating how two large universities in Scotland...
prepare their secondary level ITE student teachers to engage with, and be alert to, the needs of EAL learners; how useful students find such preparation; lecturers’ perceptions of provision in this area; and students’ evaluations of the usefulness of a whole-day intervention offered by the researchers. This report describes a study conducted in two Schools of Education, one named in this report as University A and the other as University B, both of which offer programmes which offer students training to be specialist subject mainstream teachers the opportunity to gain the Professional Graduate Diploma in Education (Secondary) (PGDE (S)) teaching qualification. The project was funded by the British Council as part of their EAL Nexus Project. This project, which was co-funded by the European fund for the integration of third country nationals (TCN), has the central aim of helping young migrant learners to access learning and engage positively in schools, in the community and in society, thus promoting intercultural dialogue and social cohesion. The research reported here addresses priority area 4: Initial Teacher Education (ITE).

Aims of the study
The preceding introductory comments have indicated that our key aim was to investigate how two universities prepared their PGDE (S) students to meet the needs of EAL learners in mainstream schools. This in turn enabled us to consider ways in which such provision could be improved. We therefore set out to gather academic staff and PGDE (S) students’ views on:

- EAL, and how best to support EAL learners in mainstream classrooms;
- what makes for good practice, and effective ITE provision, in this area;
- university ITE provision to date;
- how, and to what extent, participants’ understanding of EAL was enhanced by a one-day intervention; and
- aspects which remain problematic.
Terminology

It is important to bear in mind that there is a number of terms used in published research to refer to pupils learning English as an additional language. In the UK the term EAL is most common, whereas in the USA its equivalent is English Language Learners (ELL). Broader fields of research refer to English Language Teaching (ELT), English as a Foreign Language (EFL), limited English proficiency (LEP), English as a Second Language (ESL), and English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL). Similarly, terms which refer to teachers include bilingual support assistants/teachers, plurilingual classroom assistants, classroom assistants, EAL teachers, bilingual teachers and bilingual teaching assistants (Leung and Creese, 2010). Leung and Creese remind us that not only do these different terms act as descriptive labels, but also inherent within them are particular ideologies.

We have chosen to use the term EAL in this report as it allows us, in our view, to refer to a commonality of issues that are linked to an increasingly diverse group of students. It is important to remain alert to the fact that students who are learning EAL come from diverse cultures and from different linguistic and socio-economic backgrounds. Acquiring a second or additional language and culture can be very challenging and the degree of that challenge will depend on the personal, experiential and contextual factors that students bring to the process, as well as how well they regulate the linguistic, cognitive, social and emotional tasks required in language and cultural acquisition (Chu, 2011; Herrera, Perez and Escamilla, 2010; Marinova-Todd and Uchikoshi, 2011; Paradis, Genesee and Crago, 2011). The EAL student population is not only culturally and linguistically diverse, but is also socioeconomically diverse. Some come from families with high levels of income and education, while others have lived in poverty and have had little formal schooling. This is important to know because family socio-economic status and education level influence the academic achievement of students (Goldenberg et al., 2011). Research indicates that low-income EAL students are usually behind their peers from higher socio-economic backgrounds in language skills and that they need culturally responsive teaching (Cartledge and Kourea, 2008). The EAL
student population in the UK cannot therefore be viewed simply as a homogeneous group; rather, they comprise a wide and diverse population and one which is becoming increasingly diverse as refugees and other migrants continue to arrive in the UK.

However, we remain alert to the fact that the term EAL is not unproblematic. We are aware that while English is a core subject in schools, it is also the ‘language of schooling’ and the medium of instruction for the whole curriculum (Gibbons, 1993; Met, 1994; Snow et al., 1992). Students – both those for whom English is their first language and those for whom it is a second or additional language - therefore have to apply their knowledge and understanding of speaking, listening, reading and writing to other areas of subject knowledge. Yet the term EAL tends to suggest that learning English is a means to an end, rather than a means to help EAL learners to access subject content knowledge that is being delivered through the medium of English (Anderson et al, 2016). Probyn (2010) reported the high levels of stress that learners experience in teaching and learning through the medium of a language in which they are not able to communicate freely, with negative consequences for learning, and Jordaan (2013) argued that low levels of achievement in literacy could be attributed to the fact that English remains the main medium of instruction. Paxton (2009) found that, even at university level, students for whom English was not their first language struggled with learning new concepts because of unfamiliar terms and unfamiliar grammatical structures and that they frequently engaged in codeswitching, using a range of languages and meaning to negotiate meaning, in order better to understand new concepts.

Because in the UK EAL is not a distinct subject, but rather is what Leung (2001) terms ‘a diffuse curriculum area’, there is an erroneous belief that learning an additional language across the curriculum will develop naturally in the school environment or will be achieved through English as a subject. Effective teachers have long recognised that this is not the case, and that EAL learners require explicit
instruction to help them to make the connections between English as a subject and English as a medium of instruction.

**Organisation of the report**

The introduction to this report has set out the wider research context against which the current study is placed, outlined the main aims of the study and pointed up key considerations concerning terminology. The *Literature Review* chapter which follows begins by setting out the Scottish policy context which impacts on provision for EAL learners, and describing the Professional Graduate Diploma in Education (Secondary) (PGDE (S)) programmes in universities A and B, before turning to review key bodies of literature that inform our understanding of EAL learning and teaching. These include: first language acquisition; second language learning; subject literacies; bilingual theories and language development; teacher education; and literacy. This is followed by a description of the methods adopted for this study, which includes a detailed account of the aims and content of the intervention, comprising a keynote lecture and two workshops. Attention then turns to the two findings chapters which present an analysis of the quantitative and qualitative data gathered from the staff and the student questionnaires. The final chapter, the discussion, highlights the key themes which emerged during analysis, explores the implications of the findings, and makes recommendations.
Chapter 2: Literature review

Scottish policy context

In Scotland, following the publication of the Education (Scotland) Act in 1981 nearly forty years ago, the key principle that was to guide the education of EAL learners in Scottish secondary schools was that they should be educated in mainstream classrooms alongside their peers to avoid segregated provision and to guarantee equal access to the curriculum. Additional support was to be put in place to help such learners to access the mainstream curriculum. In 2004 the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act (HMSO 2004) provided a broad definition of pupils who may require additional support and required every local authority to put in place appropriate provision or additional support for each learner. The Act highlighted the central role that schools have in maximising the potential of bilingual learners and urged them to ‘be proactive in addressing the learning needs, and raising the achievement of bilingual learners’ (2004: 27). The Scottish Executive’s Supporting Children’s Learning: Code of Practice (SEED, 2005) provides specific guidelines for implementing the Act.

In the last decade a series of policy guidelines has been published\(^1\) setting out how local authorities, schools and teachers were expected to take ahead this mainstreaming agenda. However, as Andrews (2009) notes, despite this series of successive legislative, curricular, advisory and quality assurance documents over the past two decades, successful mainstreaming of EAL students has not been achieved. In Scotland a major curriculum reform, Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) has recently been implemented. Within this new curricular framework, the same curriculum specifications and assessment criterion statements are used for both learners for whom English is their first language, and for students for whom English

\(^{1}\) Principally the Standards in Scotland’s Schools Act (2000); the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act (2004); the Scottish Executive’s Supporting Children’s Learning: Code of Practice (2005); the Scottish Executive’s Supporting Children’s Learning: Code of Practice (2005); the report Learning in 2(+) Languages (LTSN Scotland, 2005); and Her Majesty’s Inspectors of Education’s (HMIE) self-evaluation document How Good is Our School (HGIOS, 2006).
is an additional language. A few schools provide separate classes for students studying for *English for Speakers of other Languages* qualifications (ESOL).²

In 2005 a series of guidelines were drawn up in the publication *Learning in 2(+) Languages* (Learning and Teaching Scotland [LTScotland], 2005) to support the implementation of CfE for pupils learning EAL. The *Learning in 2(+) Languages* report recognises that in order to promote achievement:

> schools should build on pupils’ learning and achievements, within and beyond school. Bilingual learners have a number of particular strengths including their experience of different languages. However, some will require additional support if they are to maximise their progress in school and achieve to their fullest potential. (LTScotland, 2005:8)

A number of key principles are highlighted within this report in relation to working with pupils learning EAL. They should be provided with ‘effective teaching and learning, communication with parents, valuing and promoting home language and staff support and development’ (LTScotland, 2005:8). There is some recognition in the report of the links between the development of literacy in a first/home language and the development of literacy in English.

**Professional Graduate Diploma in Education (Secondary): University A**

The Postgraduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) (Secondary) in University A is a ten-month, 36-week, full-time programme, successful completion of which entitles students to register provisionally with the General Teaching Council (GTC) and to

² In Scotland, prior to the introduction of new assessment arrangements with CfE, there were several ESOL qualifications: Access2; Access 3; Intermediate 1; Intermediate 2; and Higher. The new CfE assessment framework has replaced these qualifications with National 2, National 3, National 4, National 5 and Higher (see Scottish Qualifications and Assessment [SQA] website). However, few schools are able to offer them as discrete subjects because of demands on time; because ESOL is not viewed as a ‘subject’ in the same way as English or Science are; and because there are difficulties finding appropriately-qualified staff to teach the ESOL courses at certificate levels.
begin their mandatory probationary year as a teacher of a specialist subject. The programme is divided into six mandatory courses, three of which are delivered in the university and three in placement schools. There is an equal time allocated to the university-based and the school-based elements, thus 18 weeks are spent in university and 18 in schools.

The two university-based courses – *Curriculum and Pedagogy* (103 hours) and *Professional Studies* (48 hours) are taken by all students. In addition, Art and Design, Drama and Music students take the *Curriculum Plus 1: Primary Specialism* course (36 hours); single subject students from English, Geography, History, Mathematics and Modern Foreign Languages take a *Curriculum Plus 2* (36 hours) course selected from the following: *English as Additional Language* (EAL), *Learning in the Outdoors* or *Philosophy for Children*; and Biology, Chemistry and Physics students take the *Curriculum Plus 3* (36 hours) *General Science* course.

The total number of hours spent on the university courses is 187. Each of the University-based courses *Curriculum and Pedagogy, Professional Studies* and *Curriculum Plus* is taught and assessed at Scottish Qualifications Framework (SCQF) Level 11 (Masters level), and, as each course carries 20 credits, PGDE (Secondary) students can gain a total of 60 Masters credits. These credits can be carried forward into an early career Masters programme. If students wish to undertake a Masters programme after the Initial Teacher Education year they can also apply to other universities in Scotland which recognise the 60 Masters credits.

The entire cohort is given one lecture on EAL-related matters (50 minutes), and this is then followed up in the weekly 2-hour Professional Studies workshops. There is also the optional EAL Course within Curriculum Plus 2 which is open to any student from English, Mathematics, Geography, History and Modern Foreign Languages. This course carries 20 credits at Masters level. Other student teachers with other disciplines are not able to opt into this course strand because they are tied into
other Curriculum Plus courses. This is a highly-evaluated course during which the tutor makes excellent links with placement courses and sets tasks to be carried out in practice.

In the academic year 2014-15, 168 students started the programme, distributed across the following subjects:

- Art and design (14)
- Biology (15)
- Chemistry (10)
- Design and Technology (13)
- Drama (12)
- English (25)
- Geography (10)
- History (10)
- Mathematics (14)
- Modern languages (French, French with Spanish, French with German, Spanish with French) (9)
- Physical Education (18)
- Physics (5)
- The optional EAL Course within Curriculum Plus 2

**Framing of the optional EAL Course**

Before we outline key areas of recent research in EAL that informed the course design and set out its underpinning conceptualisations of learning, language and
literacy, it should be noted that the design was influenced by a concern that students should actively explore and engage with issues related to social justice. In particular, it was important to sensitise student teachers to the experiences that students from ethnic minority backgrounds often face in school settings where deficit views of them as (language) learners may limit their opportunities and potential for achievement (Kubota and Lin, 2009). Providing the opportunity to explore critically such sensitive issues and to develop inclusive pedagogies creates the conditions for ‘students and teachers to confront racism and other kinds of social injustice not only individually but … collectively’ (Kubota and Lin, 2006, p. 485).

Clearly it was important that the course was informed by current areas of research and debate in EAL and that students were directed to central readings within this body of literature. Areas that were addressed here included:

- the challenges that many EAL students face in coping with a new – and often baffling – educational context with its different pedagogies and expectations (Leung and Creese, 2010; Colombi and Schleppegrell, 2002);
- issues which prevent inclusion (Bearne and Marsh, 2007);
- important cultural differences and expectations of both EAL students and students who speak English as a first language (Hall, 1992);
- EAL learners’ loss of identity within contexts where their lack of power and visibility is evident (Statham, 2008; Bernstein, 1996);
- issues related to equity and policy in terms of access to the curriculum (Hawkins, 2011; Edwards, 2009); and
- whether EAL students learn more readily in specialised EAL classes or in mainstream schools (Franson, 1999; Murakami, 2008; Mohan et al., 2001; Leung, 2003; Cummins, 2000; Bernstein, 1996).
While it was essential that the course was appropriately informed by influential EAL literature, there was a need to avoid adopting an overly-narrow EAL-centric approach. Accordingly, it was seen as necessary to establish the course on defensible theoretical understandings of the nature of learning and of literacy that were in turn clearly articulated to the student teachers. EAL learners and learning were viewed from socio-cultural perspectives on learning (Johnson; 2009; Colombi and Schleppegrell, 2002) that derive from the work of Vygotsky (1978) and Bakhtin (1981). Student teachers were alerted to the nature of linguistic/semiotic tools and to their powerfully mediating effects on learning and action (Wertsch, 1991; 1998); to the social processes that shape learning; to the intricate relationships between cultural tools, specific contexts and individual agency; and to ways in which these cultural tools are imbricated in relationships of power.

The acquisition of literacy and critical literacy for EAL learners was not defined in narrow terms but rather drew upon wider conceptualisations in line with these socio-cultural views of learning (Vasquez, 2008; Dozier, Johnstone and Rodgers, 2006; Provenzo, 2006). Consonant with socio-cultural theories of learning, literacy was conceptualised not as a single set of global skills but rather as a set of literacy practices which were differentiated in relation to purpose, context and genres of texts (Cairney, 1995; Gee, 1990). In line with these broader definitions of literacy, the term text was defined in its widest possible sense to include both print and non-print texts. Reading a text and making meaning from it thus were viewed as a complex interaction between the producer, the reader and the text, with the reader drawing upon both linguistic and semiotic tools, often in collaborative social contexts (Cooper and White, 2008). This focus on the development of literacy and critical literacy helped student teachers to develop the kinds of pedagogic practices required to teach their school students about how language is used to communicate particular worldviews; to engage critically with particular discourses operating within societies; and to understand the ‘intricate relationships between [language], text, talk, social cognition, power, society and culture’ (van Dijk, 1997, p. 253).
The optional EAL Course

The preceding paragraphs have delineated the key bodies of research which informed the development of the optional EAL course and have outlined how socio-cultural perspectives on learning and literacy shaped both conceptual framing and content. Its overarching aims were:

- to sensitise and alert student teachers to the ways in which all subjects, and in particular their own specialist subject areas, are encoded in language;
- to enable student teachers to explore how socio-cultural perspectives and practices inform and shape the use of language to convey meaning within particular school subjects and contexts;
- to enable student teachers to learn how to make effective use of this theoretical knowledge within the classroom.

The optional EAL Course is a two-hour weekly session delivered over the 18 weeks the student teachers are in the university. These sessions offer a balance of structured tutor input about language and the theories and practices related to teaching and learning English as an additional language, and collaborative participation in activities as participants explore their developing understanding. This approach provides opportunities for student teachers to engage actively in collaborative group discussions, class presentations and micro-teaching. These activities allow them to explore and demonstrate ways in which they can bring together their theoretical understanding of first language development, EAL learners and appropriate pedagogical approaches in integrated mainstream classes. There are two parts to the assessment of the EAL Curriculum course. The first is a formatively-assessed group presentation of a classroom-based task that links theory and practice; the second is a summatively-assessed essay based on a lesson plan related to their specialist subject area for use in multilingual classroom contexts. Participants are required to write a rationale for, and an evaluation of, this lesson plan and support their discussion with appropriate reference to the academic literature.
Professional Graduate Diploma in Education (Secondary): University B

As in University A, the Postgraduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) (Secondary) at University B is a ten-month full time programme, the completion of which provides provisional General Teaching Council of Scotland (GTCS) registration as a teacher of a specific subject area in the secondary school. The GTCS is the regulatory body governing entrance to the teaching profession. As well as offering university-based courses in educational and curricular issues, for which students can gain 90 Masters credits, the programme also highlights the importance of practitioner enquiry. This systematic reflection on teaching in the classroom gives the programme its distinctive Masters character. As in University A, students spend 18 weeks in the university and 18 weeks in schools.

In the academic year 2014-15, 168 students started the programme distributed among the following subjects:

- Art and design (11)
- Biology (10)
- Business education (10)
- Chemistry (9)
- Computing (8)
- English (25)
- Geography (9)
- History (10)
- Mathematics (22)
- Modern languages (French, French with Spanish, French with Italian, French with German, Spanish with French) (29)
- Modern studies (7)
While in the university, students were allocated 36 contact hours for their subject specialism, 36 for generic issues in Education and 36 for practitioner enquiry courses (98 hours in total). In the academic year 2014-15, there appeared to be no policy regarding time allocated to EAL for secondary students. Discussions with individual tutors and their students concerning EAL tended to be conducted in an ad hoc manner and seemed to concentrate on coping strategies in the classroom, rather than aiming at developing a deep theoretical understanding on which to base planning.

**Theories of language learning; how do children acquire language?**

An understanding of first language (L1) acquisition and second language (L2) learning theories acts as a useful starting point to provide a context for subsequent discussion of second language acquisition and how this may be achieved as effectively as possible with EAL learners in the classroom.

There are three main theories of first language acquisition: behaviourist, innatist, (also referred to as nativist) and constructivist, also known as interactional/developmental (Lightbown and Spada, 2006). The explanations below are necessarily short and do not explore all the complexities of each theory. Nonetheless, it is important to have an understanding of theories of first language acquisition, given that these theories can be seen to inform the conceptualisation of Second Language Acquisition.
**Behaviourism**

Behaviourism (Skinner, 1957) was a popular theory in the middle of the twentieth century which explained children’s language development as forming ‘habits’ of correct utterances. It was believed that through constant repetition, children would acquire linguistically correct responses to stimuli provided by the caregiver and/or others around them. Errors in language production were ‘recast’ to provide a correct model for the child to repeat. According to behaviourist theory, language is seen to develop as a result of conditioning as the child is given positive reinforcement to develop ‘good’ language habits. In second language learning, stimulus-response language practice exercises may be used to reinforce structures and vocabulary in a similar way. Behaviourism contrasts with innatist or nativist theory which argues that children’s language develops ‘naturally’ as they mature.

**Innatism**

In a trenchant attack on Skinner, Chomsky (1959) argued that children learn their first language by the same processes that they learn to walk; their language development occurs naturally as they mature, assuming there are no pre-conditions which may impede their development. Chomsky emphasised the role of innate cognitive processes in the development of language, where ‘Universal Grammar’, a set of language ‘rules’, allows children to make sense of the language system to which they exposed, and to test hypotheses. The role of ‘Universal Grammar’ in the acquisition of language operates during a limited period. After this time language learning is seen as more difficult and learners may not acquire native speaker proficiency. This claim has, however, been disputed (Birdsong 1999, Bongaerts 1999).

**Constructivism**

Chomsky’s arguments have also been disputed because they do not appear to take into account the relationship of inclusion of language acquisition to a child’s overall cognitive development (Slobin 1973). Piaget (2002) contended that children’s ‘beginning language’ represented their developing understanding of their
experiences and concepts as they learned to interact with the world around them and was therefore not centred in a separate module. He argued that as children’s cognition develops, they use language to articulate the understanding of concepts informed by their experiences. In a L2 learning context, EAL learners may already have developed some sophisticated conceptual understandings which they may find it difficult to express because of their limited L2 capabilities (Gravelle, 2000). There will be further discussion of this issue in a later part of this review.

Vygotsky (1978) differed from Piaget because of his view of language as a fundamental part of cognitive development. Vygotsky’s view was that language was inextricably linked to thought processes. Unlike Piaget, Vygotsky saw language as the vehicle through which children’s cognitive development occurred, rather than as a means of expressing their understanding. He contended that children’s language developed through interaction with adults and other children as they were helped to accomplish tasks which they could not achieve on their own, mediated by the language of explanation and discussion. ‘What one can do in cooperation with others today, one can do alone tomorrow’ (Vygotsky, 1986:188). The process through which this happens is termed the ‘Zone of Proximal Development’ (ZPD) (Vygotsky, 1986).

These theories about first language learning have been instrumental in providing a basis for second language learning theories, which will be discussed in the next part of this review. It could be argued that in the classroom with EAL learners, Vygotskyan theory seems particularly relevant for the development of language skills as learners interact in their ZPD with more experienced speakers, that is, their peers and the teacher, to develop knowledge and understanding of language structures which help them to communicate. Hymes’s concept of communicative competence (1972), where learners’ linguistic development is closely tied to the social context within which they learn the L2, may also be considered appropriate to describe how learners are guided to use language appropriate to the moment and the situation.
Second language acquisition

A great deal of research has been carried out into how a second language is learned, the majority of which has been undertaken in the field of teaching English as a foreign language. While a number of teaching methodologies have developed from L1 acquisition theories, the learner in the EAL classroom often does not have the luxury of a dedicated class for language learning and therefore may have to depend on support from their peers and the teacher, who may feel unconfident or ill-equipped in dealing with their language needs (HMIe, 2009).

Within the classroom, conversational interaction is seen by Gass (1997) as the basis for the development of the learner’s grammar in the foreign language. Through using the language for basic needs and simple exchanges, learners develop greater communicative competence, which includes grammatical, social and strategic competence (Canale and Swain, 1980). Bachman (1990) added ‘psychophysiological mechanisms’ to describe the neurological and psychological processes the learner experiences during the act of speaking, that is, the neuromuscular skills used to voice the utterance and the messages transmitted and received in interaction with others through auditory and visual channels.

In Bachman’s framework, precision in grammar is seen as residing within language competence as the correct form of the language is put together in a coherent unit by the speaker. Strategic competence pertains to the business of creating and sustaining communicative acts, through reference to register, context and social aspects, for example, politeness, as well as the correct choice of linguistic form to achieve communication. Strategic competence also refers to strategies the learner uses to make meaning in communication from a possibly limited language resource. Zhuang (2007) suggests that strategic competence is ‘a wise ability to modify the communicative goal while making up for the limited L2 competence’ (p.45). The teacher may assist EAL learners to develop strategic competence through focused questioning and scaffolded support to respond. Implicit in
Bachman’s framework is the speaker’s need not only for recognition of the contextual demands of particular interactional situations but also for familiarity with language forms in order to be able to communicate effectively.

While many theorists emphasise the role of instruction in L2 learning, Gardner’s model of second language acquisition (2007) focuses on the learner, suggesting that there are four stages of second or foreign language development: elemental, consolidation, conscious expression, automaticity and thought, which can be compared to the stages in first language acquisition. The elemental stage is when the language is introduced to the learners and they are made aware of it. In the consolidation phase, where they use the new language to practise speaking, the learners become familiar with the language and aware of rules governing particular structures, before making the effort to employ the language in more open-ended dialogue in the conscious expression stage. The final stage, automaticity and thought, happens when the learners no longer need to think about the language they are using, but think in the language.

In order to ensure L2 acquisition, learners should be exposed to extensive input in the target language (TL) (Ellis, 2005b), so that they can hear the sounds, intonation patterns and correct pronunciation of the language, in order to be able then to interact, just as they did when learning their first language (Lightbown and Spada, 2006). It is also desirable that learners should have as many opportunities as possible to engage in interaction which focuses on meaning (Butzkamm 2000; Ellis 2005a, 2005b), which will give them practice in hearing the language spoken and taking part in communication for real purposes.

However, the quality of teachers’ TL input and by implication that of other learners, is crucial (Krashen, 1985). If the language that EAL learners hear is incomprehensible, there is little likelihood of progression which may cause
frustration and demotivation (Kent, 1996). Equally, if the input is too simple and does not stretch the learners, their language skills will not develop.

Krashen’s Input Hypothesis (1985) emphasises the need for teachers to provide ‘comprehensible input’ in order to convey meaning effectively to the learners and to provide a model from which they can create their own utterances. He argues that, by being exposed to comprehensible input at a level just beyond the learners’ existing understanding, they ‘notice the gap’ between what they know how to say and what they do not know, thus triggering more attention to the form of the language and vocabulary items used by the interlocutor (Doughty and Williams, 1998). It has been argued that there are links between the ZPD and Krashen’s theory in that the level at which learners are working in the ZPD and the level of language teachers may use are both slightly higher than their present level of competence (Walsh, 2006). However, Lantolf (2000), points out that the Vygotskyan model requires collaboration whereas Krashen’s model is concerned only with input and does not include the interactive process.

Pupils’ understanding of teachers’ language input may be helped by the accompanying messages which are transmitted non-verbally (Macdonald, 1993). The input may be made comprehensible to learners through the use of visual support, body language, common vocabulary, cognates, shorter, less complex sentences, the increased use of gesture and facial expression and slower, more articulate speech, incorporating more and longer pauses (Lynch, 1996). Interviews with pupils have indicated that they are aware of and appreciate these aids to understanding (Crichton, 2006).

While there appears to be agreement that a language-rich environment is beneficial for learners, being exposed to input, however comprehensible, does not guarantee ‘intake’ by the learner. Learners have to ‘notice’ language before it can be acquired (Schmidt, 1990, 2001). The conscious paying of attention is described in Schmidt’s ‘noticing hypothesis’ (2001). Noticing is therefore seen as the starting point for acquisition.
In the classroom then, emphasis should be on ‘comprehended’ input or ‘intake’ (Gass, 1997). Gass makes the distinction between comprehended input, which involves recognition by the learner of the language used by the interlocutor ‘for the purpose of a conversational interaction’ (p. 25), and intake, which allows the learner to take notice of the interlocutor’s language ‘for the purpose of learning’ (p. 25).

Intake is described by Loew (1993) as ‘an intermediate process between the exposure to input and actual language acquisition’ (p.334). According to Kumaravadivelu’s findings (1994) in a study of adults learning a second language, intake factors include, among others, individual characteristics in the learners, affective variables and the social and educational context. This suggests that the teacher has to be sensitive to a much wider variety of factors in the classroom than merely achieving the pedagogical aims of the lesson, ‘the task-as-workplan’ (Seedhouse, 2004: 93), taking affective and social factors into account (Allwright, 1984).

Much of what EAL learners may be exposed to in the classroom could be described as ‘formulaic’ language. It has been estimated that formulaic language may account for up to 58.6% of English native speaker discourse (Erman and Warren, 2000). Formulaic sequences of language are stored by the learner as an unanalysed ‘chunk’ and used as a single vocabulary item (Wood, 2006). The use of formulae by language learners is an important part of learner output aiding fluency in the long term (Raupach, 1984). The formulaic ‘chunks’ are progressively analysed or ‘unpacked’ as learners use them more often in communicative interaction (Myles et al., 1998). The more often formulaic chunks of language are repeated in the phonological short-term memory, the greater the chance of them lodging in the long-term memory and therefore the easier they are for the learners to access (Ellis 2001, Logan 1998). Since many native speakers use ‘stock’ phrases and expressions in conversation (Wray and Perkins, 2000), by exposing pupils to set phrases in English, the teacher is supporting acquisition of language which the
learners can draw on when required to converse with native speakers (Belchamber, 2007). Bialystok (1994) claims that formulaic chunks of language which are useful for conversational purposes gradually evolve into more analysed representations in the learners’ minds which may support higher literacy skills in the foreign language, (Myles et al., 1999) as structures are re-cycled for use in interaction in other contexts.

Allwright (1984) describes classroom interaction as ‘the fundamental fact of classroom pedagogy’. For van Lier (1996) interaction is the ‘engine’ that ‘drives the learning process’ (p.147), although he does not specifically limit the interactive process to dialogue, but also includes interaction with text, and reflection about social processes. The role of classroom interaction in the acquisition of first and second language has been the subject of a number of studies (Johnson 1995; Seedhouse 1996; Van Lier 1996; Ellis 1999; Hall and Verplaetse 2000; Nassaji and Wells 2000; Walsh 2002; and Richards 2006).

In Block’s view the ‘acquisition metaphor ... should be complemented ... by the participation metaphor’ (2003: 104). Sfard (1998) argues that participation allows the learner to become a member of a community through developing the skills necessary for communicating within that community. Kumpulainen and Wray (2002) emphasise the role of the learner as ‘an active participant in social learning’ (p.10). They argue that it is the teacher’s role to activate and manage the interaction with a view to developing learners’ communicative skills through practice of language which is relevant to their needs.

Krashen’s Affective Filter Hypothesis (1981) relates to learner motivation and self-confidence. The affective filter is described as an emotional filter which subconsciously inhibits language learning because of negative feelings on the part of the learner, perhaps lack of confidence, which stops him/her from taking the risk of contributing, therefore acquisition is impeded. If the affective filter is up, the learner is also prevented from benefiting from the input s/he receives. If the
affective filter is low, the learner will feel more self-confident and will be able to take advantage of the learning opportunities offered. It is therefore the teacher’s job to provide opportunities for EAL learners to interact in a secure, supportive environment (Hall and Verplaetse, 2000:15) where errors they may make will not mean a loss of face affecting their willingness to engage with English. The creation of an atmosphere which promotes learners’ confidence to participate is crucial to avoid learner anxiety about contributing (Tsui, 1996).

Use of the mother tongue (MT)
Butzkamm (2003) agrees with Cook (2001) that the role of the MT is important for language learners as a basis to build on when learning a foreign language and should not be banned from the classroom. Learners come to the second language classroom with a language system which is already sophisticated and which allows them to process new information, make connections and retrieve experiences from memory. ‘Learners inevitably engage in [their own language]-English associations and formulations in their minds’ (Hammerly 1989: 51).

According to Wong-Fillmore (1985), an important process for the second language learner is the decoding or “figuring out” of what the teacher, and by implication the peers, say. This may tie in with Butzkamm’s (2003) argument for the learners’ metacognitive use of the MT as a tool to articulate new knowledge, but Wong-Fillmore’s advice to teachers to ensure that the majority of English they use is comprehensible suggests that it is crucial that it should be at a level which will facilitate pupils’ interaction and not constrain it.

Bilingual Theories and Language Development
The work of Cummins (1984, 2000) has made a seminal contribution to theorising concerning the development of bilingualism. The Common Underlying Proficiency model (Cummins, 1980), which is represented pictorially as two icebergs, suggests that if learners are provided with sufficient motivation and exposure to a language then an automatic transfer will take place between the two languages (Edwards, 2009). The two separate icebergs above the surface level demonstrate that
although two languages can be visibly distinct, e.g. vocabulary and grammar, there is a core source of thought operating below the surface (Baker, 2006; Edwards, 2009:59) (see figure 2.1).

Figure 2.1 Common Underlying Proficiency Model (Cummins, 1980)

Edwards explains: ‘For this reason, information processing, literacy and other cognitive skills can be transferred from one language to another and do not need to be learned afresh for each new language’ (2009:59).

The Threshold Theory (Cummins, 1976; Pertti and Skutnabb-Kangas, 1977) suggests that there is a relationship between a learner’s L1 and L2 where the development of the L2 is dependent on the competency achieved in the learner’s L1 (Baker, 2006). This theory proposes that there are two thresholds pertaining to levels of language competence: the first threshold is a level that the learner needs to pass to avoid the negative consequences of bilingualism; the second is a level that needs to be reached so that the learner can experience the positive cognitive benefits of effective bilingualism (Baker, 2006:171; Edwards, 2009:58). ‘The Threshold Theory relates not only to cognition but also to education’, where a child
may experience a temporary delay in learning if the curriculum is taught in the L2 (Baker, 2006:172).

The Developmental Interdependence Hypothesis was refined to consider in more detail the relationship between a learner’s two languages (Cummins, 2000). Cummins (2000) advocates that the development of the L1 facilitates the development of the L2, i.e. they are interdependent. The notion of a common underlying proficiency is frequently used to consider the ‘cognitive/academic proficiency that underlies academic performance in both languages’ (Cummins, 2000:38). Studies within the United States which are associated with cognitive reading processes indicate that reading skills acquired in an L1 facilitate reading development in an L2, thus supporting the notion of a common underlying proficiency (Fitzgerald, 1995). Better language development will be apparent when languages are similar (Lado, 1964; Genesee, Geva, Dressler and Kamil, 2008). Current versions of this theory emphasise that languages that share similar structural features facilitate faster language development, as transfer from L1 to L2 is more likely to occur (Genesee et al, 2008). Ellis (1994) also proposes that transfer is linked to other features, e.g. literacy and developmental processes. The insights gained from an understanding of a common underlying proficiency have implications for policy development and classroom practices.

In addition, Cummins proposes a dichotomy between two types of language proficiencies. The first dimension is understood to be everyday communication skills known as BICS (Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills) and higher order skills for academic purposes termed as CALP (Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency). Cummins (1984, 2000) claims that BICS tends to develop when there is contextual support, and CALP in academic situations. These dimensions show that ‘the primary distinction between the two concepts rests in the extent to which the communicative act is ‘context-reduced’ or ‘context-embedded’ (Carrasquillo and Rodriguez, 1996:27). Studies (Cummins,1984; Collier, 1995) indicate that pupils learning EAL acquire conversational fluency in the everyday language of the society.
within one to two years. However, academic language needs a longer period of time to develop and studies suggest that a period of between five to eleven years is needed for pupils learning English as an additional language to catch up with their native speaking peers (Thomas and Collier, 1997; Cummins, 1984, 2000).

However, critics of Cummins’ theory of language and cognition raise a number of concerns about this simple dichotomy (e.g. Genesee, 1984; MacSwan and Rolstad, 2003). Cummins’ (1984, 2000) theory of BICS/CALP tends to position academic language and literacy skills that are used within schools as more valued, thereby giving the language of the educated classes special status (MacSwan and Rolstad, 2003). Such distinctions suggest that other outcomes in school, e.g. creative thinking, social and emotional development, are less valued and important. In addition, the simple dichotomy of context-reduced and context-embedded is criticised for being too simple and critics argue that making a task context-embedded can also render it less cognitively demanding (Frederickson and Cline, 1990:26). MacSwan and Rolstad fiercely oppose the distinctions made by Cummins and argue that contexts shape how language develops and how it is used. They claim that schooling is not unique and that all of life’s experiences lead to new and ‘specialized vocabulary, new speech styles, and even structural changes’ (MacSwan and Rolstad, 2003:7).

**Biliteracy**

Moving away from the dichotomies that exist in language learning theories, Hornberger (2004) draws together theories of bilingualism and literacy in more than one language and introduces the notion of biliteracy. In a way that is similar to Cummins (2000), Hornberger (2003) considers bilingualism/multilingualism as a resource, yet recognises the complexities involved in developing literacy in two or more languages. She defines biliteracy within this model as ‘any and all instances in which communication occurs in two (or more) languages in or around writing’ (Hornberger, 2004:156). Hornberger (2003) explains these complexities in terms of
a number of dimensions or continua associated with biliteracy. She uses different intersecting models, with each area of the model representing extreme points on a continuum (see figure 3.2, page 51).

**Figure 2.2** The Continua of Biliteracy (Hornberger and Skilton-Sylvester, 2003)

The first cluster relates to context and Hornberger explains, using this diagram (see figure 2.2), that society often places value on the macro, oral and monolingual end of the continuum (2003:41). Edwards provides a helpful example to illustrate these points: ‘at the micro end would be a Chinese-speaking child in Australia using a bilingual dictionary to learn new vocabulary in English; an example at the macro end would be the Gujarati-speaking Indian community in the UK where people make only minimal use of Gujarati in writing’ (2009:55). This cluster also considers the mode of language, oral or written, and which language is being used, L1 or L2.
The second cluster focuses on *biliteracy*, referring to both the individual and the context. Society in this dimension places value on the L2, written, and production end of the scale. Schools evidence a preference for this weighting in the use of standardized tests (Hornberger, 2003). Continuities between oral and written language can be exemplified when pupils learning EAL can read in their L2, but are still in the process of developing oral or written skills (Edwards, 2009:56).

The third cluster is concerned with the *content* of biliteracy and relates to issues surrounding language, culture and identity. Within this dimension, society generally places weight on the majority, literary and decontextualised end of the continuum. Hornberger states that the vernacular point on the literary-vernacular continuum, e.g. performing plays for friends, writing letters) is absent from school contexts (2003:51). In this part of the continuum language and meaning are foregrounded. Importance is given to notions of Discourses as a way of giving voice and a sense of agency to minority discourses (minority and majority) and genres (vernacular and literary). Discourses in Hornberger’s (2003) sense is similar to Gee’s (2005), where ways of being and doing are linked to social practices. The *content* of biliteracy also foregrounds *contextualized* and *decontextualised* aspects of the continuum where the intersection of personal experiences and school experiences is highlighted. The consideration of Discourses within this dimension is relevant to this study, particularly in relation to literacy. Multiple Discourses operate within society, yet access to them is not available to everyone. Hornberger (2003) suggests that critical literacy leads one to compare and contrast different Discourses and to explore the ways in which one Discourse may conflict with another.

The fourth cluster is concerned with the *media* of biliteracy and relates to the standard/non-standard debate (Hornberger, 2004). Consideration of these distinctions relates to how students are placed within bilingual programmes. The first two aspects of this dimension address the question of *simultaneous* versus *successive* exposure to languages and literacies (Hornberger and Skilton-Sylvester,
The last aspect refers to standard and non-standard varieties of language. This dimension considers notions of power and who the beneficiaries may be in different programmes in relation to how minority and majority languages and literacies are positioned. Hornberger (2004) suggests that ‘weighting requires attention to simultaneous acquisition and to dissimilar, divergent, nonstandard language varieties’ (2000:113).

Hornberger (2003) emphasises that each of these continua does not function as an independent dimension; rather, they are intersecting and nesting. This framework offers a way to consider language and literacy practices within diverse school contexts by taking into account the complex interactions on the continuum.

**Teacher Education**

It follows that because EAL pupils are mainstreamed, both the mainstream teacher and the EAL teacher are responsible for meeting their language and literacy needs (Leung, 2001). However, the literature shows that despite the policy of mainstreaming in Scotland since the 1980s and certain opportunities for professional development that help teachers to understand the language and learning needs of EAL pupils, not much has changed. One of the key issues that is recognised within the literature is that there is a need to investigate the reasons associated with why change is slow. Some researchers argue that in order to gain insight into this issue, there is a need to explore the perceptions that underpin teachers’ classroom practices (Franson, 1999; Borg, 2006; Gibbons, 2008; Johnson, 2009). Franson’s (1999) study conducted in England recognises that while mainstream teachers have an important role in ensuring that EAL pupils are included in common classroom practices, teachers are daunted by such responsibilities.
Lucas and Villegas researching in the United States reported similar experiences to the UK. They found that despite changes to national policy and the emphasis placed on the inclusion of EAL pupils in mainstream classes, mainstream teachers had not been given sufficient preparation for teaching in culturally and linguistically diverse classrooms (2001:40). Grant and Wong also raise questions linked to EAL learners in mainstream schools and ask: ‘Why do barriers continue to restrict access to full literacy for many language-minority learners in the United States?’ (2003:386). Grant and Wong (2003) posit that the reason there is a lack of equality within school systems for English language learners is related to the failure of teacher education programmes to prepare mainstream and reading teachers to meet their specific needs. They also propose that a first crucial step to address these issues would be to enable such teachers to become aware of their own linguistic and cultural deficit models (Grant and Wong, 2003:393). Tarone and Allwright (2010) also recognise that teacher education programmes have left out knowledge of second language learners and second language acquisition processes and that this has a direct impact on how needs are met within classrooms. Darling-Hammond, Chung and Freelow (2002) argue that research that explores the relationship between teachers’ perceptions and the effectiveness of teacher education programmes is required in order to promote more successful student achievement. De Jong and Harper (2005) develop this argument further and advocate the need for specific frameworks to be established that make the ‘linguistic and cultural foundations of teaching and learning visible and explicit within the context of mainstream teacher preparation in order to influence mainstream classroom practices’ (2005:118).

There appears therefore to be a consensus within the international literature that the knowledge base of teacher education programmes needs to expand to accommodate the shift towards classrooms that are culturally and linguistically more diverse.
Despite current shifts in policy, many schools still provide discriminatory experiences for pupils learning EAL. The source of this lack of equal treatment is captured well in the much-cited *Lau vs Nichols* case in the United States where the judge delivered the decision of the court and stated:

‘There is no equality of treatment merely by providing students with the same facilities, textbooks, teachers, and curriculum; for students who do not understand English are effectively foreclosed from any meaningful education’


Both Cummins, (2000) and Hawkins (2011) suggest that while policy specifications and classroom practices are non-discriminatory in their intent, and seek equal opportunity for pupils learning EAL, the lack of teacher knowledge in relation to EAL pedagogy often results in discriminatory experiences for these pupils. Such practices, as suggested by Reeves (2004), not only *flatten differences* (2004) within classrooms, but render the linguistic and cultural capital brought into such contexts as *invisible* (Bernstein, 1996). As a result, pupils learning EAL experience educational inequalities as they engage in literacy practices in mainstream classrooms.

One way to limit discriminatory experiences within schools and classrooms is to include a critical dimension to language teacher education. Hawkins and Norton argue that language teachers are in ‘a key position to address educational inequality, both because of the particular learners they serve, many of whom are marginalised members of the wider community, and because of the subject matter they teach – language – which can itself serve to both empower and marginalize’ (Hawkins and Norton, 2009:32).
Literacy

Within contemporary society there are competing definitions associated with the notion of literacy that are closely linked to economic, cultural and political agendas. It has been argued that literacy is the essential element within civilized cultures and is often associated with intelligence at an individual level (Janks, 2010; Gee, 2008). However, the field of New Literacy Studies (Gee, 1996) has moved away from the traditional notion of literacy as solely a cognitive process to one that embraces a sociocultural approach. Lankshear and Knobel observe that:

‘Developments from a range of social theory perspectives have progressively chipped away at the virtual monopoly over educational research of text-based practices previously exercised by psychologists of one type or another.’

(Lankshear and Knobel, 1997:95).

Street drew a distinction between a technical definition of reading which focused on cognition, which he termed the autonomous model, and the ideological model which characterised literacy as social and cultural in nature (Street, 1996). The term literacy can therefore be conceptualised as multidimensional in nature, involving cognitive skills that are woven into specific practices that take place within specific sociocultural contexts. Such a conceptualisation captures the situation in linguistically and diverse classrooms where pupils learning EAL are required to participate actively in literacy practices that are part of the new culture in which they now live. The following sections explore key perspectives on literacy practices.

Orientations to Literacy

Within the literature there is a range of models of literacy, and the teaching of literacy, that highlight how literacy practices vary across cultures, social contexts within individual cultures and genres of texts (e.g. Luke and Freebody, 1990; Street,
1995; The New London Group, 1996; Janks, 2010; Luke and Dooley, 2011; Kucer and Silva, 2013). At the same time, each model recognises the need for readers to:

- decode the text;
- make meaning from the text;
- interrogate the text.

(Janks, 2010:21-22).

Decoding the text is linked to traditional notions of reading. It requires the reader to be proficient in processing the language of the text. Meaning making draws on higher order cognitive skills and processes that underpin analysis and evaluation of a text (Janks, 2010). The interrogation of texts is associated with critical literacy and here the reader is encouraged to read against the text, and to recognise and understand how texts position them in different ways as readers (Freebody and Luke, 1990; Wallace, 2003; Janks, 2010).

Current models of literacy foreground the role of discourse. The term discourse is used in these models to convey how language carries the purposes, practices and identities of particular social groups. In other words, the ways in which we think, know, read and write are shaped by being apprenticed into particular social groups with their associated discourses (Cairney, 1995; Gee,2005). Gee (2005) argues that all literacy practices are linked to specific ‘Discourses’. His purpose in using capital ‘D’ here and the main thrust of his conceptualisation of ‘Discourse’ are set out in the following quotation:

‘A Discourse with a capital “D” (I will use “discourse” with a little “d” just to mean “language-in-use” or stretches of oral and written language) is composed of distinctive ways of speaking/listening and often, too, distinctive ways of writing/reading. These distinctive ways of speaking/listening and/or reading/writing are coupled with distinctive ways of acting, interacting, valuing, feeling, dressing,'
thinking and believing. In turn, all of these are coupled with ways of coordinating oneself with (getting in synch with) other people and with various objects, tools, and technologies. All this is in the service of enacting specific socially recognizable identities.’

(Gee, 2011, p.177)

Writing from an L2 theoretical perspective, Kern’s work draws on Gee’ writings and argues that reading and writing need to be conceptualised within the broader framework of Discourse. He recognises the importance of this in a global context by stating: ‘Preparing students to communicate in multiple cultural contexts...means sensitizing them to discourse practices in other societies and to the ways those discourse practices both reflect and create cultural norms’ (Kern, 2000:2).

Kern (2000) captures the conceptual shift that has taken place in relation to literacy. He states:

‘It is essential to understand that literacy is more than a set of academic skills, more than inscribing and decoding words and more than prescribed patterns of thinking. It involves an awareness of how acts of reading, writing and conversation mediate and transform meanings, not merely transfer them from one individual or group to another. Literacy is neither natural, nor universal, nor ideologically neutral, but culturally constructed. It is precisely because literacy is variable and intimately tied to the sociocultural practices of language use in a given society that is it is of central importance in our teaching of language and culture.’

(Kern, 2000:23, italics in the original).

**Subject specific literacies**

While the importance of comprehensible input has been emphasised to teachers, the language practices of school subjects may present particular challenges for
learners of EAL, or indeed for any learner. Subject specific literacy can be defined as ‘the language and activities appropriate to particular disciplines, occupations and activities ... required by particular learners’ (Hyland, 2002). Science content, for example, may be inaccessible for some learners, particularly those with EAL, due to its technical lexis and complex linguistic structures (Miller, 2009). It appears that teachers rarely explain why, for example, the passive voice is used for scientific reports, or highlight the specific language needed to explain how mathematical problems are solved (Vollmer, 2012).

Furthermore, it has been suggested that teachers may be reluctant to take time to ensure clear understanding of concepts integral to their subjects, viewing explanations of language ‘as the business of’ the English teacher (Marsh, 2009). However, even in non-STEM subjects, EAL learners may struggle to comprehend the academic language used in different subject areas (Cummins 2001). Words like ‘summarise’, ‘interpret’, ‘deduce’, and ‘recount’, for example, Vollmer (2012) describes as ‘operators’ because they contain implicit direction which call for specific cognitive processes. He suggests a model based on variety of classroom registers and a spectrum of content areas, which could be used to facilitate understanding of specific curricular areas.

**Critical Literacy**

Luke and Dooley define critical literacy as ‘the use of texts to analyse and transform relations of cultural, social and political power’ (2011:856). They emphasise that the main aim of a critical literacy approach is:

‘The equitable development and acquisition of language and literacy by historically marginalized communities and students, and towards the use of texts in a range of communications media to analyse, critique, represent and alter inequitable knowledge structures and social relations of school and society.’

Some of the key concepts linked to critical literacy theory are outlined below to aid in our understanding of how this concept applies to mainstream classrooms which include students from diverse backgrounds.

**Texts**

Within a critical literacy approach texts are conceived as cultural tools that are used within particular sociocultural environments. According to Janks (2010), all texts are visible representations of something that is abstract within society. Texts can therefore be, visual, multimodal, spoken, digitally communicated or written on paper. It is therefore important to learn how to deconstruct and understand texts and the implicit ways in which the discourses of power are negotiated within them (Pratt and Foley, 2011:67). Morgan and Ramanathan suggest that schooling is moving away from traditional notions of text to reconceptualise literacy in the light of new digital capacities (2005:152). As a result, critical educators promote a ‘pluralized notion of literacies and multi-literacies to help students negotiate a broader range of text-types and modes’ (2005:152).

Recognising the social nature of texts also impacts on how we understand genre. Texts are socially constructed and, therefore, their structural shape and their social function are socially and culturally varied (Wallace, 2003:15). By implication therefore, it is not appropriate to conceptualise genres in terms of a set number of rigidly defined forms. Kamler (1997) captures the constraints in practice that arise from viewing genres solely in terms of fixed templates. He argues that:

‘The practice of the instructional genre becomes difficult for [the teacher] to identify because she is so firmly fixed on specifying textual characteristics and linguistic features...In order to produce a more critical reading, the teacher needs access to other discourses, rather than more sophisticated understandings of the analytic templates of systemic linguistics.’

(Kamler, 1997:292)
Fairclough also argues that while texts may have a well-defined or predictable generic structure, there is ‘a limit to how far we can really talk about structure in a tight sense’ (Fairclough, 2003:74). He recognises genre mixing and the hybridity of genres and suggests that this is due to the influence of social relations and practices, the purpose(s) of the writer/designer and the technological changes that have taken place (Fairclough, 2003). He therefore notes that within any given text there are sets of ‘other voices’, or sets of ‘other texts’, that are relevant or potentially embedded within a text (Fairclough, 2003:47). Texts are therefore considered to be multigeneric in nature.

In summary, all texts have fluid boundaries and carry meanings that have been shaped by specific contexts. Readers bring to texts their own social and culturally-shaped interpretations, which means that texts are continually being reshaped. As a result of their contrasting life experiences and cultural formation, an EAL learner and a teacher may come up with radically different interpretations of the same text.

Power

Drawing on neo-Marxist theories of power, Giroux (1979) foregrounded the idea that dominant groups in society have power over those who are marginalised or at least are subordinate to the dominant group. A critical literacy approach ‘makes clear the connection between knowledge and power’ (Shor, 2009:298). It also recognises that knowledge is socially constructed and linked to the values and norms that serve particular interests within a society (Shor, 2009). A critical literacy approach therefore enables a critique of these social and cultural constructions and provides both students and teachers with conceptual tools that enable them to explore how specific meanings have been created in any given text.
Reflecting on the use of the word *critical* within a critical literacy approach, Janks notes that ‘*critical* as used in post-structuralist, neo-Marxist discourses requires that analysis is put to work to reveal the hidden ideologies of texts’ (2010:35). Texts used in society are often persuasive in their nature and position their readers in particular ways. Therefore, questions such as ‘Who has the power? Who benefits from the way this text is constructed?’ help to make power relationships visible and to ‘denaturalize ‘common’ sense assumptions (Janks, 2010:36). Such an approach is designed to uncover the ideological meanings within texts.

One way to explore repertoires of thinking and the ideologies within texts is to identify the cultural tools that are used to create specific ideological meanings (Wallace, 2003). McLaren (2009) recognises that ideological meanings do not only exist within political discourses, but also within the ways in which societies communicate their ideas, beliefs, values. He sees ideology as a production of meaning and a way of viewing the world that is simply classified as common sense (McLaren, 2009:69). Attending to power and ideology in classroom literacy practices raises questions about the types of interactions and cultural and social knowledge that are considered to be legitimate and the *norm* within multilingual and multicultural classroom settings. Failure to acknowledge and implement changes to classroom literacy practices based on such considerations can lead to the silencing of marginalised groups within the dominant culture (Wallace, 2003; Janks, 2010).

*Gaps* and *silences* are important concepts within a critical literacy approach. *Gaps* in a text can mean that a particular race, culture, ideology, gender, individual or identity is not included resulting in marginalization (Luke, 2000). *Silences* may mean that individuals who are located within the fabric of the text, do not have a role or a vocal presence and, as a result, are silenced (Pratt and Foley, 2012:69). These considerations are particularly relevant to this study, as an alertness to gaps and silences can guide teachers to ensure that students from different social and cultural backgrounds are positioned as valuable and legitimate participants in the classroom.
Chapter 3: Method

Introduction
Building on earlier research into the preparation of Initial Teacher Education (ITE) student teachers to teach English as an Additional Language (EAL) in mainstream secondary schools (e.g. Foley et al., 2012; Andrews 2009), this study investigated the degree to which two large Schools of Education in Universities in Scotland prepared Professional Graduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) (Secondary) students from a wide range of specialist subject backgrounds to understand the needs of EAL learners and develop the pedagogical skills required to meet such needs. The Introduction to this report has set out the main aims of this research which were to delineate staff and student views on:

- EAL, and how best to support EAL learners in mainstream classrooms;
- what makes for good practice, and effective ITE provision, in this area;
- university ITE provision to date;
- how, and to what extent, participants’ understanding of EAL was enhanced by a one-day intervention; and
- aspects which remain problematic.

We also sought suggestions for revisions to the intervention and for an on-going programme of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) as PGDE (Secondary) students enter their teaching careers.

Research design
A case study approach was used, based within the two University Schools of Education which were selected in part because the PGDE programmes offered were similar in size and both attracted students from a wide range of subject specialist backgrounds. Both universities have a long history in the preparation of student teachers.
Four researchers were involved in the research, three from University A and one from University B. During the planning stages of the study several meetings were held with all four researchers. Thereafter regular contact was maintained through email and telephone conversations.

Data were gathered in the following ways:

1. analysis of documentation outlining the PGDE(S) Programmes in each university;

2. a survey questionnaire for PGDE(Secondary) students in both universities (SQ 1), comprising a range of questions which generated both qualitative and quantitative data;

3. a survey questionnaire for all staff involved in the delivery of the PGDE (Secondary) Programme in both institutions comprising a range of questions which generated both qualitative and quantitative data;

4. an intervention comprising a whole-day workshop for students in each university, planned and delivered by the researchers and focusing on the theory and practice of effective EAL teaching across the subject specialism range;

5. a second survey questionnaire (SQ 2) for all student participants following this workshop, comprising a range of questions which invited students to comment on the impact of the intervention and which generated both qualitative and quantitative data; and

6. in University A, analysis of student entries in their online learning logs following the intervention.
Procedure

Sampling
The population comprised all PGDE (Secondary) students matriculated in the 2014-15 academic session (168 in University A across 12 subject specialisms, and 168 in University B across 13 subject specialisms) and all PGDE lecturers responsible for the education of these students (20 in University A and 27 in University B).

Questionnaires and Intervention

Student Survey Questionnaire 1 (SQ1)
This online survey questionnaire of all PGDE (S) students in both universities (n=336) was launched on the 22\textsuperscript{nd} October 2014, that is two months into their PGDE(S) Programme. As an incentive to complete the questionnaire, students were informed that all respondents to the survey would be entered into a draw to win one of five book tokens. Messages encouraging participation were also sent to the two cohorts during the period that the survey remained open. To ensure that anonymity was maintained, but to allow us to match up responses from this survey to the second survey that students were asked to complete following the intervention, participants were asked to create a unique identifier that included one letter and six numbers. For ease of memory, we suggested that the participants could use their birth date preceded by the first letter of their surname (e.g. someone called John Ramsay born on 21.10.1990 = R211090). As Chapter 4 reporting the findings of this survey will reveal, this means of matching up individual responses to the first and second surveys did not work out as well as we would have wished given that a considerable proportion of responses to the second survey forgot the identifiers that they had created in the first survey.
Students were then asked to supply the following information:

1. Questions on students’ backgrounds
   - university they were currently attending;
   - subject area(s);
   - gender;
   - age;
   - where their primary and secondary education took place;
   - their primary/native language;
   - other languages spoken;
   - if English was not their first language, whether they had been an EAL/ESL learner in UK or another English-speaking country and, if they had, what were their observations on their experiences of being an EAL/ESL learner;
   - if they had had informal/more formal experience of teaching EAL learners;
   - if they had any formal qualifications for teaching English as a foreign language;
   - for University A students, if they were studying the Curriculum Plus 2 option – EAL;
   - at this stage in their ITE programme, how confident they felt in their ability to support EAL learners.

2. Students’ views on language, teaching and teachers

A series of statements was given and students were asked to respond indicating their level of agreement/disagreement using a five-point scale (strongly agree/agree/unsure/disagree/strongly disagree).
Students were also asked their views on how language is best acquired.

3. They were then asked to give (using a five-point scale of very large responsibility/ large responsibility/ some responsibility/ little responsibility/no responsibility) their views on:

- the extent to which educators are responsible for meeting the needs of EAL learners.

This was followed by a question on (using a five-point scale very useful/useful/some use/little use/not required):

- the degree to which they felt it would be useful for their future careers to have EAL-related input on key aspects of learning, teaching and assessment.

4. Students were invited to specify any other area(s) of input that they felt would be useful.

5. Students were invited to identify any challenges they perceived that EAL learners may face, particularly in the subjects students would be teaching.

6. Students were invited to identify any challenges they perceived they may face in their own practice in teaching individuals learning EAL.

7. Students were invited to provide any additional comments, or to add any reflections they may wished to make.

**Staff survey questionnaire**

An online survey questionnaire for staff in both universities who taught on the PGDE (S) Programmes was launched in October 2014. It invited a series of responses under the following headings. It will be seen that many of the questions asked in this staff survey corresponded closely to those asked in the student surveys. This was designed to allow an exercise of comparison and contrast to take place.
Staff were asked to supply the following information:

1. **Background information and Continuing Professional Development (CPD)**
   - which university they worked in;
   - the subject area they taught;
   - gender;
   - age;
   - primary/native language or languages;
   - other languages spoken;
   - if English was not their first language, had they been an EAL/ESL learner in the UK or another English-speaking country. If so, could they provide a brief account of their experience as an EAL/ESL learner and of how it may have influenced their actions as a university educator;
   - how many years they had worked in ITE;
   - how many years they had taught in schools;
   - when they taught in schools, did they have experience of teaching EAL learners;
   - did they have any formal qualifications for teaching English as a foreign language;
   - when they taught in schools, did they receive any CPD in relation to EAL teaching and, if so what was the nature of that CPD;
- as a university lecturer, had they received any CPD in relation to the teaching of EAL and, if so, what was the nature of that CPD;

- following the pattern of student surveys and using a five-point scale (very useful, useful, some use, little use, not required), staff were then given a list of possible CPD EAL sessions and were asked to identify which of these they would find of greater/less use. They were also invited to identify any other areas of CPD on EAL that they would find useful.

2. Current provision for students

Staff were asked to:

- indicate how satisfied they were with the content of current provision concerning EAL within the PGDE (S) Programme on which they taught;

- comment on whether, given the many areas to be covered, sufficient attention is given to EAL. If their response was no, they were asked to say what they think should be incorporated into the programme;

- following the pattern of the student survey, identify what they considered to be key matters in relation to EAL learning and teaching that need to be addressed with students in their subject area(s). A list of 12 possible topics was provided, and they were invited to indicate their views (using a five-point scale: very important, important, some importance, little importance, not required);

- identify any other matters that they saw as key in relation to EAL learning and teaching for students in their subject area(s);

- provide observations on their own practice in preparing students to support EAL learners that may be of value to other colleagues;
- share any additional comments on how ITE PGDE Programmes could better prepare students to face the challenges of EAL learning and teaching; and

- following the pattern of the first student survey, indicate, using a five-point scale (very large responsibility, large responsibility, some responsibility, little responsibility, no responsibility), their opinions on the extent to which ITE providers, EAL specialist services, English teachers, class teachers of subjects other than English, classroom assistants, and school management were responsible for meeting the needs of EAL learners.

**Intervention**

The intervention comprised a one-hour keynote lecture which was delivered by two of the researchers in each university. The two two-hour workshops in University A were led by all four researchers and two invited language specialists from University A. Because one researcher was unavailable to deliver the workshops in University B, three researchers, two language specialists from University A and one language specialist from University B led them. While the intention had been to provide two full days for the intervention, one in each of the two universities, this did not prove possible and the intervention in University B took place over two separate afternoons.

At the beginning of the lecture students were given a pack of materials which included copies of the PowerPoint slides that would be used in the lecture and in each workshop, and of the workshop materials. Given that in planning these sessions our intention was not only to provide theoretical input for students, but also to model for them in highly-interactive workshops how to move from theory to practice, we deemed it important to ensure that at the end of the intervention students would leave with materials that they could use and with a better understanding of how they could plan lessons and devise teaching materials which
would take account of the needs of EAL learners. In advance of the sessions they were allocated to groups, each of which contained students from different subject specialist areas. In doing this we hoped that they would not only learn with one another but also from each other.

**The lecture**

Underpinned by the literature reviewed in the preceding chapter, the purpose of the lecture was: to raise students’ awareness of the diverse nature of EAL learners in Scotland; to provide information about second language theories and to suggest strategies, based on these theories; and to support EAL learners in the classroom. Students were invited to consider the variety of social, cultural, linguistic and socio-economic backgrounds of EAL learners. Differences between policy and practice were discussed. Language learning perspectives, focusing particularly on socio-linguistic theories, were explained, with a practical exercise after which students were asked to reflect. This exercise took the form of a practical example of a foreign language, with which they were not familiar, used in writing and orally to prompt them to respond to questioning and perform tasks. Students were also asked to reflect on the decoding strategies they had used to make sense of the foreign language input, with a view to making these more explicit in their classrooms.

Cummins’ work was used to illustrate EAL learners’ English language development and raise awareness of the progressive stages that learners pass through to develop academic language. The different developmental trajectories of native and non-native speakers were highlighted. Finally, students were given examples of good practice in classrooms as observed by Her Majesty’s Inspectorate (HMIE).

**The workshops**

Before outlining the content of the two workshop interventions that took place in both university contexts, it is necessary to highlight factors that influenced their design. Well-documented research (OECD, 2013) has reported inequitable
schooling experiences within Anglophone countries for students from linguistic minority backgrounds, despite policy rhetoric that seeks to promote equality and inclusion (Luke and Dooley, 2011). In light of this, and given the experiences that many pupils from minority language backgrounds encounter as they try to access the mainstream curriculum in schools, we felt that it was therefore important for the workshop design to include content that raises student awareness of issues relating to equality and social justice.

The emphasis within the EAL interventions was to help student teachers from all subject areas to understand the connections between language, culture and identity and to recognise the linguistic and sociocultural demands made by classroom activities. We were careful to ensure that this strategy did not simply sensitise student teachers to the ways language is encoded in their different subject areas, but rather sought to help them to apply actively the theories they had been exposed to in the lecture within their future classroom practices. This allowed us to consider ways of intentionally drawing on the various cultural and linguistic resources within the classroom as well as focussing specifically on how language works within a text, in order to foster a classroom environment that meets the language and literacy needs of pupils from diverse backgrounds.

Given the overall aims of the project, we felt it was particularly important to help student teachers construct activities that would allow pupils learning EAL to develop the language and literacies needed to access classroom texts and lessons. The development of language, literacy and critical literacy for pupils with EAL were recognised within the design as complex processes, and viewed as sets of socially and culturally situated practices (Janks, 2010; Vasquez, 2008). We also recognised that there are a number of orientations associated with literacy, but that all of them share the perspective that ‘human action is mediated by language and other symbols systems within particular cultural contexts’ (Lewis et al, 2009:5). Within this broad literacy framework, text was defined as an item that carries meaning, thus including both print and non-print texts (e.g. a picture, film, object). The
reading of a text was therefore recognised as only *one* portrayal of a ‘fact’ or *one* reading of a subject matter. Within such an approach, *reading* was seen as a process of making meaning. Such theoretical understandings underpinned the activities within the workshops and aimed to provide opportunities for student teachers to develop inclusive pedagogies that create conditions for culturally and linguistically responsive classrooms.

The preceding paragraphs have outlined the main aims and perspectives that informed the design of the workshops for the project. To take those aims ahead, the workshops drew on social constructivist perspectives on teaching and learning, where opportunities were given to student teachers to communicate their own understandings of a given text. Large and small group discussion provided opportunities for collaboration and problem solving, thus increasing student teachers’ ability to develop their thinking, reasoning skills and linguistic and cultural understanding around the activities that were used.

Each workshop lasted an hour and a half. The emphasis on connecting theory with practice when engaging with classroom texts was pursued differently in each of the workshops. The following sections outline how this was achieved.

**Workshop 1**

In the first workshop, student teachers were expected to engage with a Modern Studies text entitled ‘The Gulf War’ (Janks, 2010: 45). The initial activity featured interactive group work, using a progressive brainstorming strategy, where student teachers engaged with the key concept (‘binary opposition’) that underpinned an understanding of the content of the text. Student teachers were encouraged to use English or their first language to explore the idea. Feedback from completion of this task indicated that students had built up a bank of cultural knowledge and words linked to the concept being explored. Activities that followed this initial
exploration of the concept allowed student teachers to evaluate the contribution of others and consider how this might shape or modify their own understanding. Space was also given for matters that the student teachers did not know, or were unsure about, to be discussed. Further activities provided opportunities for participants to read the written text at various levels of comprehension. Student teachers engaged in discussion to answer questions linked to a basic understanding of the text and were also asked to provide an explanation for the way the writer used particular words or phrases in the text to create specific meanings. Cultural differences and multiple interpretations were considered through an engagement with the concept associated with the text and the writer’s word choice. These activities allowed student teachers to build an extensive understanding of the way language was used to position the reader and the ideas within the text, and at the same time raised awareness of how to help pupils critique dominant ideologies and world views that are often portrayed in a range of materials used in the classroom. In effect, literacy was being viewed here as not simply ‘functional’ reading, but as a set of social practices that allowed student teachers to engage in critical reflection and an examination of the world in which they live.

During discussions, language functions were made visible to allow those unaccustomed to particular forms of debate and interaction to take part in classroom talk. Such strategies provided opportunities to develop collaborative talk using the language needed to engage with the text. A discussion task at the end of the workshop enabled student teachers to explore ways in which the activities brought together their theoretical understanding of second language development and inclusive pedagogies with the content of their subject areas.

Workshop 2
In the second workshop, student teachers were introduced to a timed activity that required them to write about an image presented to them on the screen. Students had to do this activity in a language other than English. Feedback from this task
allowed participants to talk about their frustrations in writing in a language they were less familiar with and the cognitive demands it placed upon them. Theoretical input introduced student teachers to the various challenges that pupils learning EAL faced when they were developing writing. Discussions around this input illustrated how western schools presuppose that young people have already developed spoken language skills in the language of education and have internalized how that language works in everyday use. These insights highlighted how pupils learning EAL did not arrive in mainstream classrooms with the same English language resources as their ‘native’ speaking peers and that this had implications for pedagogic practice, especially when considering the development of writing.

Additional input focused on genre approaches to writing, where it was recognized that writing is goal oriented and has a particular social purpose. Scaffolds were introduced to student teachers in the form of writing frames. Active involvement in using these in guided tasks allowed a recognition to emerge in relation to the ways particular genres had reoccurring linguistic features and textual structures. In addition, different stages of writing were introduced in a way that allowed student teachers to become aware of, and respond to, the linguistic and cultural needs of EAL learners. The session finished with a collaborative task that allowed student teachers to design their own writing frame for their own subject area, while taking into account the strategies that had been introduced during the session.

**Student Survey Questionnaire 2 (SQ2)**

Immediately following the intervention student teachers were asked to complete a second survey questionnaire to allow us to determine whether, and to what extent, they felt that the intervention had developed their understanding of how to support EAL learners in general and in their own subject specialist areas in particular. The second online survey was launched on the 22nd January 2015 in University A, and in University B, on the 6th February 2015. As in the first survey,
the students were given the incentive of the opportunity to win a book token; and a number of follow-up messages encouraged them to complete the questionnaire.

The survey began by asking students if they had completed the first survey and, if they had done so, to enter their unique identifiers. If they had not completed the first survey, or had forgotten their identifiers, they were asked a series of questions about their background: specialist subject areas; gender; age; where their primary and secondary education took place; their primary/native language; other languages they speak; whether or not they had been an EAL/ESL learner in the UK or in another English speaking country; their experiences of being an EAL/ESL learner; if they had had any informal or more formal experience of teaching EAL learners; and if they had any formal qualifications for teaching English as a foreign language. Attention then turned to their evaluation of the EAL intervention sessions.

1. Evaluation of the intervention

Students were asked to indicate:

- using a three-point scale (no/very little increase in understanding, some increase in understanding, a considerable increase in understanding), the extent to which, looking at EAL teaching and learning as a whole, they felt that the intervention had given them a better general understanding of the needs of EAL learners;

- using a three-point scale (no/very little increase in understanding, some increase in understanding, a considerable increase in understanding), the extent to which they felt that the sessions had given them strategies/ideas for responding effectively (within - their own subject specialism) to EAL learners;

- what, if any, ideas/insights surprised them;
- any aspects of the day, ideas encountered, etc. that they found to be particularly helpful;

- any matters which they felt were not covered, but should have been covered, and any matters that were covered but in their opinion needed to be addressed in greater depth;

- strategies that they encountered on the day, or ideas of their own that were sparked on the day, that they intended to put into practice in their own classrooms.

2. Current views on EAL and learning and teaching

This section asked students about their current views on matters related to languages, learning and teaching. They were asked to indicate:

- using a five-point scale (strongly agree, agree, unsure, disagree, strongly disagree) their level of agreement or disagreement with the series of statements about how language is best acquired that had featured in the first survey;

- using a five-point scale (very useful, useful, some use, little use, not required) the degree to which it would be useful for their future careers to have EAL-related input on a series of aspects of learning, teaching and assessment that had featured in the first survey. They were also invited to specify any additional areas which they would identify as useful;

- the level of confidence they felt at this stage of their ITE programme, in their ability to support EAL learners;

- Students were invited to provide any additional comments and/or reflections, that they wished to make on the intervention, or on more generally on EAL-related matters.
Analysis of data

In addition to providing a synoptic account of the survey data, our initial intention was to provide a more fine-grained analysis of points of comparison and contrast across the student survey data sets, using inferential statistics where appropriate. However, as the initial paragraphs of Chapter 5 reveal, unevenness in response to the surveys between the two universities and difficulties in matching up responses to the first and second student surveys meant that it was not advisable to make comparisons between the two surveys as robust as had been planned. That said, a close analysis of the data within and across the surveys was conducted as far as was possible within the constraints of the overall pattern of response to both surveys.

To be true to the aims of this project that centred on gathering and representing participants’ views, the qualitative data were first explored in a close, interactive reading and then analysed to create what Maxwell (2013: 108) has termed ‘substantive categories’. Maxwell describes how such substantive categories 'are primarily descriptive, in a broad sense that includes description of participants' concepts and beliefs; they stay close to the data categorized' (2013: 108). These categories were generated inductively, followed by a process of checking their robustness and the trustworthiness of interpretations made on their basis. An important consideration in taking the analysis ahead and in reporting the qualitative findings, was to give due attention to the range of opinions that were expressed, particularly in relation to reactions to the intervention. In reporting the qualitative findings, we have sought to indicate what were majority views but also to represent the range of opinions on an issue and not to overlook 'outliers'.

Generalisability

From the outset we remained alert to the fact that this is a relatively small-scale study involving only two universities in Scotland and we therefore took care to ensure that we did not generalise our findings inappropriately to the wider
population of PGDE(S) students and their lecturers. However, we would suggest that the views, concerns, issues and challenges reported and faced by our participants are likely to be similar to those encountered by PGDE(S) students and staff in other universities, and that there may be some degree of generality. The findings suggest that it would be valuable to undertake additional research of this type, not only in other Scottish universities, but throughout the UK. As was noted in the introduction to this report, numbers of EAL students in mainstream classrooms in England, Wales and Northern Ireland have increased significantly over the past decade, and it is therefore reasonable to conclude that universities in those countries, and their student teachers, are facing similar challenges to those reported by the students and staff in the two universities that we investigated. Additional research with a sample which was more fully representative of the wider population would make it possible to establish the extent to which the views expressed here are indeed representative.

**Ethical issues**

At all times we were guided by Macfarlane’s (2010; 2012) advice on ethical and moral standards while undertaking research in higher education, and at each stage we remained alert to and mindful of our responsibilities. Ethical approval was sought and given by the Ethics Committees in both universities during the design stages of the study, and data collection and reporting followed closely the guidelines published by the British Educational Research Association (BERA) and the British Psychological Society (BPS). Permission to undertake the research was sought from the two PGDE (S) Programme Directors, who were also given information sheets and consent forms. Separate forms were prepared for students and for staff informants, and these were distributed electronically a week before these informants were sent a link to the respective survey questionnaires. An invitation was made to both sets of informants that should they require any additional information this would be provided. Assurances were given that during the reporting stages of the research it would not be possible to identify either individuals or institutions and that at all times confidentiality and anonymity would
be assured. Rather than ask students and staff to sign paper copies of the forms, it was agreed that having read the information sheets and the assurances at the beginning of the survey, the decision to participate would be taken as informed consent. We have outlined above the careful steps we took to ensure that anonymity was maintained when we matched students’ responses to the first questionnaires with their responses to the second questionnaires.

Consent was granted for the research team in University A to have access to the students’ weekly electronic reflective diaries. Again assurances concerning anonymity were given and care was taken when reporting extracts from these logs that individual students could not readily be identified.
Chapter 4: Findings from the staff survey

The preceding Methods chapter has set out how a central aim of this project was not only to survey students’ knowledge, attitudes and perceived education needs in relation to EAL but also to build a picture of the EAL-related experience, knowledge, and development needs of teacher educators in these two institutions. The Methods chapter has also set out the rationale for the overall design of the staff survey and for the specific questions that it included. In this chapter we present the findings from the staff survey; and in the following chapter points of comparison and contrast with the findings from the student surveys will be highlighted.

Background of the respondents

A total of 20 responses was received to the staff survey. Ten of these responses came from University A and ten from University B. There was also an equal division by gender. Looking first at the subject areas they taught, these 20 respondents identified 27 areas in which they taught. The most strongly represented areas were those of science and technology, with thirteen respondents falling into these categories. (Biology 2; Chemistry, 1; Computing 1; Design Technology, 2; Physics, 4; Science/General Science, 2; Technology/Mechanics, 1). There was also one respondent from the area of Mathematics. The other respondents came from the areas of: Art, 3; Classics, 1; Drama, 1; Educational Studies, 1; English, 1; Geography, 1; Modern Languages, 3; Music, 1; and Religious Education, 1. There were no responses from the subject areas of Business Studies, History, Modern Studies and Physical education.

Consonant with the age distribution of teacher educators in these two universities, (and in other institutions), the respondents were preponderantly in their fifties or older: 50-59, 9; 60 or over, 4. Five respondents were in the age range of 40-49, and two under 29. In line with this age profile, most of this group of teacher educators
had accumulated considerable experience teaching in schools before they moved to the university sector (over 30 years experience in teaching in schools, 3; 21-25 years, 4; 16-20 years, 2; 11-15 years, 3; 6-10 years, 6). Only two respondents had no experience of teaching in schools. Two thirds of the sample also had worked for a considerable, or very considerable, time in Initial Teacher Education (ITE) (21-30 years in ITE, 3; 11-20 years, 3; 6-10 years, 7; under 5 years, 7).

Turning to look at their language background, all of the respondents identified English as their ‘primary/native language’. Only seven positive responses were received to the question that asked what languages an individual spoke in addition to their primary language(s). One response only noted French, and there were four responses that identified a pair of languages: French and Flemish; French and German; French and Greek; Spanish and French. Two responses listed a range of modern European languages: French, German, Spanish, Italian and some Russian; Italian (fluent), French (good), Spanish (conversational), German (conversational). No respondents indicated that they had any formal qualifications for teaching English as a foreign language.

We have noted in a preceding paragraph that this group of teacher educators had between them a large number of years of experience of teaching in schools. However, only a small minority saw themselves as having had considerable or very considerable ‘experience of teaching EAL learners’ during their time in schools (very considerable experience of teaching EAL learners, 1; considerable, 2; some, 9; little, 3; very little, 4).

Only two of the 19 respondents who had taught in schools had received any CPD in relation to EAL teaching during this stage of their careers. One of these respondents noted that this CPD had consisted of an ‘in-house evening’. The other indicated that it had involved ‘training from X Council on an annual basis’ and that ‘as a HT, I was an active member of the X council EAL Strategy Group’. Only one out of the 20 respondents stated that as a university educator he or she had received
any CPD in relation to EAL teaching. This CPD was described as ‘recognising challenges and difficulties of EAL students’.

Views on the usefulness of specific CPD inputs on EAL

It was seen as important to build up as fine-grained a picture as possible of exactly what kinds of CPD input on EAL respondents considered would be of value to them. Accordingly, a set of questions asked ‘if CPD sessions on EAL teaching were to be provided by your university, which of the following [areas of input] would you find of greater/lesser use?’ Tables 4.1a, 4.1b and 4.1c present responses to this set of questions. It will be seen that, with the exception of the item on creating appropriate assessments, a very clear majority of respondents rated all of these areas of input within the categories very useful and useful and there were very few responses within the categories little use and not required. This set of results can be read as indicating a receptiveness to input on EAL and possibly also a perception that this is needed. The pattern of responses to the first two items in this set on ‘general input on learning/teaching an additional language’ and ‘recognising language that can cause challenges’ suggest an openness to becoming more generally well-informed about this domain of learning and teaching.

High ratings were also given to input that would assist teachers to deal with ‘practical’ concerns in the classroom such as: ‘devising resources/materials’; ‘differentiation of content/activities’ and ‘involving EAL learners in group work.’ It is heartening that there was also a very positive pattern of response to the items that concerned the integration of EAL learners into the school and an alertness to EAL learners’ own cultural resources: ‘involving EAL learners socially in the life of the classroom and the school’; ‘drawing appropriately on EAL learners’ own linguistic and cultural background’.
There was a somewhat less positive appraisal of the usefulness of input on ‘creating appropriate assessments’, with only a bare majority of 11 answering in the categories of ‘very useful’ and ‘useful’, and five respondents seeing this as of ‘little use’ or ‘not required.’ One cannot be clear as to why this was the case, but a speculation is that the creation of appropriate assessment may have been viewed as being outwith the ambit of either teacher educators or student teachers. By contrast, input on ‘providing effective feedback’ was strongly rated.

Only two respondents provided suggestions for other areas of CPD input on EAL that they would see as of value. One respondent noted that ‘it would be useful to have information on what can be done to safeguard and promote the home languages of EAL learners.’ The other respondent noted that student teachers in their subject area were already ‘creating signage and flash cards and glossaries of technical and specialist vocabulary’ and wished to receive guidance on how best to achieve these activities of introducing subject-specific language.
Table 4.1a: perceptions of the usefulness of CPD sessions to EAL teaching on:
general input on learning/teaching an additional language; recognising language
that can cause challenges; devising resources/materials; differentiation of
content/activities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response options</th>
<th>General input on learning/teaching an additional language</th>
<th>Recognising language that can cause challenges</th>
<th>Devising resources/materials</th>
<th>Differentiation of content/activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>very useful</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>useful</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>some use</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>little use</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>not required</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.1b: perceptions of the usefulness of CPD sessions on EAL teaching on:
involving EAL learners in group work; language for conceptual understanding of
your subject(s); developing EAL learners’ vocabulary; drawing appropriately on EAL
learners’ own linguistic and cultural background.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response options</th>
<th>Involving EAL learners in group work</th>
<th>Language for conceptual understanding of your subject(s)</th>
<th>Developing EAL learners’ vocabulary</th>
<th>Drawing appropriately on EAL learners’ own linguistic and cultural background</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>very useful</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>useful</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 4.1c: perceptions of the usefulness of CPD sessions on EAL teaching on:
creating appropriate assessments; providing effective feedback; involving EAL learners socially in the life of the classroom and school.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response options</th>
<th>Involving EAL learners in group work</th>
<th>Language for conceptual understanding of your subject(s)</th>
<th>Developing EAL learners’ vocabulary</th>
<th>Drawing appropriately on EAL learners’ own linguistic and cultural background</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>some use</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>little use</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>not required</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Response options | Creating appropriate assessments | Providing effective feedback | Involving EAL learners socially in the life of the classroom and school |
|------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------
| very useful      | 5                                | 7                           | 7                               |
| useful           | 6                                | 7                           | 6                               |
| some use         | 4                                | 5                           | 5                               |
| little use       | 3                                | 0                           | 0                               |
| not required     | 2                                | 1                           | 2                               |

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Perceptions of current provision for students regarding EAL

Turning from views of what CPD was useful to academic staff to consider their perceptions of the provision concerning EAL in their programmes, respondents were asked how satisfied they were with the content currently offered on EAL. Only two responses were recorded in the category of ‘very satisfied’, and the rest of the responses were divided between the eight participants who declared that they were ‘fairly satisfied’ and the ten who answered in the categories of ‘not very satisfied’ and ‘not at all satisfied’. While this pattern of response seems to indicate considerable dissatisfaction with the status quo, the answers to a succeeding question do not suggest any marked appetite for change. When asked ‘From your own perspective, given the many areas to be covered in the PGDE (Secondary) Programme do you feel that sufficient attention is given to EAL?’ three replied ‘yes’, five replied ‘no’ and 12 ‘don’t know’. Individuals who replied ‘no’ were asked to indicate what they thought should be incorporated into the programme. Among the suggestions here were the observations that all of the potential areas of input we flagged up in the questions concerning desirable CPD input should be included; and the statement that ‘EAL needs to be mainstreamed so that all teachers are equipped to take responsibility for EAL in their own areas of the curriculum.’

Key matters in relation to EAL for students

To gain a detailed sense of the content areas related to EAL that respondents felt should be included in the curriculum of teacher education programmes, respondents were asked to indicate ‘what in your opinion are key matters in relation to EAL learning and teaching that need to be addressed with students in your subject area?’ The matters that the teacher educators were asked to identify as key, or not, were an almost identical set to the areas of potential CPD input for themselves that they had earlier been asked to rate. Responses to each of the items in this set of are presented in the following bulleted list:
- **general input on learning/teaching an additional language:**
  very important, 7; important, 7; some importance, 3; little importance, 1; not required, 2.

- **recognising language that can cause challenges:**
  very important, 5; important, 9; some importance, 4; little importance, 1; not required, 1.

- **devising resources/materials:**
  very important, 4; important, 8; some importance, 8.

- **differentiation of content/activities:**
  very important, 5; important, 11; some importance, 3; not required, 1.

- **involving EAL learners in group work:**
  very important, 6; important, 11; some importance, 3.

- **involving learners in whole class work:**
  very important, 6; important, 10; some importance, 4.

- **language for conceptual understanding of your subject(s):**
  very important, 6; important, 10; some importance, 2; not required, 2.

- **developing EAL learners’ vocabulary:**
  very important, 8; important, 8; some importance, 3; not required, 1.

- **drawing appropriately on EAL learners’ own linguistic and cultural background:**
  very important, 8; important, 7; some importance, 5.

- **creating appropriate assessments:**
  very important, 5; important, 7; some importance, 6; little importance, 1; not required, 1.

- **providing effective feedback:**
  very important, 8; important, 8; some importance, 2; not required, 2.

- **involving EAL learners socially in the life of the classroom and school:**
  very important, 7; important, 8; some importance, 4; not required, 1.

It will be seen from this list that there is a distinct similarity in the pattern of responses to these items on what EAL input student teachers require with the answers to the questions on what would be useful areas of potential CPD input for themselves. All of the items in this list were highly rated, albeit with somewhat lower ratings for the topics of ‘devising resources/materials (very important 4; important, 8) and ‘creating appropriate assessments’ (very important, 5; important, 7). Given these high ratings, it seems reasonable to conclude that all of the items in this list were indeed seen as ‘key matters’. Accordingly, to address all
of these key matters would require a comprehensive programme of education concerning EAL.

Respondents were also invited to point up aspects of their own practice in preparing students to support EAL learners that might be of value to their colleagues and to provide comments on ‘how Initial Teacher Education PGDE programmes could better prepare students to face the challenges of EAL learning and teaching.’ Only a limited number of responses was received to these questions, with one teacher educator highlighting the need for colleagues ‘to pay more attention to comprehensible input – the use of rephrasing in many different ways.’ Another respondent drew attention to the value of using ‘professional networks to access appropriate resources for EAL.’ A third respondent’s observation can be read as suggesting the importance of viewing matters concerning EAL learning and teaching within the frame of cultural diversity: ‘My own practice addresses multi-cultural issues and citizenship. It is largely interdisciplinary in nature and embraces cultural diversity.’ On this theme of cultural diversity and connections across cultures, another teacher educator noted the need for initial teacher education programmes to make ‘better connections with world cultures.’

**Who is responsible for meeting the needs of EAL learners?**

A set of questions asked the teacher educators to rate the degree of responsibility that different educators have for meeting the needs of EAL learners. The responses to this set of questions are set out in Table 4.2.
Table 4.2: perceptions of the extent to which the following educators are responsible for meeting the needs of EAL learners: ITE providers; EAL specialist services; English teachers; class teachers of subjects other than English; classroom assistants; school management.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response options</th>
<th>ITE providers</th>
<th>EAL specialist services</th>
<th>English teachers</th>
<th>Class teachers of subjects other than English</th>
<th>Classroom assistants</th>
<th>School management</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>very large responsibility</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>large responsibility</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>some responsibility</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>little responsibility</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>no responsibility</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is not surprising that both EAL specialist services and school management were seen as having key responsibility for meeting the needs of EAL learners. While English teachers were rated as having a somewhat greater responsibility for meeting the needs of EAL learners than other teachers, the difference was not large. It is interesting to note that classroom assistants were rated less highly in terms of responsibility for meeting the needs of EAL students than any other group of educators. In the absence of any more detailed exploration of this matter it is not however possible to infer why this was the case. It can be observed, however, that, in practice, classroom assistants often do play a key role in supporting EAL learners.
A marked division can be seen within the teacher educators themselves between those who saw ITE providers as having a very large or large responsibility for meeting the needs of EAL learners (9), and those who saw ITE providers as having only some responsibility (10). This pattern of response can be read as being in some tension with the set of findings that has just been reported concerning key matters in relation to EAL learning and teaching which suggested the need for a comprehensive programme of initial teacher education concerning EAL. It is, however, rather more in line with the responses to the question ‘from your own perspective, given the many areas to be covered in the PGDE (Secondary) Programme do you feel that sufficient attention is given to EAL?’

We now turn to examine how the student teachers in our samples viewed their roles in supporting EAL learners and their state of preparedness to give this support. In presenting the findings from the student teacher surveys we will bring out where appropriate points of comparison and contrast with the views of the teacher educators.
Chapter 5: Findings from the student surveys

Response rates to the surveys and background information on the respondents

The Methodology chapter set out the incentives that were offered to students to complete the two surveys that we conducted and the communications that sought to encourage responses. Table 5.1 presents the response rates to the two surveys.

Table 5.1: number of responses to the two surveys by university; and percentage of responses by institution.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Survey One</th>
<th>Survey Two</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>University A responses, % of University A cohort</td>
<td>116 69%</td>
<td>56 33.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University B responses, % of University B cohort</td>
<td>58 34.5%</td>
<td>79 47.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total responses, % of all potential respondents</td>
<td>174 51.8%</td>
<td>135 40.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While the overall response rates to the two surveys was fairly satisfactory, it will be seen from Table 5.1 that there was a distinct unevenness in response between the two universities. Two thirds of the responses to the first survey came from University A, whereas in the second survey this pattern was reversed with 58.5% of the responses coming from University B. In University A, 52 of the 56 respondents to the second survey (92.9%) had completed the first survey. In contrast in University B only 36 of the 79 respondents (45.6%) had completed the first survey. This differential pattern of response across the two universities suggests the need for caution in making cross-university comparisons between the two surveys.
It was also not possible to make as fine-grained a comparison between the two surveys as we had planned. It will be recalled that respondents to the first survey were asked to create a unique identifier, (memorable to themselves), that would then allow us to match up precisely responses to the first and second surveys. However, a more considerable number of respondents to the second survey than had been anticipated had forgotten their unique identifier. In University A, in the second survey only 32 of the 52 (61.5%) individuals who had completed the first survey had remembered their unique identifier. The corresponding figures for University B were 23 out of 36 (63.9%) respondents to the second survey remembering their identifier. Accordingly, given the modest numbers of respondents who could be tracked across both surveys, it was seen as inappropriate to draw certain of the statistical comparisons that we had envisaged in designing the project.

**Background of the respondents**

To provide a succinct overview of the background of the respondents to both surveys, a detailed description is given of responses to the background questions in the first survey. Salient points of comparison and contrast with ‘new’ responses to the second survey are then noted. Given that almost all respondents in University A who filled in the second survey had engaged with the first, (52 out of 56), this in effect entails giving a picture of how new respondents in University B differed from respondents to both surveys.

**Gender**

Looking first at gender, 118 (67.8%) of respondents to the first survey were female and 56 (32.2%) male. There were differences between the two sites in the gender distribution of responses with 37.1% of the respondents in University A being male, compared to 22.4% in University B. However, in the second survey 32.6% of new respondents in University B were male.
**Age distribution**

The age distribution of all respondents to the first survey was:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Range</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>under 24</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>(37.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24-29</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>(45.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>(12.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-49</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>(2.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 or over</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>(1.7%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There was a somewhat higher proportion of students in University A under 24 (40.5%) than in University B (32.8%).

**Subject areas**

Table 5.2 sets out the particular subject areas in which respondents to the first survey were enrolled. There were 189 responses to this question, indicating that only a small proportion of respondents were specialising in more than one subject. Those respondents who are recorded under ‘Other’ only provided a very generic descriptor that could not be associated with a particular subject or subjects, e.g. ‘Education’, ‘PGDE Secondary’. Individuals in University B who only completed the second survey gave 48 responses to this question. Among this group there was a lower representation from English (10.4% of the total responses), and collectively a rather stronger representation of the sciences: Biology (8.3%), Physics (8.3%), Chemistry (6.3%), Computing Studies (6.3%).
Table 5.2: numbers of respondents enrolled in particular subject areas and percentages of column total.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject Areas</th>
<th>Nos. enrolled, percentages of column total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Art</td>
<td>10 (5.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biology</td>
<td>4 (2.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Studies</td>
<td>5 (2.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemistry</td>
<td>8 (4.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computing</td>
<td>1 (0.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drama</td>
<td>8 (4.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design Technology</td>
<td>11 (5.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>31 (16.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geography</td>
<td>9 (4.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>11 (5.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>17 (9.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modern languages</td>
<td>29 (15.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modern Studies</td>
<td>4 (2.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music</td>
<td>6 (3.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physics</td>
<td>6 (3.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Education</td>
<td>14 (7.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious Education</td>
<td>7 (3.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>8 (4.2%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Location of primary and secondary education
Participants in the survey were asked to indicate the location of their primary and secondary education. They were asked to tick all applicable locations from the following list: Africa; Asia; Australasia; Central America; England, Wales, or Northern Ireland; EU other than the UK; Europe outside the EU; Middle East; North America; Scotland; South America; Other. There was a total of 180 responses to this item in the first survey. Respondents predominantly indicated that they had received their primary and secondary education in Scotland: 133 (73.9% of the total responses to this question). Almost equal proportions had received their primary and secondary education in England, Wales, or Northern Ireland, 22, (12.2%) or in the EU other than the UK, 20 (11.1%). Three respondents chose North America as a location, one Asia, and one Europe outside the UK. There was a larger proportion of the total respondents in University B to the first survey who had had their primary and secondary education in the EU other than the UK, (21.7%), as opposed to University A (5.8%). This pattern was not evident, however, among the new respondents in University B to the second survey. They gave 48 responses to this question. 38 (79.2%) indicated that their primary and secondary schooling had taken place in Scotland; four (8.3%) in England, Wales or Northern Ireland; four (8.3%) in the EU other than the UK; one in Africa; one in Asia.

Primary language or languages
All of the respondents to the first survey answered the question that asked them to indicate their ‘primary/native language or languages.’ In line with the responses to the question on the location of their primary and secondary education, a very large majority indicated that English was their first language: 156 (89.7%). Eight participants noted French as their first language and two identified French and English as their primary languages. Single individuals spoke the following European languages: Danish; Greek; Italian; Spanish; and Spanish and German. There was only one individual who was a native speaker of a Slavic language, Russian. There were only two speakers of Asian languages: one Mandarin and one English and Cantonese.
Other languages
Respondents were also asked to ‘indicate any other languages that you speak’.
There were 99 responses to this question. However, 38 of these responses took the
form of: ‘none’; ‘no’; ‘N/A’; ‘–’. Accordingly, there were only 61 ‘positive’
responses to this item.

Two respondents identified English as the other language that they spoke, and for
others English appeared in association with other languages: English, Spanish, 3;
English, Spanish, German, 1; English, French, German, 1; English, French, 1; English,
Danish, 1; English, German, 1; English, Spanish, Italian, German, 1; English, Polish,
German and French, 1. A few other respondents indicated that they possessed
three or more languages: Spanish, Catalan, French, Italian, 1; French, German and
Spanish, 1; French, Italian and very basic Spanish and German, 1.

Looking at pairs of languages, 5 respondents identified themselves as having
French and Spanish; 4 French and German; 1 Spanish and Italian; 1 French and
Gaelic; 1 French and Russian; and 1 Mandarin and Cantonese.

Among respondents identifying only a single language, French was the most
common, followed by German, 4 and Spanish, 2. Other ‘single’ languages
mentioned included: Norwegian, 1; Irish, 1; Gaelic, 1.

Summarising the responses to this question, perhaps the most striking finding is
that there were only 61 respondents, 35.1% of the respondents to the first survey,
who noted that they spoke a language or languages in addition to their first
language. A minority of respondents, however, did indicate that they could speak a
number of languages. Given the location of the respondents’ primary and
secondary education, it is not surprising that the languages spoken were largely
those of western European countries. Slavic and Asian languages were hardly
represented and Middle Eastern and African languages not at all.
Respondents who were themselves EAL/ESL learners

A subsequent question set out to establish if respondents had themselves been in the position of learning EAL, asking ‘If English is not your first language, have you yourself ever been an EAL/ESL learner in the UK or another English-speaking country?’ In the first survey eight respondents identified themselves as having been EAL/ESL learners, and in the second survey one further respondent.

These respondents were invited to provide brief observations on their experience as an EAL/ESL learner. One respondent reported positive experiences of being an EAL learner in the following terms:

‘Communicative approach. Lots of speaking, quick-paced lessons, many activities during one lesson, approachable and friendly teachers, focus on creativity and self, not a lot of grammar.’

Another student described having had a communicative-based approach to language learning and drew a contrast between this communicative-based approach and language learning in Scottish schools: ‘[preceding learning was] communicative based, which is totally different from how modern languages are taught in schools here.’

A distinctly negative account of being a secondary school EAL learner was given by a third respondent:

‘I had a support teacher who basically just sat with me in the classroom and used a dictionary to communicate with me. I had less classes in my first year in Scotland (S3) than other pupils and had to sit in the support base some periods doing nothing, which was really boring.’
The personal qualities required of an EAL learner to meet the challenges of learning a new language that is also the medium of instruction were highlighted in the following observation:

‘One has to be very determined and focused in order to perform well at school, as one not only needs to study for the subjects but study a new language at the same time. It is very challenging.’

Formal qualifications for teaching English as a foreign language

Turning to look at prior qualifications in the area of teaching English as a foreign language, 17 (9.8%) respondents to the first survey gave a positive response to the question: ‘Do you have any formal qualification for teaching English as a foreign language, e.g. CELTA, DELTA?’ A further three of the new respondents to the second survey in University B identified themselves as having formal qualifications in this area. This result can be interpreted as suggesting that these individuals would have valuable knowledge and experience related to EAL that they could share with their peers and indeed university tutors.

Studying an EAL option course

It has already been noted that University A offered a specialist option in EAL, ‘Curriculum Plus 2 – EAL’. 12 respondents from that university noted that they were studying that course.

Informal or more formal experience of teaching students learning EAL

To gain a sense of these students’ preceding experience in the area of EAL, they were asked: ‘Have you have had any informal, or more formal, experience of teaching [in English] learners for whom English is not their first language?’ 74 (43%) of the (172) respondents in the first survey indicated that they did have such
experience. Here, the percentage of positive responses was almost identical for the two universities. 22 (51.2%) of the new respondents to the second survey in University B indicated that they had had such experience.

Levels of confidence in ability to support EAL learners

Respondents were asked in the first survey: ‘At this point in your ITE programme, how confident do you feel in your ability to support EAL learners?’ Only a small minority indicated that they had clear confidence in their capacities in this area, with 5 (2.9%) answering in the category very confident and 15 (8.6%) in the category confident. Around a third indicated that they had some confidence 56 (32.2%), while just over half were distinctly lacking in confidence: 71 (40.8%) little confidence and 27 (15.5%) not at all confident. Figure 5.1 reveals that there was a broadly similar pattern of response to this question across the two universities.
How can English best be acquired?

A set of five questions in the first survey explored respondents’ beliefs concerning how English is best acquired. Tables 5.3, 5.4 and 5.5 set out the pattern of responses to these questions. Table 5.3 shows that there was very strong and widespread agreement with the belief that is very prevalent within schools and much of the EAL literature that ‘English is best acquired by being immersed in an English speaking environment.’ There was a much less certain pattern of response to the statement that “English is best acquired by the explicit teaching of the vocabulary and structure of the language’, with just over half of the respondents, (54%) answering in the categories ‘strongly agree’ and ‘agree’ and around a third (34.5%) indicating that they were ‘unsure’.
A somewhat similar pattern of response can be seen to the question ‘EAL learners acquire language best through participating in mainstream classes’, with 52.9% replying in the categories ‘strongly agree’ and ‘agree’, and around two fifths (41.4%) indicating that they were ‘unsure’. Around half of the respondents (51.7%) were also ‘unsure’ if ‘EAL learners acquire language best through out-of-class provision’. There was, however, a lower level of agreement with this question, with (34.5%) answering in the categories ‘strongly agree’ and ‘agree’.

There was a rather more positive pattern of response to the final item in this set on beliefs concerning the acquisition of English: ‘Learners need to be taught explicit strategies for transferring meaning from their first language to their second language.’ 62.7% of respondents answered in the categories ‘strongly agree’ and ‘agree’. However, a third (32.8%) indicated that they were ‘unsure’ about this statement.
Table 5.3: responses to the questions: ‘English is best acquired by being immersed in an English speaking environment’ and ‘English is best acquired by the explicit teaching of the vocabulary and structure of the language’.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response categories</th>
<th>English is best acquired by being immersed in an English-speaking environment.</th>
<th>English is best acquired by the explicit teaching of the vocabulary and structure of the language.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>strongly agree</td>
<td>70  40.2%</td>
<td>15  8.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>agree</td>
<td>82  47.1%</td>
<td>79  45.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unsure</td>
<td>20  11.5%</td>
<td>60  34.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>disagree</td>
<td>2   1.2%</td>
<td>18  10.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>strongly disagree</td>
<td>0   0%</td>
<td>2   1.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5.4: responses to the questions: ‘EAL learners acquire language best through participating in mainstream classes’ and ‘EAL learners acquire language best through out-of-class provision.’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response categories</th>
<th>EAL learners acquire language best through participating in mainstream classes.</th>
<th>EAL learners acquire language best through out-of-class provision.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>strongly agree</td>
<td>20 11.5%</td>
<td>13 7.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>agree</td>
<td>72 41.4%</td>
<td>47 27.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unsure</td>
<td>72 41.4%</td>
<td>90 51.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>disagree</td>
<td>9 5.2%</td>
<td>20 11.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>strongly disagree</td>
<td>1 0.6%</td>
<td>4 2.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.5: responses to the question: ‘Learners need to be taught explicit strategies for transferring meaning from their first language to their second language.’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response categories</th>
<th>Learners need to be taught explicit strategies for transferring meaning from their first language to their second language.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>strongly agree</td>
<td>37 21.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>agree</td>
<td>72 41.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unsure</td>
<td>57 32.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>disagree</td>
<td>8 4.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>strongly disagree</td>
<td>0 0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Who is responsible for meeting the needs of EAL learners?

Turning to the next set of questions in the survey, students were asked to rate the degree of responsibility they believe that different educators have for meeting the needs of EAL learners. It will be seen from Table 5.6 that a majority of respondents saw all of the categories of educators listed in the table as having a ‘very large’ or ‘large’ responsibility for meeting the needs of EAL learners. 63.8% of respondents felt that ITE providers had a ‘very large’ or ‘responsibility’ for meeting the needs of EAL learners and 33.9% thought that ITE providers had ‘some responsibility’ for meeting their needs. This is a rather different pattern of response from the one in the survey of teacher educators themselves. 45% (9) of the teacher educators surveyed felt that ITE providers had a ‘very large’ or ‘large’ responsibility and 50% (10) that they had ‘some responsibility’.

69.5% of respondents felt that English teachers had ‘very large or ‘responsibilities’ in relation to EAL learners, with the corresponding figure for class teachers of subjects other than English being 62.6%. This fairly small difference, taken with the overall very positive pattern of response to the whole set of these items, can be read as suggesting that the message that ‘EAL learners are the responsibility of all’ had been taken on board by a majority of these respondents.

It is interesting to note that in contrast to the teacher educators whom we surveyed, the student respondents appeared to acknowledge the role that classroom assistants may play in supporting EAL learners. 57.5% of student respondents saw classroom assistants as having ‘very large’ or ‘large’ responsibilities towards EAL learners, and 36.8% some responsibility.
Table 5.6: students’ perceptions of the extent to which the following educators are responsible for meeting the needs of EAL learners: ITE providers, EAL specialist services, English teachers, class teachers of subjects other than English, classroom assistants, school management.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response options</th>
<th>ITE providers</th>
<th>EAL specialist services</th>
<th>English teachers</th>
<th>Class Teachers of subjects other than English</th>
<th>Classroom assistants</th>
<th>School Management</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>very large responsibility</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>19.5%</td>
<td>65.5%</td>
<td>19.5%</td>
<td>17.2%</td>
<td>14.4%</td>
<td>35.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>large responsibility</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>44.3%</td>
<td>29.3%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>45.4%</td>
<td>43.1%</td>
<td>41.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>some responsibility</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>33.9%</td>
<td>5.2%</td>
<td>28.2%</td>
<td>32.8%</td>
<td>36.8%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>little responsibility</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.3%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
<td>5.2%</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>no responsibility</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Useful areas of EAL-related input

To gain a clear sense of what were key concerns related to EAL and to guide the planning of the content and activities of the two half-day sessions on EAL and learning, teaching and assessment, respondents were also asked a set of questions about how useful they would find EAL-related input on specific aspects of learning, teaching and assessment. Tables 5.7: a, b, and c show that all of the areas identified in this set of questions attracted high ratings of usefulness. This overall pattern of response can be viewed as indicating recognition by these students that they needed to develop their understanding and skills related to EAL across a broad front; and certainly appears to make an argument for a comprehensive programme of education concerning EAL. (It will be recalled that the teacher
educators whom we surveyed also appeared to perceive the need for a wide-ranging programme of CPD concerning EAL for themselves.)

It will be seen from Table 5.7a: that the respondents did not simply focus on the practical matter of ‘devising resources/materials’ (86.2%, very useful/useful) but also recognised the distinct value of ‘general input on learning/teaching an additional language’ (86.8%, very useful/useful), and ‘recognising language that can cause difficulties’ (83.9%, very useful/useful). Given the key role that effective differentiation can play in supporting EAL learners’ linguistic and academic progress, it is heartening to see that this was the aspect of teaching and learning that was the most highly rated (62.6%, very useful; 28.2% useful).

Table 5.7b reveals that large value was attached to learning how to involve ‘EAL learners in group work’ and ‘in whole class work.’ Focusing in on language, respondents perceived that it would be distinctly helpful to have input on ‘language for conceptual understanding of your subject(s)’ and on ‘developing EAL learners’ vocabulary’. Table 5.7c reports a very high rating of the wish to learn how to involve ‘EAL learners socially in the life of the classroom and school’ and a concern also to draw ‘appropriately on EAL learners’ own linguistic and cultural background’. There was also a very high rating of the usefulness of finding out how to provide ‘effective feedback’ and a stronger wish to learn how to create ‘appropriate assessments’ than was expressed by the teacher educators.

Tables 5.7a, 5.7b and 5.7c: Responses to the set of questions that asked: ‘Focusing on your current studies in teacher education, please indicate the degree to which it would be useful for your future career to have EAL-related input on the following aspects of learning, teaching and assessment.’
Table 5.7a.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response options.</th>
<th>General input on learning/teaching an additional language</th>
<th>Recognising language that can cause challenges</th>
<th>Devising resources/materials</th>
<th>Differentiation of content/activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>very useful</td>
<td>81 46.6%</td>
<td>76 43.7%</td>
<td>88 50.6%</td>
<td>109 62.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>useful</td>
<td>70 40.2%</td>
<td>70 40.2%</td>
<td>63 36.2%</td>
<td>49 28.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>some use</td>
<td>18 10.3%</td>
<td>24 13.8%</td>
<td>19 10.9%</td>
<td>7 4.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>little use</td>
<td>5 2.9%</td>
<td>4 2.3%</td>
<td>4 2.3%</td>
<td>3 1.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>not required</td>
<td>0 0%</td>
<td>0 0%</td>
<td>0 0%</td>
<td>0 0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.7b.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response options.</th>
<th>Involving EAL learners in group work</th>
<th>Involving EAL learners in whole class work</th>
<th>Language for conceptual understanding of your subject(s)</th>
<th>Developing EAL learners’ vocabulary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>very useful</td>
<td>95 54.6%</td>
<td>96 55.2%</td>
<td>71 40.8%</td>
<td>74 42.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>useful</td>
<td>62 35.6%</td>
<td>57 32.8%</td>
<td>68 39.1%</td>
<td>71 40.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>some use</td>
<td>15 8.6%</td>
<td>19 10.9%</td>
<td>33 19.0%</td>
<td>22 12.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>little use</td>
<td>2 1.2%</td>
<td>2 1.2%</td>
<td>1 0.6%</td>
<td>6 3.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>not required</td>
<td>0 0%</td>
<td>0 0%</td>
<td>1 0.6%</td>
<td>1 0.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5.7c.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response options.</th>
<th>Drawing appropriately on EAL learners’ own linguistic and cultural background</th>
<th>Creating appropriate assessments</th>
<th>Providing effective feedback</th>
<th>Involving EAL learners socially in the life of the classroom and school</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>very useful</td>
<td>67 38.5%</td>
<td>71 40.8%</td>
<td>77 44.3%</td>
<td>99 56.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>useful</td>
<td>68 39.1%</td>
<td>73 42.0%</td>
<td>74 42.5%</td>
<td>56 32.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>some use</td>
<td>31 17.8%</td>
<td>26 14.9%</td>
<td>20 11.5%</td>
<td>18 10.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>little use</td>
<td>7 4.0%</td>
<td>3 1.7%</td>
<td>2 1.2%</td>
<td>0 0.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>not required</td>
<td>1 0.6%</td>
<td>1 0.6%</td>
<td>1 0.6%</td>
<td>1 0.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Suggestions concerning areas of EAL-related input**

In addition to responding to the set of questions presented in Tables 5.7a, 5.7b and 5.7c, respondents were invited to specify any other area(s) of input concerning EAL that they would identify as useful. Excluding some entries that simply noted ‘n/a’, there were ten responses to this invitation. Rather than suggesting an area of input, one of these responses took this opportunity for comment to challenge the whole enterprise of acting to integrate EAL learners within secondary school classrooms:

‘I feel that teaching is hard enough as it is, the burden should NOT be on the teacher and EAL learners would be better suited being placed together until they have the rudimentary essentials of language so that other pupils do not miss out on their learning ability.’

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This remark was, however, very much an outlier within this set of comments. By contrast, the following response did not suggest any additional area of input but appeared to endorse the need to be informed about all of the aspects flagged up in the preceding set of questions: ‘All very useful as need to get it right for every child and EAL as additional language is an issue.’

One of the respondents raised the matter of how one might ‘open English speaking classmates to the language differences and to EAL learners’ language and culture for a better integration’, while another noted that ‘social integration is a big thing’. On this theme of social and academic integration, one student raised the question of how best to approach the question of the grouping together of EAL pupils who share a language:

‘The use of groups of same language students in group work or for extra-curricular activities/socialising – benefits and disadvantages.’

Another response drew attention to the matter of ‘working with the parents of the pupil who is considered EAL’.

Other responses focused in more closely on vocabulary (e.g. ‘a list of vocabulary in any language relating to the EAL pupil’) and on how best to communicate with EAL learners. The following quotation, for example, revealed a concern with how teachers can appropriately modify their language to ease EAL learners’ understanding:

‘Some general information or workshop on how to simplify our language, i.e. use of basic tenses, in order to learn what is and what isn’t easily understood by EAL learners. Also the dangers of misunderstandings etc.’

Another respondent highlighted the usefulness of at least some rudimentary knowledge of an EAL student’s language:
‘Some basic skills in the student’s native language would be useful for staff, both in the case of teaching and supporting able students and those who may have support needs other than learning English. ... Understanding colloquial terms would also be very useful ...’

In addition to flagging up these areas of knowledge about an EAL learner’s language that would be useful for teachers, this respondent also noted the value of ‘translator tools on I-pads and computers would also be a help towards encouraging English pronunciation from EAL learners during class’.

**Perceived challenges for EAL learners**

The researchers thought it important to gain at least a general sense of how these trainee teachers were viewing the challenges that EAL learners in their classes might face. Accordingly, a question invited them to ‘state briefly what, if any, challenges you perceive that EAL learners may face, in particular in the subjects(s) that you will be teaching?’ This invitation prompted a large body of observations, with 142 respondents commenting on a quite wide range of challenges. Following the steer given in the question, the bulk of responses focused in on the challenges that EAL learners would experience when learning a particular subject. There was however also a considerable number of observations (39) that centred on the general challenges that EAL learners would face in a new *linguistic* environment. Other responses raised concerns about: the social exclusion that such learners could face; assessment; and the lack of background knowledge about British politics and society.

**Challenges of understanding and communicating within English-medium classes**

Looking first then at respondents’ depictions of the challenges EAL students could face in an English-medium classroom, quite a number of responses highlighted the

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3 This figure excludes three responses that simply listed ‘none’ or ‘N/A’.
difficulties EAL learners could face in understanding a teacher’s instructions and the nature of the task that they were being asked to achieve. Comments on this theme included:

‘Gaining a full understanding of any task, and receiving instructions and feedback from a teacher.’

‘They will find it hard to follow simple instructions if they cannot understand English reading or writing. Visual aids cannot always be useful.’

‘Comprehending and responding to instructions. Following lesson/unit objectives and the learning intentions.’

‘Not understanding instructions without step by step explanations using a dictionary or someone who speaks their native language.’

‘Misinterpreting explanations.’

Other comments brought out more the challenges not only of understanding what was said and written but also of communicating and participating through the medium of English:

‘Understanding, being able to express themselves appropriately.’

‘To be able to read scripts, communicate their ideas across to teachers and peers.’

‘Some learners will have very little understanding of English therefore any participation in class is extremely difficult.’

‘Cannot ask questions or work as part of a group. Won’t be able to answer questions.’

‘Participating with peers.’

The following observation also drew attention to the potential emotional impact of having a less developed linguistic repertoire:
‘It must be intensely stressful sitting in a room where most people have been speaking the language for years and understand nuances etc.’

One respondent was alert to the cognitive processes, and implicitly at least the cognitive load, of mental translation between English and a first language:

‘Processing sets of instructions. Translating their “own language” thoughts into English language in writing.’

Other respondents pointed up the difficulties posed by: ‘subject specific language’; ‘the terminology in the subject area’; and subject specific terminology/double meanings’. On this topic, one individual observed that: ‘The vocabulary can be quite difficult for English speakers, so may be more so for EAL learners.’ Part of the challenge could reside in the fact that definitions of terms in an academic subject could differ from their meaning in everyday usage:

‘Language is already complicated and pupils will hear terms that are either completely novel, or sound similar to words they already know but mean completely different things.’

The following quotation reveals an awareness of the fact that not only could subject-specific vocabulary be a challenge in itself, but it also needed to be employed within demanding cognitive processes:

‘Specialist vocabulary and specific skills such as evaluating and making judgements must be very difficult when you are unclear as to what you are reading.’

One student teacher used this invitation to comment on perceived challenges for EAL learners to flag up the way in which such a learner could be disadvantaged if it
was assumed that fluency in spoken English meant that they did not require support:

‘EAL learners who are studying in mainstream classes are not recognized by different subject teachers, therefore their needs are not met to achieve the best academic result, if the teachers are considering they are not EAL learners because their spoken English is very good.’

**The challenges of ‘fitting in’**

Quite a number of respondents chose to focus their comments on the challenges that EAL learners could face in ‘fitting in’ and in participating in discussion and the life of the classroom. Representative comments here included:

‘Not fitting in.’

‘Being isolated from the rest of their class – especially if they join the class late.’

‘[The challenge of] feeling accepted/understood.’

‘Feeling left out, particularly in group or whole class work.’

‘Participating in extra-curricular and social activities.’

‘Fitting into the classroom environment, fully understanding the topics that we are discussing, being able to keep up with the rest of the class.’

The following quotation displays a recognition of how alienating it could be for an EAL student to be unable to read and participate in a new English speaking environment:

‘A sense of complete misunderstanding of all that’s going on around them. A sense of pressure.’
Group work was seen by some of the respondents as presenting particularly acute challenges:

‘Group work seems particularly difficult because they are often unsure in voicing their thoughts because of the intimate setting.’

‘Any group work, where they are required to work with English speaking children.’

‘Cooperating with peers in pair, group work, etc.’

‘Participating fully in collaborative learning.’

On this theme, one respondent observed that EAL learners might not be included in groups because their peers had not been given strategies that would draw them into participation:

‘When working in groups, other children find it hard to include EAL learners as they are not equipped to help.’

It seems appropriate to conclude this section by quoting a respondent who, rather than surfacing challenges for EAL students in participation and social integration, in effect described the kind of relationship that ideally one would wish to see in place:

‘Relating to classmates, and being able to build a relationship with the class teacher so that there is comfort amongst all, for difficulties to be expressed, discussed and dealt with.’

Challenges surrounding assessment
A small number of respondents foregrounded matters concerning assessment. For example, one student reflected on how limitations in English could inhibit a productive formative assessment dialogue:
'I have had EAL students in my classes. They have managed the practical lessons no problem, however I have been less sure of their understanding of critical work and work on the board. [It has been hard to find] ways of checking their understanding without asking them in front of the class, but as their language is restricted it is difficult for them to repeat back to you their understanding.’

Other respondents pointed up the problems that EAL students might experience in understanding the wording of questions, and thereby fail to interpret correctly what the questions required them to do:

‘Most notably during exams with worded questions, I find that students may misinterpret the meaning of the questions, miss vital information or not understand it all together.’

‘With worded questions, understanding what is being asked of them.’

‘While sitting assessments may be unsure of what is being asked of them.’

This difficulty in interpreting questions appropriately could lead to EAL students being unable to display knowledge that they did in fact possess: ‘EAL learners may have knowledge and understanding to be able to answer a question, but may not know what the question is asking them to do.’ It was also recognised by one respondent that asking an EAL student to undertake a ‘standard’ assessment was not only unfair but could also impact on the student’s learning: ‘Would be unfair to give them the same assessment as everyone else. Could have an effect on their own learning and those who they were working with.’

The challenges of acquiring culture-specific knowledge and practices
A few respondents drew attention to how EAL students faced the task not only of learning English but also of acquiring, in the words on one student, ‘culture-specific
content’. This could include understanding the cultural practices and expectations embedded in UK classrooms: ‘Non-understanding what the teacher’s expectations are, problems of culture and integration.’

It was also noted that EAL students might lack the ‘local’ cultural capital that was required to engage with some school subjects, such as Modern Studies:

‘Modern studies is very much a study of the political, social, economic and cultural world. Some concepts and themes are particularly difficult to understand for students who have English as their 1st language never mind EAL learners. For example, they may not understand the political processes in the UK or US as it could be very different from their country. There may also be a clash in cultures and backgrounds in the classrooms.’

Challenges in mathematics
Pursuing the theme of subject-specific challenges introduced in the immediately preceding quotation, a number of respondents noted how the language involved in mathematics and following explanations of mathematical concepts and procedures could prove challenging to EAL learners:

‘Understanding the language of maths particularly in problem solving questions.’

‘The explanations of mathematics will cause challenges.’

‘I will be teaching maths so the language is general, universal, however, explaining more advanced concepts may be difficult.’

One respondent perceived that mathematics might represent a particular challenge for EAL students, given that the acquisition of subject-specific language was interwoven with the mastery of demanding cognitive processes:

‘I will be teaching maths, which is a universal language. However, the likelihood is that the EAL students at high school will be at a similar level in their mathematical ability to non EAL children.'
Therefore, in order to teach maths, the students need to understand a lot of complicated thought processes and even more new words so in my opinion, it makes learning and understanding maths incredibly difficult.

**Challenges in science subjects**

A considerable number of the comments made by students who were going to be teaching science subjects echoed the comments made by the mathematics teachers concerning the challenges that EAL students face in mastering subject-specific language. For example, one respondent wrote that:

‘In Science, the subject-specific language may be difficult to teach in parallel with every day language. Writing and achieving success criteria in literacies will be a challenge.’

The form of assessments could also pose difficulties: ‘There are a lot of explanation type questions in physics now which will provide extra challenges for EAL learners.’ Another respondent noted how the cognitive demands of mastering scientific concepts were magnified by the need to engage in mental translation: ‘Interpreting physics principles while simultaneously translating them into their preferred language.’

The following observation reveals an understanding of the quite wide range of literacy demands and practices that an EAL student might face in a science class: ‘Discussion during practical and group work, understanding safety instructions (spoken or written), writing reports, reading information, listening to teachers, other students and media.’ The concern about ‘understanding safety instructions’ flagged up in this quotation occurred in a number of the observations made by science teachers, for example:

‘Safety – chemistry can be dangerous if instructions not understood.’
‘Following safety rules during experimental work if they do not understand terminology.’

‘Understanding verbal instructions for practical work, especially where health and safety is a concern.’

**Challenges in the English classroom**

Teachers of English identified a number of quite distinctive challenges that EAL learners could meet within their subject. One respondent pointed out how the fine-grained attention to reading and creating texts that was expected in English classrooms required the foundation of a wide linguistic repertoire:

‘English requires a very wide descriptive vocabulary for distinct nuances in expression – I feel this would be a difficult challenge. I also feel that they would be challenged in writing extended pieces of writing.’

A meta-language with which to analyse texts also had to be acquired:

‘I will be teaching English so the use of meta-language and extended reading/writing tasks may pose difficulties.’

‘They have to learn a quite complex metalanguage, which is built upon a fairly proficient knowledge of the primary language, English. Huge challenges here.’

The types of texts that might be encountered in the English classroom could present particular linguistic challenges:

‘In English EAL learners may struggle to engage with seminal texts such as Shakespeare as the language is so vastly different from what they will be trying to develop. The same goes for texts written in Scots.’

... ‘The current agenda of studying Scots and Scottish texts may present greater difficulties for EAL learners in this area.’
Mastering the finer points of English grammar was also seen as a possible area of difficulty for EAL learners:

‘As a trainee English teacher primarily, if you are trying to teach your pupils about grammar and they, as native English speakers, are not getting it, this is going to be ten times more difficult for a pupil who does not even have the basics. Depending on the learner, so much differentiation would have to be used.’

The close, analytical reading of texts that involves, in the words of one student, attention to ‘figurative speech, idiom, interpreting deeper meaning in texts’, was seen by a number of respondents as the key challenge faced by EAL learners in the English classroom. Observations on this theme included:

‘In English, we are asking pupils to constantly analyse effectiveness in language, reasons for word choice and developing an ability to critically read any text. This level of engagement with a language requires a natural ability to speak and communicate easily in that language in the first instance. Not having absolute fluency would therefore create barriers for EAL learners. They need to build the foundations before they can start to appreciate the structure of the language.’

‘In the case of English, the vocabulary that students are required to know is one of the challenges that EAL students face. Another problem is the way in which English is taught as it is mainly literature based. The language part of the subject is difficult for EAL students as well as they are required to analyse language used and the techniques employed in a text such as irony, persuasive language, connotations. All these close reading tasks, which are problematic for English native speakers, have an additional difficulty for EAL students as they are dealing with a language which is not their own and, therefore, understanding idiomatic expressions and figurative language is quite challenging as languages are different despite having similarities.’
**Challenges in modern languages classrooms**

There was a considerable quantity of observations on how EAL students might find learning another language in school, in addition to English. A few of these respondents did not see this as a particularly problematic matter:

‘I teach Modern Foreign Languages. It can be interesting to make connections between L1 and target language.’

‘For Modern Languages, EAL students face the same challenges as any other students in the class as they are acquiring another language different to their own. I consider, however, that EAL students shouldn’t be removed from Modern Languages as what they learn in this class is beneficial for them and it helps them to acquire English easily as the strategies developed to learn a new language can be transferred from one language to another.’

‘Many pupils acquiring French as L3 or 4 in my current experience appear to have no problem, even if their English is not fluent, so there seems to be [a] tipping point after which teenagers can grasp the essentials and then move on with L3 or 4; identifying where that point is appears to be the nub.’

‘I teach German, which can easily be taught to EAL learners as well in my opinion, as long as one has the provided materials such as the required dictionaries and maybe a guide to difficulties x speakers have learning English in order to be able to keep an eye for these areas and also provide useful support.’

The bulk of commentary on EAL learners’ experiences in modern language classrooms, however, centred on difficulties that they might encounter. One area of potential difficulty was a lack of motivation, as engaging with a modern language might seem to be much less relevant than the immediate, clearly useful task of mastering English:

‘Learning a Modern Language when you are a EAL learner may not seem relevant to you and may be seen as twice as much work as for
the other pupils, as you already have to learn English, which is the language you will need every day.’

‘... there can be a lack of motivation in learning a new language if the learner finds himself struggling in different areas because of his low proficiency in English – other areas that can appear to be more useful for his future success and integration within the country.’

EAL learners in the Modern Languages classroom may feel that they primarily need to focus on learning English as this is one of the languages used in the classroom. However, EAL learners are more likely to possess translation skills that they can use to be successful in Modern Languages.

Some respondents recognised the cognitive load and challenges that a learner might face in tackling a new language at the same time as developing their grasp of English. For example, one respondent talked of how: ‘It will be difficult for learners to take on another foreign language while still improving their English and perhaps confusing the two.’ An understanding of the cognitive demands of moving between different languages is also evident in the following quotation, which additionally introduces the concern that EAL learners may be disadvantaged when teachers assume that they will have facility in languages:

‘There are three languages they need to translate between which can be confusing. It is difficult to translate between two languages they do not know well. There is an assumption that EAL students will do well in modern languages and will be able to cope better than in other subjects which may be true but they still need support and this may be lacking due to this assumption.’

Implicit in some of the preceding observations is a recognition that the cognitive load and challenges faced by EAL students derived to a degree from the fact that they were learning another language, at least in part, through the medium of
English, as opposed to encountering a wholly target language approach. Quite a number of respondents drew explicit attention to this difficulty, commenting for example, on how:

‘In MFL, it can be difficult for EAL students as we always draw on comparisons between English and the target language. If the learner is at an early stage in his learning of English, then it seems to double the work for him as he’ll have to translate into English and then into his mother tongue.’

‘In Modern Languages, if target language grammar is explained in English to the rest of the class, the EAL student may miss out on the explanation. Also, if an EAL student is currently trying to cope with learning English, it may be an added challenge to take on another language (e.g. French, Spanish or German).’

‘As a modern languages student teacher I think to some extent that an EAL learner has the same opportunity as native English speakers as most/all students in the class will be unfamiliar with new vocabulary and structures. However, the EAL student may have additional difficulties as the teacher will offer a translation of the word in English, which, if not understood, may be debilitating to their learning.’

One respondent noted how the processing demands of translating between languages might be compounded when the EAL student’s first language differed in type from the modern language they were being asked to learn:

‘As I will teach yet another language (French), I think EAL learners whose primary language is not Romance would face a bigger challenge than their English-speaking or Romance-language-speaking comrades as they would not understand the explanations given in English and would have to fit yet another language in their brain.’
Challenges recognised in other secondary school subjects

While the majority of observations on subject-related difficulties came from the teachers of maths, science, English and modern languages, there was also a smaller number of responses from teachers of other subjects. These comments tended to echo the perceptions presented in preceding sections that EAL students could struggle with subject-specific terminology, literacies and interpretive practices. On this theme a teacher of Art and Design noted that:

‘In my experience in Art and Design, EAL pupils work well with practical activities as they can rely on visual over verbal understanding of information. It only really becomes an issue with critical work and when evaluating their own work. This is made more difficult by subject specific vocabulary which can have a different meaning in an Art class than it does in an English class.’

An understanding of the difficulties associated with the literacy practices of their subject is again evident in the following statement from a history teacher who also pointed up the problems that EAL students may face when they join a school some way in to an academic year:

‘If they are coming into a history classroom part way into an academic year ... they could struggle from having missed key content and having the additional pressure of a language barrier to catching up with this. They could also struggle with the literacy and writing aspect of history.’

‘PE students drew attention to the challenges that EAL learners might have in comprehending ‘game, skill and task specific language’.

One respondent also highlighted how difficulties surrounding oral communication might inhibit EAL students’ integration into a class:

‘Within PE there is a lot of oral communication required as part of sports and activities therefore it may be difficult for an EAL student
to integrate themselves in the class. Plus the class may not include that learner in their game if the learner has low confidence.’

Similarly, within drama the key potential difficulty was seen to lie with how difficulties in communication might inhibit participation in group work and social integration into the class:

‘Drama is a practical subject learnt through strong communication between pupils which EAL learners cannot easily understand. Group work is a large part of Drama lessons too which EAL learners may find intimidating to be a part of.’

‘As drama is largely group work, if EAL learners cannot understand the material I am teaching then this has a knock on effect in that they will find it difficult to take part in the group work. This could lead to them feeling isolated.’

One respondent indicated another potential source of difficulty that EAL learners might face in drama and a corresponding challenge for the teacher in assessing their work:

‘I think that EAL learners will face the challenge of not being able to recite a play or even devise their own play for the teacher to assess the quality of their work effectively. They may do so in their own language but a drama teacher may struggle to effectively find a way to translate their work to English for assessment purposes.’

Reviewing the whole set of observations provided by the respondents that has been presented in this and preceding sub-sections, there is a striking degree of correspondence between the matters which they identified as challenging for EAL students and the findings of a recent interview study which explored EAL students’ own perceptions of the challenges that they had encountered (Anderson et al., 2016). This interview study addressed the appropriately pointed comment made
by one of our respondents: ‘I don’t know – ask them they will know better.’

Considered as a whole, this set of comments can be viewed as presenting quite an encouraging picture in that it reveals an often quite sensitive appreciation of a wide range of difficulties that EAL students may face in their learning and life within school. We turn now to look at how the respondents viewed the challenges they might face in teaching EAL learners.

**Perceived challenges in teaching EAL learners**

There were 134 valid responses to the questions which asked the students to ‘indicate briefly what, if any, challenges you perceive you may face in your own practice in teaching individuals who have English as an additional language?’ Only one individual replied that there were ‘none’. The rest indicated that there were indeed challenges – challenges that fell into the following themes: being ‘clueless’; communication; fostering participation/inclusive social relationships; diagnosis of language difficulties; assessing understanding and feedback; differentiation/providing appropriate support; motivation/engagement; time; cultural responsiveness; attending to individuals/attending to the whole class; and structural factors.

**Being ‘clueless’**

Rather than identifying a single area of anticipated difficulty or a few challenges, 21 of the respondents indicated that they felt generally very unprepared to respond appropriately to the needs of EAL learners, ‘not knowing what to do.’ The tenor of the comments of these students is illustrated in the following quotations:

‘I have no knowledge of how to address this matter yet. I would act like a British person abroad, just repeating what I would be saying and not helping anyone.’
‘I am uncertain where to start and how to build them up to an acceptable level of English.’

‘I have had no training on this at all so the list is huge.’

‘Trying to help EAL pupils and support them. I really feel I need strategies for this.’

‘I do not know how to support pupils who find accessing the language difficult and am unsure as to what strategies to use. In my experience, schools are unsure as to what to provide to support these pupils.’

The observation in the immediately preceding statement concerning schools’ lack of preparedness to respond to EAL learners’ needs was echoed by another respondent who noted that their placement school would not be a source of necessary understanding and skills:

‘I have no experience whatsoever of working with EAL pupils and the school which I work in has no provision for supporting such students.’

Communication

Turning to observations on challenges that had a more explicitly stated focus, a considerable quantity, (28), of responses focused on the anticipated difficulties of communicating effectively with EAL students. Some of the responses that fell within this category of communication simply raised this as a difficulty but commonly there was an implicit or explicit concern with how they, as teachers, could come to tailor their communication to be appropriate for EAL learners. Comments of both these types are illustrated in the following list.

‘Language barrier. I don’t speak any other languages and would hate to feel like I was isolating a student.’
'How would I ensure they have understood any instructions I want them to learn? How could I question their level of understanding if they don’t know what I’m saying?’

‘Struggle to explain myself efficiently enough to pupils with EAL.’

‘Ensuring that my instruction and explanation are clear.’

‘Challenge of wording questions to suit how much English they understand.’

‘Talking slowly and having clearer instructions for these pupils.’

For some respondents concerns related to communication centred around: ‘getting them to understand complex topics and themes’; ‘expression of more complex ideas’; ‘explaining difficult scientific concepts.’ Attention was also drawn to the potential difficulties in getting across the purposes behind classroom tasks and their expected outcomes:

‘I think it could be difficult to engage them in practical work if they do not understand why they are making the work.’

‘Inability to really understand the learning intentions and success criteria.’

**Fostering participation/inclusive social relationships**

Quite a number of responses, (15), centred on the challenge of fostering EAL students’ participation in classroom activities and/or their integration into the social life of the classroom. Respondents talked about encouraging EAL students’ participation in discussion and activities in the following terms:

‘Involving EAL students in interactive language activities.’

‘Including EAL learners in classroom discussion, brainstorming activities.’

‘Getting them to speak in front of their peers at all probably.’
Other responses focused more explicitly on the integration of EAL learners within a class:

‘Integration within the class.’
‘Integrating students with low language ability at present in English.’
‘Trying to not isolate pupil.’
‘Uncertainty of how to best differentiate to their needs, and how to make the overall classroom environment a comfortable one for them.’
‘How do I ensure that EAL learners are included in the wider school community?’

One respondent saw building a relationship with an EAL student as being the foundation for such integration: ‘Being able to build a relationship, which I believe is key to creating a thriving learning community.’ At the same time some respondents recognised that attempts to encourage participation and to offer support needed to be sensitively judged:

‘I don’t want to cross the line between pushing them to be involved and making them upset.’
‘The challenge for the teacher is how best to support them when they experience difficulties in the class. They need additional support yet you want them to feel included.’

Another respondent clearly recognised that fostering EAL learners’ participation in activities and integration within a class entailed working actively with all students to create an inclusive ethos:
'Trying to involve EAL learners in group work and promoting social inclusion within the whole class, helping other pupils understand the challenges that some pupils have to deal with and therefore for them to be sensitive and supportive.'

Diagnosis of language difficulties, assessing understanding and feedback
Some respondents chose to highlight the challenge of diagnosing the nature of difficulties with English and/or the assessment of understanding of subject content:

‘Identifying exactly where the individual finds difficulty in English as an additional language, and using that as a starting point for further development in their learning.’

‘It would be difficult to ask questions to assess prior knowledge or consolidate learning.’

‘To gauge whether they actually understand the content. And, if not, do you have the time to go through it all on a 1-1 basis?’

‘Assessing progress’ and providing appropriate feedback were seen by a number of respondents to be challenging tasks:

‘A difficulty in providing feedback and ensuring all pupils know the task.’

‘I believe it would be hard to ensure any kind of formative or summative assessment is taking place throughout the year if they struggle to speak or write in English.’

One respondent also raised the question of how to enable EAL learners to evaluate their own work:
‘Teaching pupils to evaluate their own work and that of others using subject specific vocabulary. I have tried using Google translate with one pupil but with little success.’

**Differentiation/providing appropriate support**

Being able to assess current levels of understanding is clearly a necessary foundation for effective differentiation, as certain of the respondents would appear to have recognised:

‘Getting feedback from the pupils as to how much they are understanding. Knowing how to differentiate lessons to suit EAL best while still challenging them.’

‘I would need to ensure that I have sufficient resources and extension/differentiation tasks available when required. I will also need to accommodate different levels of English language use and establishing these different levels in the first instance will be quite challenging I ima’gine.

A considerable number of the observations on challenges for teachers, (20), were concerned with differentiation and the provision of appropriate materials and support. Statements on this theme included:

‘Differentiation and making sure that they are learning effectively and not left behind.’

‘Expressing things in a way which is accessible/not using language that could be confusing. Creating work that is both accessible but still challenging/interesting for EAL learners.’

‘I will have to think hard about differentiating material and making sure EAL learners are keeping up. I foresee that it will be very difficult to make sure understanding is happening in real time.’
‘Differentiating tasks appropriately and being able to support their language learning without compromising their ability at a historical content level.’

‘I think that one of the main challenges in teaching English to EAL students is the preparation of appropriate materials for them that help them to develop the same skills as the rest of the class but at a different pace.’

Motivation/engagement
Some respondents chose to focus their comments on the difficulties that they might face in keeping EAL students motivated, ‘get them to be motivated and engaged’, or in building up their self-confidence in their learning. One response described the challenge of ‘keeping individuals who have English as an additional language engaged in tasks.’ Others revealed an understanding of the threat to a student’s sense of competence that could accompany communication difficulties and of how this in turn could lead to a defensive response:

‘Students may not understand the task and may not feel comfortable completing it as they fear it will be incorrect.’

‘The fear of believing that they cannot describe their thoughts well so they stop trying, as a result they become socially awkward.’

‘Perception of difficult vocabulary being discouraging as constructing mental models presumes an ability to communicate with shared ideas.’

To counter such a situation, one respondent indicated the need for a teacher to be ‘encouraging confidence within them to be able to say when they do not understand.’
Time
A number of the respondents identified finding sufficient time to support EAL students as the principal challenge that they faced. Some of these respondents centred their attention on the time involved in creating appropriate resources and achieving differentiation:

‘Lack of time to differentiate.’
‘Not having enough time to prepare materials extra for that student’

This pressure on time could be compounded when one was unclear as to the exact nature of the student’s needs:

‘Finding enough time to create and develop extra resources for EAL students. The worry that the information you give using their own language is wrong (online translation websites giving incorrect information). Knowing what help they actually need. Not having information about their exact level of English. Inclusion within the class.’

Worries were also expressed by some students that they would not have the time within classes to ‘explain things’, to give sufficient support to EAL learners.

‘Time management. It is hard to provide the extra help that you want to, when you have a full class to teach also.’
‘Special attention to those individuals needed to check they understand what I’ve said to [the] whole class – this would take up a lot of time in class.’

One can see in the following observation a student thinking through how to work around time constraints:
‘I would need to make sure that the individual or group understood my tasks. Strategies to overcome long explanation times, for example, set the task then specifically gather the EAL and explain in more detail for them so to try and achieve as much activity time.’

**Cultural responsiveness**

For a very few students, acting in a culturally responsive way and issues in intercultural communication were their predominant concerns as the following extracts reveal:

‘Understanding their cultural background – it would be good to know more to make me feel less uneasy of causing offence.’

‘EAL indicating coming from a different culture to me, therefore teaching controversial issues concerning these cultures would be a concern.’

‘Integration into the class and communication with child and parents.’

**Attending to individuals/attending to the whole class**

For some students the key concern was how to maintain an appropriate balance between attending to individual EAL learners and considering the needs of a class as a whole. One respondent succinctly summarised this potential tension in the following terms: ‘Finding a balance between supporting the EAL students and addressing the whole class.’ Another wrote of a ‘worry about the learning of other learners in the class if I am to devote my time to assisting EAL learners with extra support.’

The challenge that a novice teacher may face in coordinating effectively individual and group/class work can be detected in the statement that it could be difficult to
find ‘time to go over things with them without leaving the other pupils to their own devices.’

One student, concerned with how to address this potential tension, recognised that it could be eased by employing pupils themselves as a source of support for their EAL peers:

‘I will have other students to support so will need to create effective use of time / plan lessons which involve all and allow peers to support one another for a multitude of tasks.’

### Structural factors
A small number of respondents chose to identify possible challenges in relation to limitations in a school’s support and resources for EAL work. One of this group noted that ‘the school might not have the support and/or finances to assist class room teachers’; while another was concerned about ‘not having the support of the SMT and other members of staff who see it as ‘not their responsibility’ ‘. Yet another student drew on their immediate experience to depict the difficulties that can arise when there is insufficient support and resources for EAL learners and their teachers:

‘Meeting the needs of all pupils in class if there is no additional support. One of my classes has 4 EAL, 5ASN [Additional Support Needs] and sometimes there is no support which makes scaffolding for all challenging at times. Work can be differentiated easily but resources such as I-pads for looking up vocab etc. can make lessons easier.’

### Additional Observations
Respondents to the survey were given the opportunity ‘to provide any additional brief comments, reflections that you may wish to make.’ The bulk of the 36 responses that were provided in response to this invitation could be grouped
under the following headings: recognising the need to develop personal skills and knowledge in relation to EAL; the need for EAL to be given greater prominence throughout the education system; a call for greater ITE input on EAL; and a wish to see school support and resources in relation to EAL. There was also a number of very pertinent observations made by the respondents that do not fit under any of these categories. These observations are grouped under the heading of specific matters raised by respondents.

**Need to develop their personal practice in relation to EAL**

Looking first at these comments which centred on a recognition of the need to develop their own skills and knowledge in relation to EAL, statements here included:

‘I need to make a strategy in my classroom that will ensure that EAL learners are able to become integrated in my class, and be confident in executing this strategy.’

‘Very useful to learn more strategies to deal with EAL pupils.’

‘It’s something I’ll need to consider as already come across pupils in the school who are EAL learners. It’s something I’ll chat with my placement 1 department to find out how they accommodate with EAL learners.’

**The need for EAL learners to be given greater prominence**

The immediately preceding extracts would seem to reveal a personal commitment by these students to equip themselves with the skills required to support EAL learners appropriately. For other respondents, the thrust of their comments was on the need for the school system as a whole to display greater commitment to EAL students and for all teachers to develop their practice in this area. This thrust of commentary was captured succinctly, for example, in the statement that: ‘I feel EAL is often ignored as a vital learning tool for ALL teachers.’ The following
observation highlights the need for teachers in general to be educated on how to respond to the needs of EAL learners:

‘It is very difficult for teachers who have no experience of teaching EAL learners to know where to begin – I feel that this is where more teachers would benefit from education about EAL learners’ needs at every stage of their English language development.’

On these general themes of raising the profile of EAL and of teacher education concerning EAL, one respondent noted the benefits of drawing more individuals for whom English is an additional language into the education system:

‘With EAL becoming a wider issue than 25 years ago I think it is important to invest in more EAL teachers and be encouraging EAL pupils to go into education. I have noticed that the majority of people on my course don’t have EAL so may find it hard to understand the challenges – myself included.’

One respondent’s feelings had clearly been deeply affected by, and advocacy for EAL students awakened by, placement experiences. This person wrote movingly of how:

‘I see this as a serious issue in Scottish schools today. I saw some troubling situations for EAL students on my serial placement. Some teachers clearly didn’t have any idea of how to engage with these students. Teachers were clearly frustrated, students confused, nervous and disengaged. I perceived that one student’s experience in school was a very lonely and isolated one; I may be wrong about that, but it has been playing on my mind ever since. I feel that this is something that we all need to learn about. It is as important as any other barrier to learning. You know this, but I think that many do not.’
Strong advocacy for action related to EAL and an argument for the benefits that this can bring were also displayed by the respondent who wrote that:

‘I believe it is very important that we are taught strategies to help pupils across the board as perhaps a maths teacher for example may feel it is not their job, however I believe every class teacher should take responsibility for helping EAL students. As our country is becoming increasingly more diverse we really need to be learning how to best help EAL students. I have met a 6th year pupil who spoke no English when she arrived in fourth year and is now applying for medicine at university with perfect English. It shows the importance of helping EAL students develop and reach their full potential which will in turn be an asset for our country and create the effective contributors that the CfE⁴ is aiming for.’

**Call for greater ITE input on EAL**

A number of respondents (6) chose to take this opportunity for comment to call for ITE input on EAL. One of these respondents, for example, stated that ‘I would be very interested in EAL related input on the course and think it is a very important aspect of teaching we need to look at.’ A student teacher made the case that EAL needed to be given greater priority in the ITE programme in the following manner:

‘I feel that I have only scratched the surface of teaching, learning and assessment for EAL within my course and that this means I will have to rely on whichever school I work at to have provision already in place for these learners to support my work. I would much rather have had more in depth teaching about working with EAL than for instance learning about primary education and having a placement there. I feel that EAL is a much more important issue which requires a lot of time spent on it on ITE courses.’

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⁴ Curriculum for Excellence is the national curricular framework that has been developed and implemented in Scotland over the last decade.
Another respondent made the plea that not only should there be greater ITE input on EAL but that this input should very much focus on practical strategies to support students with English as an additional language:

‘I feel that EAL learning should be really focused on in the ITE courses instead of only covering it for a week or two. I would like to know less about how these learners feel and how we should include them as teachers. Instead I want to know HOW to go about supporting and engaging them.’

It was also pointed out that the experience that course participants brought with them in language learning and teaching could be used much more effectively on the ITE programme:

‘I think a shortfall of much of the ITE course so far is that it does not draw on the wealth of experience that the student teachers bring. After a competitive application process there are student teachers who have a broad range of experience and backgrounds and this should be drawn upon and shared, there should be opportunities for students to share stories relating to their personal experience of language teaching and learning as well as working with people from other cultures.’

**School support and resources in relation to EAL**

A small number of respondents (6) gave the message that their work with EAL students needed to be supported by schools. There was a discernible difference in the tenor of these comments, however. In the following statements, the respondents would appear to place the locus of responsibility very firmly with the schools, rather than on themselves as class teachers:

‘I feel that if the pupil’s English is not of a reasonable standard then provisions need to be made for them to have an assistant or carer with them during the lessons as it has the potential to have a negative impact on the learner, other learners and the teacher.’

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‘If the school are taking in pupils who have very poor English then it is reasonable to expect the school to help me teach this pupil.’

By contrast the two respondents quoted beneath also drew attention to the importance of schools giving appropriate support and being adequately resourced, but at the same time can be seen to own more responsibility themselves for the education of EAL students:

‘I think that it is important to accommodate EAL learners needs, however to do this on your own as a class teacher is almost impossible, especially because of the variety of languages in a classroom. We definitely need additional support and time as teachers to provide the help that we want to provide for EAL pupils.’

‘I consider that teaching EAL students is a responsibility of the whole school and not only of the subject teacher teaching them. Therefore, it will be useful for schools to have resources and materials appropriate for them, especially in the first stages of English acquisition.’

Specific matters raised by respondents
A few respondents used the opportunity to provide additional comments to highlight their concerns relating to EAL students, ‘There is a danger that pupils could be left behind. It is a worry’, or to indicate their appreciation of the challenges that these students faced:

‘I have a lot of respect for EAL learners as it must be particularly difficult to have to contend with a language barrier in education, where one’s own language is not the language being used.’

One respondent raised the key matters of how EAL learners are perceived and the expectations that teachers have concerning their capacities to interpret English
texts. It will be seen from the comment beneath that this person placed the locus of responsibility very firmly on the teacher to find inventive means to allow EAL learners to achieve understanding:

‘I think for teachers of English, EAL learners should not be perceived as having barriers but more an opportunity to encourage engagement with our language on a slightly different level. I believe EAL learners will still be able to achieve the same levels of understanding from a text, we as teachers just need to find the appropriate routes to get them to that level of understanding and appreciation.’

Another student teacher sought advice on the question of the appropriateness of support for an EAL learner from an L1 speaking peer:

‘[A] question I would like to have answered relates mostly to the situation I experienced but may be useful for others to know. The same girl sat next to another girl who also speaks the same native language and who 2 years previously had no English at all but who is now fluent. At times the teacher relies on help from her peer to get her through the lesson. Is this the correct thing to do? Or could it be debilitating to the other girl’s language skills?’

A very pertinent question was raised by one respondent who asked how in practice learners are categorised, or not, as ‘EAL’:

‘During my first 3 weeks in my placement, I have been trying to find if there is any EAL learners in the school but I haven’t [sic] been told by different teachers in the school that they don’t have any EAL learners, even though there are international students in the school, their English level has been considered high. I wonder if there is a set of criteria the schools can go by when considering who would be an EAL learner.’
The opportunity to comment was taken up by one individual to question the appropriateness of current school policies of ‘immersion’:

‘During my time on first placement, there were a few pupils I had in my classroom that were just there to be ‘immersed’ in the language, where they were not there with the hope of getting a qualification. Could this time not be used to greater effect to help focus on subjects like English so that the pupil will then take this knowledge forward to help with other subjects? I am not suggesting exclusion from a class entirely but the odd lesson here and there at the same time is not a bad thing where, in science, there are many aspects the pupil just cannot access.’

Another student teacher left a message to encourage us in our study and stiffen our resolve:

‘... I’d be interested to see how you progress in the hard reality of this study and possible outcomes rather than being constrained by how it might be perceived; good luck with it.’
Chapter 6: Findings of the second student survey

Content of the second survey

It was noted in Chapter 3 that the second survey collected demographic data from respondents who had not completed the first survey; and then all respondents were asked to rate the degree to which the day, or two half-days, intervention had: increased their general understanding of the needs of EAL learners; and given them strategies/ideas for responding effectively to EAL learners. Qualitative comments were then invited on: ideas/insights they found surprising; helpful aspects/ideas; matters that should have been covered or covered in greater depth; strategies/ideas that they meant to put into practice.

Respondents were all asked to indicate their level of agreement with the same set of statements on language acquisition that had been presented in the first survey. This was followed by a rating of the different areas of EAL-related input that it would be useful for them to have for their future career, with the option of flagging up other areas that they considered pertinent. A measure was taken of their current level of confidence in their ‘ability to support EAL learners’; and there was the opportunity in the final question to provide any additional comments and reflections.

Ratings of the EAL intervention

Looking first then at the general ratings which respondents gave to the intervention, it can be seen from Table 6.1 that a large majority of respondents did feel that it had led to some or a considerable increase in understanding. However, there was a somewhat different pattern of response to this question between the two universities. It will be seen that 21.5% of respondents in University B were of the view that they had gained no or very little increase in
understanding from the day as opposed to 8.9% of respondents in University A answering within this category. Given that the content and activities were the same in both universities and there was an almost identical set of tutors, it is difficult to account for this difference at all readily.

Table 6.1: Responses to the question asking if the intervention ‘has given you a better general understanding of the needs of EAL learners?’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response categories</th>
<th>University A</th>
<th>University B</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>no/very little increase in understanding</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>some increase in understanding</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>considerable increase in understanding</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.2 presents the breakdown of responses to the question on the degree to which the intervention had provided respondents with strategies and ideas for working effectively with EAL learners. Here there were no marked disparities between the two universities in the pattern of response. This set of results could be read positively as suggesting that this quite short intervention had given the majority of respondents strategies and ideas for working with EAL students that they could employ in their future career. A more negative view of the intervention emerges, however, if one focuses on the fact that just under a third of respondents felt that they had experienced no or very little increase in strategies and ideas.
Table 6.3: Responses to the question asking what extent the intervention ‘has given you strategies/ideas for responding effectively, (within your own subject specialism(s)), to EAL learners?’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response categories</th>
<th>University A</th>
<th>University B</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>no/very little increase in strategies and ideas</td>
<td>17 (30.4%)</td>
<td>24 (30.4%)</td>
<td>41 (30.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>some increase in strategies and ideas</td>
<td>32 (57.1%)</td>
<td>42 (53.2%)</td>
<td>74 (54.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>considerable increase in strategies and ideas</td>
<td>7 (12.5%)</td>
<td>13 (16.5%)</td>
<td>20 (14.8%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Unanticipated insights

Turning now to the question that invited the student teachers to indicate ‘what, if any, ideas/insights surprised you’, there were 45 responses to this prompt. However, nine of these responses were in the negative, saying only ‘N/A’, ‘none’, “As a former CELTA teacher none’, etc. In addition, there were two instances of resistance: ‘I was surprised at the lack of practical advice given’; ‘... hours on this and <1 on HWB [Health and Wellbeing] baffles me.’ In contrast, another respondent simply noted: ‘very interesting’. A few respondents also sounded notes of ‘counter-resistance’ to peers and established teachers who did not engage sufficiently with EAL, as the following comments reveal:

‘How many students thought that it was not their responsibility to support EAL learners.’
‘Ignorance and disinterest in the teacher professional body, even amongst the recently qualified, of EAL pupils’ needs across the curriculum in a school.’

‘Learning about some cases where teachers have expressed an unwillingness to assist EAL learners in the classroom.’

Some students chose to highlight how the intervention had alerted them to the struggles that EAL learners may have faced before coming to the UK or had given them a directly felt sense of the challenges that these learners experience in the classroom:

‘The background of some of the EAL students, what some of them have gone through previously.’

‘I had not considered how difficult it would be for a child with EAL. The day opened my eyes in respect of the problems and issues that could arise as a result.’

A number described how the intervention, (and sometimes in particular the German portion of the lecture that will be considered in the next section), had given them a very direct feeling of empathy with EAL learners: ‘knew they’d find it difficult to understand English, activities made me feel somewhat like they must feel.’ The following statement shows how for one student teacher the intervention had succeeded in bringing attention to ‘the perspective of EAL pupils’, while also at the same time validating the practices that this student was trying to implement:

‘The workshops were really helpful in getting us thinking about learning from the perspective of EAL pupils. I was surprised that some ideas we considered were things I did anyway and are considered good practice in my subject pedagogy; so I suppose it validated techniques I had tried – and that I had used to support all learners – without knowing the theory behind it.’
Quite a number of respondents wrote on how their understanding of EAL had been expanded or indeed had undergone a qualitative transformation. For one respondent this had taken the form of a widening of cultural horizons: ‘I was not so much surprised, but exceedingly curious as to how people from around the world think differently about certain situations. This is something I was not so aware of.’ Another respondent was struck by ‘the workshop on the power inherent in language.’ For two respondents, the new insight took the form of a revised understanding of the belief that language is acquired by ‘immersion’:

‘Concept of EAL pupils being submerged not immersed in [the] classroom when there is insufficient support.’

‘Idea that immersion is not enough to ensure fluency in a language.’

One respondent noted how the intervention had heightened awareness of the finer details of the workings of language:

‘I wasn’t really surprised by any insights. I was mainly made aware of things that I may not have considered before (i.e. difficulty comprehending English texts because of the connotations and manipulation of words).’

In the following statement one can see how for one student teacher a greater capacity to see a text in terms of its context, rhetorical purposes and effects, intersected with a clearer appreciation of the challenges faced by EAL learners and with reflection on how to respond effectively as a teacher:

‘I realised how much in English actually depends on the tone, of a piece of writing for example, so it must be very difficult for EAL learners to understand e.g. a biased newspaper article,'
since they not only have to learn the literal meaning of a word but also apply this to context, where it can have several other meanings. That really opened my eyes to just how difficult these pupils must find this sort of thing in a classroom environment, and prompted me to think of ways in which teachers could try and deal with this.’

In a similar vein, a respondent’s realisation of the multivalent, and culturally dependent, meaning of texts had expanded awareness of a reader’s response to a text and the consequent need for flexibility and responsiveness in teaching:

‘The second session really placed a strong emphasis on precisely how a single image/object can be interpreted in so many different ways, beyond that of simply own knowledge, but rather into background, culture, etc. This really helped me consider I cannot make any assumptions about how a text (in whatever form) may be interpreted and must instead be prepared and plan for all (or rather many) eventualities.’

A very empathetic, distinctly reflexive and emotionally engaged reflection was provided by the individual who wrote that:

‘What surprised me the most was X telling us that one boy she interviewed [said] that being able to speak English was more important than anything else, even more so than his native language. As a geographer this is sad because my subject can at times be focused around belonging, culture and identity making the world that we live in, and the world that I study and teach, diverse and unique.’

For a considerable number of the respondents to this question, the insights they chose to point up concerned strategies and ideas that they themselves
could directly employ in a class. For example, one individual wrote that ‘I liked the mind map session and can see me using it in class.’ Some focused on visual communication with EAL learners: ‘more uses of photographs’; ‘use of visual aids was something I had not considered previously’; ‘using drawing to help communicate/have students respond.’ For one respondent, the revelation was ‘the use of partly completed texts (sorry, I forget the proper name) to assist EAL learners with written work which is a particularly useful strategy.’ Another respondent focused on the use of light-touch differentiation: ‘Can be as little as extra scaffolding on a worksheet’. Two respondents had taken on board the possibility of deploying EAL learners’ own languages within classes:

‘The poster carousel enabling EAL learners to participate in their own language was a helpful strategy.’

‘That you can use the learners’ native language in class to bring in an extra perspective to an activity.’

One respondent saw a direct link between an activity that featured in one of the intervention workshops and their subject area: ‘the activity and methodology used in our first workshop (binary opposition) was directly applicable to the modern studies classroom.’

One individual commented that their unanticipated insight had come from:

‘the 1st workshop work which consisted on working in groups. It was really interesting to work with people from other subjects and see their perspective on EAL.’

We will return to this topic of the gains made from interacting with peers in the next section.
Aspects of the intervention that were found to be helpful

Following on from this question on ideas/insights that had surprised the respondents, they were asked to ‘please indicate any aspects of the day, ideas encountered, etc., that you found to be particularly helpful.’ There were 70 responses to this item (36 University A, 34 University B). Six of these responses were short negative statements: ‘none’, ‘N/A’. The remaining responses could be grouped into a number of categories of appreciation: general value; lecture; workshops; question and answer session; worksheets/resources/information pack; ideas/strategies gained; increasing understanding of EAL learners; and gains from peer interaction.

General appreciation
Looking first at those comments which centred on the value of the intervention as a whole, responses here included the succinct ‘everything’ and ‘all of the process was helpful and valuable.’ Other respondents wrote in the following terms:

‘The sessions were very interesting and interactive. The Text wall was very relevant.’

‘The handouts to take away. The lecture. The group sessions.’

‘I found the following to be helpful. Materials provided to try out in class, other students’ ideas and strategies, the text wall and the Q + A sessions namely the concerns raised by students of Modern Studies and the subsequent response. These are issues that, when teaching abroad, I have often avoided rather than confronted.’

Lecture
A considerable number of respondents to this question (10) singled out the lecture for praise, including the student teacher who wrote that: ‘The
introductory lecture at the beginning was very useful to clarify what we understand by EAL learners and the difficulties they may face.’

The bulk of these comments highlighted the particular benefits that came from part of this lecture being delivered in German. This was seen to have given a very directly experienced sense of the matters that an EAL learner might struggle with in the classroom. Observations on the gains in empathy and understanding that came from this experience included:

‘I really liked the way it was portrayed. The lecture in German was perfect for demonstrating how an EAL child would feel in school.’

‘The part of the lecture that was delivered in German – this really helped to give a real experience of how it can be for EAL learners in classrooms.’

‘Some of the lecture being delivered in German was helpful to promote empathy with EAL learners.’

‘Experiencing how an EAL learner may feel during the first lecture in the “German” section. This made me understand how a pupil may be feeling and think about the language I am using and how I would be able to help a pupil with EAL in a classroom setting.’

**Workshops**

An almost equal number of respondents centred their notes of appreciation on the workshops, with one respondent, for example, describing how ‘The morning workshop was enlightening’; while another wrote on how ‘The workshops where we actually engaged with activities that could be used in class was really helpful.’ Some of these respondents noted how workshop activities had given them a more differentiated understanding of language and of the need to contextualise information appropriately for EAL learners:
‘It was interesting to do the tasks that made us aware of how other people may perceive certain words and how that may also be due to cultural differences.’

‘I found the binary opposition exercise a useful way of understanding how differently we can interpret words even within our own language.’

‘The workshops were good at helping understand the need to contextualise information and be sensitive to learners.’

Other respondents drew attention to the helpfulness of the exercises on word association and the different diagrammatic means by which EAL learners’ understanding of vocabulary could be increased:

‘I enjoyed the second session on word association and it made me think of language used in my own subject area, that I hadn’t thought about before.’

‘I think the various diagrams to increase EAL learners’ [understanding of vocabulary] were helpful. Also trying to describe a picture in a language less familiar was a helpful exercise to understand the feelings of EAL learners.’

Question and answer session
A similar proportion of respondents (9) flagged up ‘the question session at the end’, ‘Q and A (text wall)’ as helpful to them. One respondent identified a strength of the intervention as ‘being able to ask lots of questions’, while another described the ‘Q and A session, [as] helpful because more practical’. This session was identified by one student teacher as of value as it gave the opportunity to address concerns that had not been dealt with earlier: ‘Plenary session was helpful in answering some questions that were not addressed in sessions.’ Another student, who shared this positive view of the final session, felt that more time could have been given to this activity: ‘I found the question and answer session in the plenary very helpful. I wish we had time for more
questions.’ Rather than just present a brief appreciative comment on the Q and A session, one student gave a quite detailed account of exactly how it had been of use:

‘I had asked on the text wall in the final EAL lecture how, as an English teacher, you could teach EAL pupils things like poetry if they did not have the basic language. One of the guest lecturers answered in a lot of detail on this, so I was able to take away notes and several ideas which were really helpful, such as being reminded that there is so much imagery in poetry and we can use images for EAL learners and give them the English underneath – that way they can learn English and associate ideas with the images in their own language.’

A smaller number of respondents singled out the worksheets and resources provided to the participants as useful, for example, writing that: ‘example worksheets are helpful’; ‘The folder of resources is useful’; ‘information pack.’

**Ideas and strategies gained**

Quite a number of respondents chose to focus on the ideas and strategies that they had gained from the intervention. Some of these statements touched on matters that have been flagged up in preceding sections of this report as helpful, such as ‘the use of visual cues to increase understanding of the content of a lesson.’ A considerable proportion of this group of statements centred on the productive use of an EAL student’s first language and/or life experience:

‘Idea of worksheets/questions in native language.’

‘Encourage them to write in their L1 then translate.’

‘The poster carousel enabling EAL learners to participate in their own language was a helpful strategy.’
‘Using the foreign pupils’ own experience outwith UK to illustrate a point and therefore to bolster their inclusion from peers and within the school.’

One could see within this set of comments examples of student teachers taking the ideas presented in the intervention into their own subject areas:

‘Different ways of approaching literacy within art and design, for example the templates given to us for breaking down tasks and questions.’

‘The concept mapping exercise was useful and I have adapted this technique with my S1 supported set for contextualising a film study.’

One respondent noted that a valuable insight gathered from the day was that

‘A lot of exercises we have already considered to aid in literacy are helpful for EAL learners.’

Developing understanding and empathy
Some of the respondents noted how the intervention had enabled them to come to a more differentiated understanding of EAL learners and the challenges that they faced:

‘I think it was important to reiterate that EAL learners should not be grouped alongside pupils with additional support needs such as students with dyslexia.’

‘I thought that the discussions about trying to understand the varied cultural and socio-economic backgrounds that EAL learners are coming from was relevant.’
'That even if EAL pupils seem to speak with a broad Scottish accent, this does not mean they have the same ability level in literacy as their native English speaking peers.'

Echoing the comments that some of their peers made concerning the value of the lecture, other respondents focused on how the intervention had given them a direct sense of, and identification with, the difficulties faced by EAL learners:

‘When we were put into situations that allowed for us to understand the difficulty for the pupil.’

‘The fact we had to put ourselves in the situation of EAL learners helps to understand more how to include them in class and provide support.’

In the following extract one can see a student teacher reflecting carefully on, and learning from, this experience of identification:

‘Using another language to talk to the cohort was a good way to help us gain some insight into how an EAL learner might feel.’

‘The activities based on the Gulf War were useful to help me appreciate how difficult an EAL learner might find the nuances of language and was also a useful activity for my specialism and a model of good practice (e.g. activating prior knowledge first and so on).’

**Gains from interactive discussion with peers**

A small number of respondents targeted their comments on the gains that they had made from interacting with peers during the intervention: ‘discussion with peers over experiences with EAL.’ This included ‘Talking to the student teachers who have actually experienced EAL learning first hand’; and ‘exploring
everyone’s understanding of the meaning of specific words through carouselling.’

One respondent pointed up that a certain degree of learning had come from discussing EAL-related matters with peers from different subject areas: ‘The handouts were useful and there was some benefit provided from the interdisciplinary aspect of the day, particularly in the first EAL tutorial session’. However, as the next section will reveal, not all of the participants in the intervention saw this ‘interdisciplinary aspect’ as a strength.

Areas that could have been addressed

It was felt important to gain a sense of the ways in which the intervention may have failed to meet participants’ expectations. Accordingly, a question asked them to ‘Please, indicate, if appropriate, a) any matters that you felt weren’t covered but should have been covered; b) matters that were covered, but that you felt needed to be addressed in greater depth.’ Of the 78 responses to this question, a small number (4) simply indicated satisfaction with the intervention: ‘N/A’; ‘all very informative’; ‘I felt all matters were covered appropriately’. The remaining responses very largely fell into a number of main categories. There were those who stated in general terms that they would have wished to have gained more strategies to use in class; while others called for more subject-specific strategies. Some observations were also made to the effect that the intervention was not sufficiently apposite to mathematics. A group of respondents wished to have seen more coverage of how to respond to EAL learners who had no or very little English at all; and some would have liked concerns relating to cultural inclusion and culture to have been addressed. There were some respondents who raised miscellaneous matters that did not fall within these main categories.
More strategies

Just under a quarter (18) of the responses to this question expressed a desire to have had ‘More practical strategies’ or ‘strategies we can use in the classroom’. Illustrating some of the comments made on this theme, some respondents wrote of their wish to have had:

‘More concrete and usable/practical strategies for helping EAL learners in the classroom (i.e. the writing frame was good, but what other options are out there?)’

‘More time spent on strategies for breaking the language barrier. Could perhaps use role play/ ask for how we would react to the situation.’

Amongst this group of responses, there was one distinct note of resistance: ‘We needed actual strategies for teaching EAL students, not wildly theoretical things about our understanding of words.’ Another respondent felt that the balance of the intervention had been skewed towards taking the perspective of EAL learners rather than giving practical advice:

‘The workshop tried to help us understand the point-of-view and needs of EAL students (but I believe we already have a good understanding of this), where what we really need are suggestions of strong strategies, techniques and resources to support EAL in schools.’

One respondent highlighted the value in pursuing this initial presentation of strategies and activities within the programme in a concerted manner:

‘Strategies and activities were mentioned but it would have been better to have a deeper knowledge about how to apply them and, if possible, to put them into practice or to analyse particular cases. I’m aware about the constraints of time and that it’s very difficult to cover all of this in one session so an
option could be to provide other sessions in future programmes.'

More subject-specific strategies/examples
An equal number of respondents to this question would have liked to have seen a stronger focus within the intervention on subject specific advice and on subject specific discussion of EAL issues. Quite a number of responses in this category simply called for: ‘Success stories and subject-specific examples’; ‘More subject specific exercises’; ‘Greater links to subject specific examples.’ One student teacher pointed up the desirability of ‘Covering subject specific information and some differentiation techniques for technical based subjects.’ On this theme, a respondent commented that ‘more subject specific examples could be covered in C and P [Curriculum and Pedagogy] classes.’

We have noted earlier how one respondent to the second survey welcomed the ‘interdisciplinary’ nature of the sessions. By contrast, several responses to this question made the case that it would have been more valuable to have had greater subject-specific discussion:

‘Would have been a benefit to have had further discussion with student[s] from similar subject areas e.g. specific strategies for certain types of subjects.’

‘I think it would have been effective to break down into our subject areas and have more specific ways of dealing with situations that can arise in the curriculum with EAL learners.’

‘I felt as though there should have been some subject specific conversations to raise awareness about strategies our departments should be using, not only to help my understanding but to extend this information to the department in which I will be working in order to support teachers who feel they are unequipped to plan for EAL pupils. I would have liked more ideas for activities. The resources
provided were fantastic – I would have liked more activity ideas in order to implement them effectively.’

One respondent observed that the very different perceived needs of, say, mathematics as opposed to language teachers, required some differentiation in discussion activities within the intervention:

‘Perhaps if we had been split into subject areas it would have been better for the workshops, and then a lecture with everybody together discussing whole school strategies. We could have covered strategies specific to what we need in our classrooms as a maths teacher will need to use different strategies than a languages teacher.’

Some respondents felt that the content of the intervention was not well targeted on the needs of maths teachers / EAL learners in maths: ‘Not many things applicable to maths students’; ‘Very little differentiation for maths. Too focused on reading and writing.’ On this theme one respondent wrote on how:

‘I would really have appreciated hearing some more concrete examples of techniques that have been used successfully with EAL learners in maths. Although, probably most importantly, the request to keep an open mind was given, it can be a little overwhelming to try to think of our own examples.’

EAL students with no, or minimal, English

Quite a number of respondents (11) pointed up as an omission in the intervention ‘What exactly to do with pupils in your class who have none or very scarce level of English’. Examples of observations that raised this very understandable concern are:
'Maybe strategies for helping EAL learners who have no English at all and have just arrived at the school.'

‘How to deal with someone who does not speak any English within the constraints of a typical lesson.’

‘I felt strategies were suggested which appealed, however the fundamental question I still walked away with was ‘great strategy for teaching, but how do I use it with someone who does not speak English?’

One respondent suggested how this situation might have been addressed in the intervention:

‘I feel we needed more information on how to help students who speak no English or very little English. An idea for this might be to show us scenarios and what you would do in this situation. E.g. Someone joins your class at the start of the session and can say basic words such as please and thank you – where would we start with a pupil like this.’

A somewhat different concern was raised by a respondent who in effect flagged up the question of how to support EAL learners with a low level of English in dealing with advanced content in the later years of secondary schooling:

‘I would have liked to learn more about how to support EAL learners in the senior phase. I have several EAL pupils that are level one language acquisition in a N4/5 class and feel I would have benefited from considering ideas that can support learners in this context as I’m not always sure how I can best meet their needs.’
Cultural considerations/cultural inclusion
A few respondents thought that more might have been achieved in the intervention in terms of fostering cultural inclusion. On this topic, one respondent highlighted the need for ‘strategies to include EAL pupils coming from countries in crisis; strategies to develop cultural understanding for staff and pupils.’ Another respondent stated that:

‘I feel that breaking down the divisions and cliques was not really discussed. It is all well and good having good EAL in the classroom, but what about in the corridors where there is not a helpful stimulus for inclusion?’

Other matters that could have been addressed
In addition to the areas that have been considered in the preceding subsections, a few respondents raised other matters that they considered could merit inclusion. One of these respondents drew attention to the challenge of ‘How you engage qualified teachers in this area who, ‘don’t see it as a problem’ which I have encountered’. Another highlighted the desirability of a stronger focus on group work:

‘It would have been amazing if examples for how we could implement strategies for group work and paired work were worked on, as these are becoming very prominent tasks in every subject! Role play would have been amazing to help us see it working!’

The question of balancing the needs of EAL learners versus those of the rest of a class that emerged in a preceding section also reappeared here: ‘how to make the lessons differentiated for EAL pupils without dragging behind the students who speak fluent English’. The suggestion was also made that more could have been expected of the participants in the intervention in terms of creating their own resources and exercises:
‘I would have liked to have seen different examples or maybe worked on creating our own examples of possible resources/exercises that could be used in the classroom to enable us to include and incorporate the EAL experience.’

One student teacher noted that appropriate suggestions for areas to include in the intervention could only be made once they had accumulated more experience in teaching, and close observation of, EAL students:

‘I think that while the day was useful, a lot more progress in my personal approach to EAL learners will develop through experience in the classroom. While each pupil and their needs are so different I find it tricky to be able to think ahead before I am in the situation and can pin-point areas that pupils need more help with.’

**Taking strategies into practice**

To gain at least a general sense of the extent to which respondents saw the day as having provided them with strategies that they would actually apply in their practice, they were asked to indicate ‘what strategies and ideas that you encountered ... or ideas of your own that were sparked by the day, do you now mean to put into practice in the classroom?’ Of the 73 responses to this question, (37 University A, 36 University B), seven were simply short negative statements: ‘no’; ‘N/A’; etc. Thus 66 of the student teachers, just under half of respondents, indicated that they would be taking ahead strategies and ideas from the intervention. As a following paragraph will reveal, a considerable number of the respondents were intending to use *multiple strategies* that they had picked up from the day. Perhaps the most striking feature of the responses to this item was the very wide range of strategies, techniques and ideas that appeared in this set of comments. Within this wide range, quite a number
talked of their intention to make ‘more use of visuals’. Observations here included:

‘Many, even just visual cues or pictures that relate to their culture.’

‘I think I will try to use visual elements more often and will try to make sure EAL learners are well included in the lesson.’

In a similar vein, other respondents declared that they would be making use of graphic organisers:

‘The graphic organisers are really helpful and I hope to use them for all pupils as well as to help EAL learners.’

‘I may use the cumulative mind map approach to discussing a topic. I feel it helped stimulate discussion better than a full scale class discussion.’

A few respondents indicated that the insights that they were going to take forward into practice involved a greater alertness to language and attention to how language functions within a wider context:

‘A greater awareness of connotations and euphemistic uses of words which might detract from meaning and confuse an EAL pupil.’

‘I think I will implement a more general awareness of how it is not necessarily just words and meaning that can be lost in translation but that of context as well. One can never assume that the entire class will hold the same values and beliefs as yourself no matter how obvious you may think they are.’

A group of respondents focused on a number of different ways to develop EAL students’ vocabulary. This included identifying key words: ‘Using more visual
devices, allowing pupils to identify key words before launching into full-scale reading.’ Some talked about the use of word banks: ‘Context and word banks will definitely be employed’; ‘Key word tables’. Attention was also given to developing subject-specific vocabulary: ‘thought showering the meaning and impact of certain words in my specific subject to help all pupils not just EAL learners.’ The following response would appear to display considerable thought being given to how best to develop subject-specific and wider vocabulary:

‘Relating new mathematical vocab to everyday use, looking for ways to teach idioms and non-academic everyday speech (e.g. recently in a 2nd level class on “time”, teaching them things like “fortnight”, “leap year”, and “24/7”).’

A set of respondents centred on ways of assisting EAL learners to understand and create texts. This included the use of writing frames: ‘The writing frame! It’s beneficial for EAL and non-EAL learners alike’; and ‘The partly completed texts idea.’ Focused writing exercises were also mentioned:

‘The use of scaffolding more and making more links between words and more focused writing exercises. I found that useful and I will make use of it in the future.’

‘I think I will incorporate the idea of brainstorming and how to construct sentences for EAL learners into my practice.’

Some respondents highlighted the value of the ‘binary opposition’ activity that featured in one of the workshops within the intervention: ‘Binary oppositions were useful’; ‘The initial task we completed looking at binary opposition with the rotating groups.’

Certain respondents related how, after the intervention, they would focus efforts on differentiation: ‘Writing frames, and a renewed approach to differentiation’; ‘Try to use differentiation to include all learners at all times.’
For other student teachers attention was directed towards ‘Definitely how to integrate EAL learners into group work.’ A few also wrote about making use of a buddy system: ‘Use of more visual aids and buddy system’; ‘The use of visual aids, and pairing up of pupils.’ One student who saw the value of ‘buddy partners’ noted that this might be difficult to put into practice: ‘Buddy partners could be a useful strategy to use although I find this would be difficult to implement in a PE environment.’

Quite a number of the responses to this question can be grouped together under the broad heading of acting to promote linguistic and cultural inclusion. For some of these respondents this took the form of an intention to make ‘use of L1 in the classroom’. Statements on this topic included: ‘Using the native language where possible to help support English acquisition’; and ‘Using the learner’s first language to illuminate English meaning.’ One respondent described how: ‘The poster carousel enabling EAL learners to participate in their own language was a helpful strategy’.

For one respondent cultural inclusion involved taking out to EAL learners an understanding of the cultural references of their new environment:

‘Longer explanations of culturally-specific references.’

‘Longer intro to a question that might be culturally unknown to the MFL pupil.’

‘Putting oneself into their shoes, i.e. signage, announcements being adapted to their levels of intellectual exposure to UK.’

By contrast, for another respondent inclusion would consist of drawing in to the class EAL students’ knowledge and, in effect, treating them as a resource for learning: ‘I want to use the EAL learner’s knowledge and prior learning to help other learners to understand difference.’
Other respondents talked in general terms of the need to foster an ethos of cultural inclusion:

‘Making your classroom multi-ethnic everyday not just on specific days.’

‘I am able to take influence from the history resources in terms of exploring words and what words mean from different perspectives from different cultures in order to build an understanding of EAL pupils but also to native English speaking pupils in helping them understand difference between cultures.’

‘Be more precise with my language, avoiding speaking over the heads of the class, but also ensure the/my classroom exists as a comfortable and inclusive environment so all are keen to participate regardless of their views/interpretations and feel it is possible to share.’

One of this group of respondents who focused on the integration of EAL learners highlighted the importance of ‘Being more aware of the needs of EAL learners and trying to incorporate EAL ‘learning’ into ‘regular’ learning.’ For one student teacher the message that was being taken into practice was the need to adopt a teaching approach that was guided by, and responsive to, the expressed needs of the EAL learners themselves:

‘Asking the pupil! Instead of guessing what they need I can ask them (and their other teachers) what works best for them. I really think this is important.’

A considerable proportion of the responses to this question (11) indicated that the intervention had prompted the student teachers to consider taking multiple ideas and strategies into their practice. The following statements illustrate how these respondents meant to deploy a number of ways of fostering EAL students’ learning.
'I hope to make my classes linguistically rich; the sessions have made me think about my use of language.'

'The need for clear instructions and well-defined activities.'

'The use of visual aids (not only for EAL learners but a useful resource for all learners).'

'Connotation versus denotation.'

'Graphic organizers'

'The binary opposition task but with different words'

'Continued use of writing frames'

'Using their own language in the classroom'

'Getting EAL pupils to create their own dictionary of mathematical terms; using visual displays of concepts; Google translate for some languages; asking bilingual pupils to support EAL pupils with little English; learn some key words / phrases from the EAL pupil’s language myself and use these when talking to them.'

Second survey: How can English best be acquired?

The second survey repeated the set of five questions in the first survey which explored respondents’ beliefs concerning how English is best acquired. Responses to these questions are set out in Figures 6, 1-5, and in the Tables in Appendix A. As there were distinct differences in responses to some of these items between the two universities, results have been broken down by university.

The figures also allow comparisons to be made between the patterns of response to the first and the second survey. We have already noted, however, that some caution needs to be exercised in making comparisons between the
two surveys, given that we did not have exactly matched samples. It has also been recognised that the ‘differential pattern of response across the two universities suggests the need for caution in making cross-university comparisons between the two surveys’ (p. 67).

This caveat needs to be taken into account when one looks at the distribution of responses in the second survey to the statement that ‘English is best acquired by being immersed in an English speaking environment’, where a distinct difference is evident between University A and University B. Just over half of respondents in University B, (54.4%), indicated that they strongly agreed with this statement, as opposed to around a fifth, (19.6%), of respondents from University A. Around a half of respondents in University A, (48.2%), answered within the categories ‘unsure’, ‘disagree’ and ‘strongly disagree.’ This degree of uncertainty was not evident in University B where only 10.2% answered in the categories ‘unsure’ and ‘disagree’. Comparisons between the first and second survey need to be read against this disparity in opinion between the two universities in the second survey. Particularly given the notes of caution that have been sounded in the preceding paragraph, it would seem to be unwise to speculate on the possible reasons for this difference in responses. It is, however, a rather striking finding.

Some differences are also apparent in responses to the statement that ‘English is best acquired by the explicit teaching of the vocabulary and structure of the language’, with just under half of respondents in University B, 49.4%, indicating that they ‘agreed’ with this statement, as opposed to 35.7% in University A; and with a higher proportion of those in University A, 41.1%, as opposed to 25.3% in University B, being ‘unsure’ about this matter. Here the proportion of respondents in the first and second survey answering within particular categories was broadly similar. This was also the case for responses to the item ‘EAL learners acquire language best through participating in mainstream classes’, with roughly two fifths of respondents in both surveys, (first survey,
41.4%, second survey, 37%), being unsure that this was true. 60.8% of respondents in University A, and 54.4% in University B responded in the categories ‘strongly agree’ and ‘agree’; but with a differing distribution of responses between the categories ‘strongly agree’ and ‘agree’.

In both surveys, a large proportion of respondents were unsure as to whether ‘EAL learners acquire language best through out-of-class provision’, albeit at a somewhat lower level in the second survey (first survey 51.7%, second survey 41.5%). The second survey did see an increase in the proportion ‘disagreeing’ with this statement, (‘disagree’, first survey, 11.5%; second survey, 20%). In the second survey, students in University A showed a somewhat greater level of agreement with this statement than those in University B, (‘strongly agree’ and ‘agree’, University A, 41.1%; University B, 32.9%). Students in University B were also less certain about the truth of this statement (‘unsure’, University A, 35.7%; University B, 45.6%).

There was a strongly positive pattern of response across both universities in the second survey to the final item in this set: ‘Learners need to be taught explicit strategies for transferring meaning from their first language to their second language’. This was particularly marked in University A where 85.7% of respondents answered in the categories ‘strongly agree’ and ‘agree’, (university B, 68.3% answering in these categories). Overall, the second survey ratings of this statement were more strongly positive than those of the first survey (‘strongly agree’ and ‘agree’, first survey 62.7%; second survey, 75.5%).

Figures 6.1-5 show percentages of respondents by university, and percentage of total respondents in the second survey, total percentages of respondents in the first survey answering the set of five questions exploring beliefs concerning how English is best acquired within the categories: strongly agree; agree; unsure; disagree; strongly disagree.

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**Figure 6.1:** English is best acquired by being immersed in an English-speaking environment

![Figure 6.1: English is best acquired by being immersed in an English-speaking environment](image)

**Figure 6.2:** English is best acquired by the explicit teaching of the vocabulary and structure of the language

![Figure 6.2: English is best acquired by the explicit teaching of the vocabulary and structure of the language](image)
**Figure 6.3:** EAL learners acquire language best through participating in mainstream classes

**Figure 6.4:** EAL learners acquire language best through out-of-class provision
**Figure 6.5**: Learners need to be taught explicit strategies for transferring meaning from their first language to their second language

Second survey: useful areas of EAL input

It will be recalled that in the first survey respondents were asked to rate how useful they would find EAL-related input on specific aspects of learning, teaching and assessment. All of the areas identified in the survey were given high, or very high, ratings of usefulness. It seemed appropriate to investigate whether the same picture held true after the intervention. Accordingly, respondents were asked to give ratings on the same set of questions in the second survey.

It will be seen from Figures 6.6 – 6.17 that input across all of these areas was still viewed after the intervention as distinctly useful. For example, in both the first and second survey there was a strong recognition of the usefulness of
‘general input on learning/teaching an additional language’; (‘very useful’/‘useful’, first survey, 86.8%; second survey, 86.7%). (Here there was an almost identical pattern of response between the two universities.) Value was also attached to ‘recognising language that can cause challenges’; (‘very useful’/‘useful’, first survey, 83.9%; second survey, 88.1%).

In both surveys the practicalities of ‘devising resources/materials’ were very highly rated; (‘very useful’/‘useful’, first survey, 86.8%; second survey, 94.1%). We have noted earlier that it was heartening to see that ‘differentiation of content/activities’ was very highly rated in the first survey, and this was also the case in the second survey; (‘very useful’/‘useful’, first survey, 90.8%; second survey, 94.1%).

Figures 6.6 - 6.17 show that respondents to both surveys saw as key matters understanding how to go about ‘involving learners in group work’ and in ‘whole class work’. Consideration also needed to be given to ‘language for conceptual understanding’ of school subjects and to ‘developing EAL learners’ vocabulary’, (topics that had featured quite prominently in the intervention). Creating appropriate assessments was seen as of high importance in both surveys, with this aspect being given particular emphasis in University A in the second survey; (‘very useful’/‘useful’, second survey, 90.1%). There was a very similar pattern of very positive response in both universities and both surveys to the desirability of learning to provide ‘effective feedback’.

Input on ‘drawing appropriately on EAL learners’ own linguistic and cultural background’ was given high ratings, particularly in University A; (‘very useful’/‘useful’, second survey, 89.2%). Both universities gave a very high rating of the usefulness of ‘involving EAL learners socially in the life of the classroom and the school.’
Figures 6.6-6.17 show percentages of respondents by university, and percentage of total respondents in the second survey, total percentages of respondents in the first survey ‘indicating the degree to which it would be useful for your future career to have EAL-related input on the following aspects of learning, teaching and assessment.’

**Figure 6.6: general input on learning/teaching an additional language**

![Bar chart showing percentages of respondents by university for general input on learning/teaching an additional language.](chart.png)
Figure 6.7: recognising language that can cause challenges

![Graph showing recognising language that can cause challenges](image1)

Figure 6.8: devising resources / materials

![Graph showing devising resources / materials](image2)
Figure 6.9: differentiation of content/activities

Figure 6.10: involving EAL learners in group work
Figure 6.11: involving EAL learners in whole class work

Figure 6.12: language for conceptual understanding of your subject(s)
Figure 6.13: developing EAL learners’ vocabulary

Figure 6.14: drawing appropriately on EAL learners’ own linguistic and cultural background
Figure 6.15: creating appropriate assessments

Figure 6.16: providing effective feedback
Figure 6.17: involving EAL learners socially in the life of the classroom and school

Suggestions from the second survey concerning areas of EAL-related input

As in the first survey, respondents were also asked ‘to specify any other area(s) of input that you would identify as useful’. One of the eleven respondents who took up this invitation expressed a wish for a more subject-specific EAL input than had been provided within the intervention. Another used this opportunity to make suggestions to argue for greater resource to go into this area: ‘There is very little support for schools in this area and it would be helpful to have more government input in this.’

As was the case in the first survey, a few respondents centred their observations on the social and academic integration of EAL students; in the words of one respondent ‘involving them as much as possible’. This
involvement was seen by this student teacher as requiring ‘help with devising/differentiating resources for them.’ Another student wished to see a focus on:

‘Getting students to share their language with the rest of the class would validate the learner/community of learners and provide valuable input to those whose L1 is English.’

One respondent flagged up not only the value of information on where relevant resources could be found but also the question of engaging other teachers with EAL issues:

‘Knowing other places that can provide help. Courses (for student and teacher), useful websites, apps for the pupil, how to involve other teachers/organisations.’

Another respondent wished to see a ‘specific focus on pupils in the senior phase.’ The matter of ‘communicating with parents of EAL learners’ was also highlighted in this set of responses. One student drew attention to the distinct challenge in diagnosing the degree to which EAL learners’ difficulties derive from language limitations or from gaps in understanding of subject knowledge:

‘Would be good to be able to identify where the main issues are, i.e. is it solely the language barrier or is there knowledge/content gaps.’

As in the first survey, there was one respondent who saw value in having at least a rudimentary knowledge of other languages that could inform work with EAL students: ‘I would like to be offered training and speak the basics in a few different languages.’
Second survey: levels of confidence in ability to support EAL learners

Figure 6.18: percentage of respondents in the first and in the second survey answering the question ‘At this point in your ITE programme, how confident do you feel in your ability to support EAL learners?’ within the categories: very confident; confident; some confidence; little confidence; not at all confident.

It was of interest to gauge whether the intervention might have led to an increase in the student teachers’ levels of confidence to support EAL learners. The second survey, therefore, repeated the measure of reported confidence that featured in the first survey, with respondents being asked ‘At this point in your ITE programme, how confident do you feel in your ability to support EAL learners?’ It will be seen from Table 6 in Appendix A that the pattern of response to this question in the second survey was quite similar across the two universities. Comparisons between the pattern of response on this item between the first and the second survey do however need to be made with some care. Given that the second survey took place at a somewhat later point in the participants’ programmes, it is possible that by this time participants
might have experienced a general increase in their confidence in their teaching abilities that impacted on their response to this question. Importantly, as a preceding section has highlighted, the surveys were not comparing ‘like for like’, i.e. did not have exactly matched sets of respondents. While these notes of caution need to be borne in mind when interpreting comparisons between the first and second survey, a distinct difference in the pattern of response is evident between the two surveys, with the exception of the response category ‘very confident’ (first survey, 2.9% second survey, 3.0%). 15.6% of respondents to the second survey declared that they were ‘confident’ as opposed to 8.6% in the first survey; and nearly half of those in the second survey, (48.9%), indicated that they now had ‘some confidence’, as opposed to around a third in the first survey (32.2%). Correspondingly, there was a definite drop in the numbers reporting that they had ‘little confidence’, (first survey, 40.8%, second survey, 27.4%), or were ‘not at all confident’, (first survey, 15.5%, second survey, 5.2%).

**Additional comments**

To conclude the questionnaire, respondents were invited ‘to provide any additional brief comments, reflections that you may wish to make on the day, or more generally on EAL-related matters.’ Within the 37 responses to this invitation to comment, there was one fairly lengthy negative response that indicated that ‘the sessions were of little or no use to me as a student teacher’ and went on to enumerate a list of failings, including ‘the refreshments’. There were also a few responses that were critical of the workshops, including the comment that ‘Both lectures were good, however the workshops that I was part of were completely useless’.

Set against these negative comments, around a third of the responses to this question took the form of general praise of, and appreciation for, the
intervention. The following extracts illustrate the nature and tone of these appreciative comments:

‘I thought the day was helpful, enjoyable and energetic which I thought was important as days/lectures like these can sometimes be tedious and boring so I thought the approach taken to promote EAL to us students was effective.’

‘It was a great day and I really enjoyed it. Thank you for putting it on!’

‘Overall, the day was insightful, and the most useful EAL related event that has been covered in the University.’

‘Great day, one of the best sessions we’ve had. Practical info but could do with even more!’

One appreciative comment did, however, point up the need to do more to win over ‘the hard to reach’ among the student body. Its balanced evaluation of the intervention and the suggestions made for improvement are given in full beneath:

‘As a linguist, I find anything to do with languages very interesting, and the input on EAL at university was no exception. There were some of my fellow students however that perhaps study more maths or science based subjects who thought it was a waste of time. I heard some people with the attitude that EAL pupils should be taught English separately and should perhaps not take part in mainstream schooling. One suggestion I might make for the input in future is to address this issue, as I’m sure it must come up every year, and perhaps give concrete and explicit reasons explaining why it is so beneficial for an EAL pupil to be in a mainstream class, and more information/resources they can use as class teacher to support EAL pupils as much as possible. Overall, I found the input very worthwhile and am very pleased that the university is tackling this issue and giving it space on the course.’
Echoing comments that have been reviewed in a preceding section, a small number of respondents wished that the day had included more in the way of practical classroom strategies. One of these respondents noted that ‘… we have had lots of theory (which is useful itself) but I would like to have more practical solutions to use in the classroom that are effective and worthwhile.’ One of the comments on this theme included the suggestion that ‘some ideas came out during the text wall session that would have been nice to discuss more in depth during the day (i.e. role of dictionaries, etc.) which again relates to practical strategies and scenario discussions.’ A very few responses also called for a more subject-specific focus for the intervention: ‘Maybe could have been more subject specific to discuss how to support.’

Two respondents made suggestions as to how the intervention might give a more direct sense of the realities of teaching and learning in relation to EAL:

‘I’d [like] to hear from teachers in schools at the moment from both primary and secondary schools. I’d like to hear their experiences and the subject specific strategies they have implemented.’

‘Perhaps we could have had more case studies and concrete examples. I appreciate the efforts that were made, but sometimes, with more general discussion and statement of statistics, it was easy to get lost. Perhaps things like videos of classrooms where EAL learners are being successfully incorporated would make it more “real”.’

Quite a number of the answers to this final question centred on the need for EAL-related matters to feature more strongly throughout the programme, including on placement, suggesting that the intervention had increased awareness of the importance of developing knowledge and skills in this area. Comments on this theme included:
'It was very helpful to have this session as my understanding about how to help EAL students is better now. I think there should be more sessions like this one.'

'I have some confidence that the [school] department I am based in would be able to assist me with resources to help EAL learners but I don’t feel that enough time has been spent on it or in enough depth as part of the university course.'

'Considering my experience on placement (X Education Authority) I would suggest that supporting EAL learners and gaining experience in this area should be a main focus on placement. Perhaps having requirements of students getting involved in this area where possible as it is a difficult area to understand what is best and what to try.'

One student in effect advised that the intervention should be incorporated into the PGDE programme and suggested that a mix of subject-specific and 'interdisciplinary' elements could be achieved:

'I feel this should be a mandatory part of the course built into the PGDE as it is very important to support all pupils the best we can. I do think splitting us into subject groups for the workshop with more tailored strategies for our own subject would help more. The big lectures should remain as the whole cohort as it gives an insight into a whole school approach to how we help EAL learners.'

**Observations on EAL in students’ reflective journals**

As the Methodology chapter has revealed, we were fortunate to be allowed by the students in University A to read and make use of sections of their reflective journals that related to the intervention and to EAL more generally. There were 34 extracts in total which touched on these topics; and some of these extracts provided a quite lengthy set of reflections. PGDE(S) students in University A are required to make weekly entries into the reflective journals.
throughout the academic session in which they reflect on their experiences of both the theoretical university-based input and their school placement experiences. A key aim of this activity is to encourage students to become reflective practitioners and they are asked to ground their reflections drawing, where appropriate, on both the key theories that they explore in the university and in the practical application of these theories while in schools.

It could be claimed that in writing such journals students might feel that it is politic to present their engagement with their university course in a positive light and therefore choose to mask negative reactions to the intervention. Accordingly, we acknowledge that these journal extracts may not give an altogether veridical representation of reactions to the intervention. What they do reveal, however, is how at least a considerable number of the students in University A had gained a clear, ‘personalised’ understanding of the main messages conveyed in the intervention and/or were thinking through in some detail how they could employ particular strategies to support EAL students. The following, sometimes quite extended, extracts from these journals, give a full sense of how their understanding and practice in relation to EAL was developing.

The large majority of the extracts presented a very positive view of the intervention, with one student, for example, writing of how: ‘The EAL day was insightful and useful and the ideas and attitudes discussed were very fresh in my mind when I started the placement.’ However, (notwithstanding the notes of methodological caution raised in the preceding paragraph), not all of the students presented a positive picture of the programme. Four of the journal extracts were rather critical in tone. One of this group displayed some resistance to the whole enterprise, while another noted that that the ‘EAL day this week did not motivate me to the same extent [as other areas of input]’. Five of the students mixed some points of criticism with notes of appreciation. One of this group presented the following summary judgement:
‘Although the content of most of the workshops was really interesting, I did not feel that I gained any more knowledge in the subject. I was hoping I would leave the day with a bit more of a ‘solution’ but it seems that everyone is just working to provide support as well as they can and there is no real “solution”. The techniques suggested were the same as those I already implement into my classes to support other varieties of differentiation so it at least reassured me that I am working on the right lines from that respect.’

Another student gave what can be seen as a ‘realistic’ assessment of what can be achieved from a comparatively brief input on EAL:

‘There were definitely some useful ideas in there, although, I still don’t think I am equipped to deal with EAL pupils in my classroom. That said, I wouldn’t expect to be [equipped] after a couple of workshops. I think it’s definitely something you learn about through experience, and activities like this are more effective in guiding us in the right direction, rather than giving us all the answers.’

Some of the journal extracts revealed how the intervention had provoked thought and encouraged an internal dialogue concerning EAL:

‘This week’s lecture was useful in helping me explore issues pupils with EAL may face, e.g. do they struggle with classroom tasks as they have a different thought process? Are classroom activities tailored to accommodate any unseen cultural factors?’

The intervention had also led some student teachers to cast a more critical eye on the practices that they had observed in schools while on placement:
‘[EAL] was actually something that I experienced in my first placement at X school and an issue both myself and other teachers around the school were unsure of how to approach. It was either a case of just immersing the pupils in the language – which I now know actually submerges the pupils – or sending pupils to pupil support – which is also excluding ...’

A number of the journal extracts appeared to portray a distinct turning point in the understanding of EAL issues and in personal commitment to EAL learners. The following extract illustrates this type of ‘epiphany’:

‘On Thursday, the university ran an EAL day. ... EAL is such an important issue in education, and in Scotland there is a diverse nature of EAL learners. In the workshops it was interesting to discuss the different ways to help EAL situations in the classroom and be able to learn from one another. Before beginning this course I never really understood the impact of EAL on a classroom situation. However, I have come to realise its importance and that, as a trainee teacher, it is an essential part of our learning to be able to deal with different situations. One of the most important things I learnt from the EAL day was to, in my teaching, ensure I allow for opportunities for EAL pupils to use their first language by personalising learning that includes this.’

Earlier sections have noted the impact that the part of the intervention lecture delivered in German had on respondents to the second survey. A few of the reflective journal extracts also highlighted how being made to listen to a lecture in a language that they did not understand had given them a very directly felt sense of connection with the difficulties that EAL learners face. The passages presented beneath bring out very clearly the strong emotional impact and transformative effect that this experience had on some of the student participants:
‘Thursday’s EAL day was also interesting, the lecture around the statistics and actually being placed in the shoes of an EAL learner – through being spoken to for five minutes in German – was honestly eye opening (hand on heart, I had no clue what she was talking about). This was actually a talking point for the rest of the day, the impact it had on the way I considered EAL learners was massive.’

‘One of the workshop leaders did part of the introduction in German to illustrate the point that by immersing children in the language they are trying to learn they are often submerged. I felt really frustrated at this point of the day. I did German at school and was quite good at it. 8 years later when X was asking questions in German I was totally lost. I could recognise some words and some words I knew that I had at one point learned and I recognised the sound of the word but not the meaning of the word. It was quite overwhelming for the five minutes that the exercise lasted and it definitely illustrated the point. Children who come to our schools with EAL have to cope with that feeling not for just 5 mins. but for about 6 hours. ... every child with EAL will be different and require a different level of support. I’m genuinely looking forward to aiding the learning of an EAL pupil in the future. I thoroughly enjoyed Thursday and feel it was of huge benefit to me, both professionally and personally’

The journal extracts quite often provided a **clear articulation of the knowledge and strategies** that had been gained from the intervention. Appendix B includes two examples of students’ summaries of the insights that they had taken from the input that they had received. It will be seen that extract (a) in this appendix gives a clear, quite full descriptive account of a student teacher of PE grappling with the ideas and strategies that they had encountered and extract (b) presents the extended account of, and reflections on ‘a number of new ideas which will be useful to my practice’ of a student teacher of modern
foreign languages. Here we present a few quotations in the following paragraphs that succinctly capture the main messages that certain students had gained from the intervention. One student, for example, produced the following crisp summary:

‘The EAL task workshops introduced how difficult it can be for children, to learn in a classroom, when English is their additional language. Simple words and phrases are not understood and this leads to a gap in their learning and can lead to disengagement and a smaller chance of that pupil reaching their full potential. By giving these pupils a word bank or worksheet which includes the correct sentence structure, they have a better chance of developing understanding of the topic and their writing skills. Some EAL pupils are able to speak English but have trouble developing their writing. Offering them a buddy in the class who speaks the same language but have been attending the school longer can help this. We should always allow the student to speak his/her own language in the classroom and the school and openly acknowledge their language. I will continue to read about the difficulties EAL pupils face and ways in which we can differentiate in the classroom for these pupils.’

Another student teacher wrote of how:

‘On Thursday we had a full day covering EAL. I did learn that it’s important to allow for reflective time within lessons for EAL pupils as they will take longer to translate what is being asked of them and be able to express themselves. I also understand that when asking a pupil to explain or describe something the teacher must put this in the context of how they require the answer to be structured in order to support understanding.’

One student encapsulated the key insight gained from the intervention in the following terms:
‘The main message I took from the EAL lecture was the classrooms need to be really multi-cultural, not just bringing in other cultures.’

Quite a number of the journal extracts displayed the students’ plans to put the ideas and strategies they had encountered during the intervention into practice. For example, one student described how:

‘The EAL sessions were really useful and I feel like I could take many of the ideas into placement next week, particularly all of the resources we were supplied with. I was quite concerned when the head of department at the school said up to 40% of my students could be Polish. Task for the weekend is to study the resources carefully to find ideas, which could be used, within the science classroom.’

Another extract shows the student thinking through how EAL learners could be assisted to engage with texts and given general language support within a science classroom:

‘In one workshop we covered how a piece of written work could be adapted to fit the needs of an EAL learner. In the sciences, a report can be split into sections, each with its own pictorial representation. Also each section can be accompanied with a word and phrase bank, or even written out as a cloze exercise. I think this kind of thing could definitely work and could also be used as differentiated material for a student with additional learning needs … pictures, sounds, actions could offer inroads into conveying meaning. Likewise, diagrams, videos and possibly games? Food for thought indeed for the coming weeks. I feel I have learned a lot since my last placement and now this has to be implemented into practice.’

As a final example of novice teachers thinking through how they could deploy strategies to assist EAL learners, the following journal passage shows a student
seeking out resources and literature that go beyond those featuring in the intervention:

‘Another theme in my reflections this week was significant improvement in my differentiation for EAL learners. Having spent some time studying the X Council EAL strategy last week, I have also referred back to resources supplied on previous placements (where I haven’t actually needed them as much). Strategies I have used have been to provide translations and visual support – also to write key words and points on the board. Whilst these clearly have made a difference, for me the biggest improvement is that I have been able to build a positive relationship with the EAL students and this seems to be reflected in their willingness to learn and involve themselves in the lesson. Over the next week I plan to continue to try more strategies that are suggested in the literature, for example seating the EAL student next to a supportive peer (Brazil, 2003) and using pair work, (something I have tried without success so far as the student isolated himself, however I feel the improved relationship and careful choice of his ‘pair’ may improve this.’

We turn now in the final chapter to highlight central findings of this investigation and lessons from the intervention, and draw out what appear to be key implications for practice in this area.
Chapter 7  Discussion and conclusions

This chapter highlights key findings and insights that have emerged from this study and, where appropriate, points up the implications that these findings would seem to have for teacher education. To address the different aims of this investigation, the chapter looks in turn at:

- tutors’ perceptions, beliefs and development needs concerning EAL;
- students’ perceptions, attitudes and development needs concerning EAL; and
- the evaluation of the intervention and the wider lessons that it provides.

Teacher educators’ perceptions, attitudes and development needs concerning EAL

This study has found that the university educators within our sample felt that they themselves needed to develop their understanding of how best to support EAL learners along a broad front. It also needs to be noted that only a small number of this group of respondents reported having had ‘considerable’ or ‘very considerable’ experience of teaching EAL learners during their time in schools. Accordingly, many of them can be seen to be in the potentially difficult and uncomfortable position of advising student teachers concerning matters that they had not experienced directly. It is possible that this may also be the case in some other, albeit far from all, regions in the UK. The pattern of their responses to the set of items on the usefulness of CPD sessions on specific aspects of EAL learning, teaching and assessment suggested a receptiveness to, and possibly also a perception of the need for, EAL input. They also identified that it was key that students should be provided with knowledge and skills in all of the specific aspects of EAL that featured in the
surveys. Their perceptions of current provision for students revealed considerable dissatisfaction with the status quo.

Taken together, these findings would suggest that they saw the need to move towards much more comprehensive provision concerning EAL in their ITE programmes. However, the picture becomes less clear-cut when other findings are taken into account. It will be recalled that in response to the question asking whether, given the many areas to be covered in their programme, sufficient attention was given to EAL, three of the 20 respondents replied ‘yes’, five ‘no’ and 12 ‘don’t know’. This pattern of response does not suggest a strong desire to implement change. A sense of personal commitment to this area also varied across this group of teacher educators, with 9 of the respondents seeing ITE providers as having a very large or large responsibility for meeting the needs of EAL learners, and 10 seeing them as having only some responsibility.

**Students’ perceptions, attitudes and development needs concerning EAL**

In this section we turn to consider the student respondents’ views on, and perceived development needs in relation to, EAL. These views need to be interpreted against the background of their linguistic and educational experience. A very large majority of respondents in the first survey, 89.7% indicated that English was their first language and 86.1% had received their primary and secondary education in the UK. Only 35.1% of the respondents to the first survey noted that they spoke a language or languages in addition to their first language. It is possible that a somewhat different pattern of response to both surveys might have appeared in universities and training organisations where there is more linguistic and educational diversity in the student teacher cohorts.
How can English best be acquired?

Summarising key findings from the set of five questions in both surveys that explored beliefs concerning how English is best acquired, it has been noted that there was a distinct difference in the second survey between University A and B in responses to the statement that ‘English is best acquired by being immersed in an English speaking environment’. 54.4% of respondents in University B strongly agreed with this statement, as opposed to 19.6% in University A. It is not possible from our research to account for this striking difference. Given that those beliefs, and the others contained in this set of questions, may potentially colour how teachers interact with EAL learners, it would seem appropriate to pursue larger-scale survey work on this topic across a range of universities and training organisations. There were also some differences between the two universities in responses to the statement that ‘English is best acquired by the explicit teaching of the vocabulary and structure of the language.’

In the second survey, 60.8% of respondents in University A and 54.4% in University B answered in the categories ‘strongly agree’ and ‘agree’ to the item ‘EAL learners acquire language best through participating in mainstream classes’. However, roughly two fifths of the respondents in both surveys were unsure that this was the case. We have noted in the Literature Review chapter the emphasis in policy on ‘mainstreaming’ provision for EAL learners. The pattern of response to this item in our surveys cannot be seen as providing a unanimous endorsement of this policy across the whole body of our student respondents, although it is important to note that at this beginning stage in their careers these students have had limited opportunities and time to experience mainstreaming and are therefore perhaps not at the stage that they can be said to be making informed judgements.

There was an increase in the second survey in the proportion of respondents who disagreed with the statement ‘EAL learners acquire language best through
out-of-class provision’, (first survey, 11.5%; second survey, 20%). However, a large proportion still remained ‘unsure’ about the truth of this statement, (first survey, 51.7%; second survey, 41.5%). By contrast there was a strongly positive agreement across both universities in the second survey to the item: ‘Learners need to be taught explicit strategies for transferring meaning from their first language to their second language.’

We have argued in a preceding paragraph that it would be of value to employ these, or similar statements concerning the acquisition of English, in a much wider survey. In addition, we would suggest that, aside from their use as a research tool, these and similar statements could be productive triggers for discussion among student teachers where the evidence and rationale for adherence to, or disagreement with, an individual ‘belief’ could be vigorously explored.

**Who is responsible for meeting the needs of EAL learners?**

We have described how in their responses to a question in the first survey, a majority of the students saw all of the following educators as having either a ‘very large’ or ‘large’ responsibility for meeting the needs of EAL learners: ITE providers; EAL specialist services; English teachers; class teachers of subjects other than English; classroom assistants; and school management. In particular, it can be noted that they were seeing ITE providers as having definite responsibilities in this area. It is heartening to see that supporting EAL learners did not appear to be generally perceived as only the business of EAL specialist services and of English teachers. 17.2% of respondents saw class teachers of subjects other than English as having a ‘very large responsibility’ for meeting the needs of EAL learners, 45.4% a ‘large responsibility’, 32.8% ‘some responsibility’ and only 4.6% a ‘little’ or ‘no’ responsibility. As we have observed earlier, the overall pattern of responses to this question suggests ‘that the message that ‘EAL learners are the responsibility of all’ had been taken on board by a majority of these respondents’ (p. 64).
Development needs in relation to EAL

It will be recalled that in both surveys respondents gave high or very high ratings of the usefulness of EAL-related input on all of the following aspects of learning, teaching and assessment: general input on learning/teaching an additional language; recognising language that can cause challenges; devising resources/materials; differentiation of content/activities; involving EAL learners in group work; involving EAL learners in whole class work; language for conceptual understanding of your subject(s); developing EAL learners’ vocabulary; drawing appropriately on EAL learners’ own linguistic and cultural background; creating appropriate assessments; providing effective feedback; and involving EAL learners socially in the life of the classroom and the school. They thus were concerned not only with the practicalities of matters such as ‘devising resources/materials’ but also appeared to show a receptiveness to input on how to foster EAL learners’ integration into, and contribution to, the life of the classroom and the school.

This picture of the need for input on EAL across a wide front is reinforced by the large number of responses in the first survey to the question asking the students ‘to indicate briefly what, if any, challenges you perceive you may face in your own practice in teaching individuals who have English as an additional language?’ We have reported on how quite a number of respondents to this question felt generally very unprepared in relation to EAL at this early stage of their career. Others focused on the specific challenges of: communication; fostering participation/inclusive social relationships; diagnosis of language difficulties, assessing understanding and feedback; differentiation/providing appropriate support; engendering motivation/engagement; finding sufficient time to support EAL students; acting in a culturally responsive manner; attending to individual EAL learners/attending to the whole class; and school support and resources for EAL work.
Taken together, the pattern of responses to the questions on what would be useful areas of EAL-related input and the students’ own identification of the challenges that they would face, would seem to reveal that the students themselves saw a distinct need for a fairly wide-ranging education in how to provide effective, well-judged, sensitive support to EAL learners.

**Appreciation of the challenges faced by EAL learners**

We have pointed up the few notes of resistance that were expressed in both surveys to the whole enterprise of class teachers being particularly attentive to the needs of EAL learners. By contrast, the bulk of commentary in the surveys displayed an alertness to the difficulties that EAL learners may face, and often a sensitivity to the social hurdles and emotionally testing situations faced by learners who were encountering a new linguistic and cultural environment. A number of the students’ survey statements and their reflective journal extracts also displayed a degree of reflexivity concerning their own positioning in relation to EAL students.

An alertness to the range of difficulties that EAL learners may experience was evident, for example, in the large number of statements that the student teachers wrote in response to the invitation to ‘state briefly what, if any, challenges you perceive that EAL learners may face, in particular in the subject(s) that you will be teaching?’ As well as responses that centred on the general challenges presented by a new linguistic environment, concerns were raised about the task that EAL learners might face in ‘fitting in’ and in acquiring culture-specific knowledge and practices. The difficulties and disadvantages that they might face in assessment were also considered; together with the specific challenges faced in particular secondary school subjects, such as maths, science, modern languages, drama, PE, history and English itself.
We have observed earlier that these comments on the challenges faced by EAL learners, and by extension many of the statements made in other open response questions, present an encouraging picture. They display how a considerable number of these novice teachers were analysing, and showing empathy with, the difficulties that EAL students may face in their learning and school life. In addition, a minority of comments recognised the contributions that EAL learners themselves could make to learning in, and the life of, the classroom; and there was also a small number of statements that revealed a strong sense of advocacy for EAL learners and the need for them to be given a more prominent place within schooling.

The intervention and its effects

Understanding and empathy
Recapping on the students’ ratings of the question asking if the intervention ‘has given you a better general understanding of the needs of EAL learners?’, it has been noted that there was a somewhat different pattern of response to this question between the two universities. In total, 20.0% of respondents to the question indicated that it had led to a ‘considerable increase in understanding’, 63.7% to ‘some increase in understanding’, and 16.3% to ‘no/very little increase in understanding.’ In their comments on the intervention and its effects the student teachers identified the nature of the gains that they had made in understanding related to EAL. A limited number of responses indicated that the intervention had not been helpful and there were a few notes of resistance. By contrast, the large bulk of commentary brought out a quite wide range of gains in understanding. This range of gains in understanding included: an alertness to the difficulties that EAL learners may have faced before entering the UK; a widening of cultural horizons; an appreciation that ‘immersion is not enough to ensure fluency in a language’; a great awareness of the finer details of the functions and forms of language; a capacity to see texts in terms of their contexts, rhetorical purposes and effects; and a realisation of the multivalent, and culturally contingent meaning of texts,
etc. Aside from these gains in knowledge, a motif running through a considerable number of comments was the development of a greater sense of empathy with EAL learners. Participants noted how the intervention had given them a directly felt sense of the situation of EAL learners and of the challenges that they faced in a classroom.

**Ideas and strategies**

We turn now to the respondents’ evaluation of the degree to which they felt the intervention had provided them with ideas and strategies that they could deploy in everyday practice. Table 6.3 on p.111 has set out the responses to the question probing the extent to which the intervention ‘has given you strategies/ideas for responding effectively, (within your own subject specialism(s)), to EAL learners?’ Summarising these responses here: 14.8% answered in the category ‘considerable increase in strategies and ideas’; 54.8% in the category ‘some increase in strategies and ideas’; and 30.4% in the category ‘no/very little increase in strategies and ideas.’ We have already observed that this pattern of response is susceptible to different interpretations. One can centre attention positively on the fact that a majority of students reported that this fairly brief intervention had given them strategies and ideas for working with EAL learners that they could take out into their practice. Alternatively, one can have a more negative focus on the finding that just under a third of respondents saw ‘no/very little increase in strategies and ideas.’

Staying with this group who felt that they had not gained sufficient ideas/strategies from the intervention, it will be recalled that about a quarter of the respondents to the question on areas that could have been addressed flagged up a desire to have had ‘more practical strategies.’ An equal number would have wished to have had more subject-specific advice and subject-specific discussion of EAL issues. It is possible, therefore, that the dissatisfaction of some participants with the strategies provided in the
intervention derived from a perception that these strategies did not directly apply to, or appear to be relevant within, their particular subject area. On the theme of areas that could have been addressed, it is worth flagging up that quite a number of respondents would have welcomed input that targeted more directly ‘strategies for helping EAL learners who have no English at all and have just arrived in the school.’

Set against a few comments indicating dissatisfaction with the strategies provided in the intervention were the more numerous observations that expressed general appreciation for the materials, ideas and strategies that had been offered. A range of ideas and strategies was singled out for appreciative comment, including ways to make use of the EAL student’s first language and/or life experience. Just under half of the respondents reported that they would be taking ahead strategies and ideas from the intervention; and a considerable number of this group were intending to use multiple strategies derived from the day. Strategies and ideas that they intended to employ included: ‘more use of visuals’ / graphic organisers; greater attention to language and how it functions within a wider context; ways of developing EAL students’ vocabulary / subject-specific vocabulary; the use of writing frames; focusing effort on differentiation; integrating EAL learners into group work; employing a buddy system; making use of L1 in the classroom; and promoting linguistic and cultural inclusion in a number of ways.

Reactions to individual elements of the intervention
Turning to look at reactions to individual elements of the intervention, the students’ comments in the second survey would seem to indicate that the lecture was generally well received. In particular, the section of the lecture conducted in German was regarded by a number of the respondents as having had a powerful impact on them, giving a very felt sense of the difficult emotions that EAL learners may experience and the challenges that they may face in comprehension and communication in the classroom. Accordingly, it
seems appropriate to suggest that a similar exercise be incorporated into any
general introduction to EAL that student teachers receive.

It has been noted that there were a few critical comments on the workshops,
and the wish on the part of a proportion of the respondents to have had more
subject-specific strategies can be viewed as an implicit, albeit constructive,
criticism of the workshops. However, we have also described the positive
observations that were made concerning the workshops, in particular, noting
how for some respondents the ‘workshop activities had given them a more
differentiated understanding of language and of the need to contextualise
information appropriately for EAL learners.’

There were positive reactions to the question and answer session that was
based around a text-wall, with one respondent highlighting how this session
gave an opportunity to raise concerns and matters that had not surfaced
earlier in the intervention. Again we would advocate that such a session which
allows participants’ queries and worries to be heard and addressed be part of
any general introduction to EAL for student teachers. A text-wall where
questions are sent anonymously from students’ mobile phones is a ‘safe’,
distinctly interactive, and fun, way in which to take such a session ahead.

**Gains in confidence**
A more positive rating of confidence in ‘your ability to support EAL learners’
was evident in the second survey conducted immediately after the
intervention, compared to the pattern of responses to the first survey.
Summarising the overall findings:

1st survey: very confident, 2.9%; confident, 8.6%; some confidence, 32.2%;
little confidence, 40.8%; not at all confident, 15.5%.
We have noted, however, that it would be inappropriate to attribute these gains in confidence straightforwardly to the intervention. By the time of the second survey participants will have had a greater amount of teaching experience that may have led to a general increase in confidence in their teaching, impacting on their rating of their confidence in relation to EAL.

**Recommendations**

A survey that analyses attitudes towards, and needs related to, an area of professional practice can seldom provide an unequivocal guide to action. However, while bearing that caveat in mind, it seems appropriate to make the following recommendations based on the current findings.

**Teacher educators**

Half of the teacher educator respondents in this survey identified themselves as having only ‘some responsibility’ in the area of EAL. If this finding proves to be representative of attitudes in other teacher training institutes and organisations, ‘awareness raising’ sessions concerning the needs of EAL learners and the challenges they face may be required to engender a greater sense of personal commitment to this area of practice, prior to a larger-scale programme of professional development for teacher educators in relation to EAL.

Many of the teacher educator respondents to our survey did not themselves have much direct experience of teaching EAL learners and, as we have noted in a preceding paragraph, this may well be the case for other teacher educators in a number of regions in the UK. Accordingly, it would seem to be appropriate
for teacher-training organizations to pursue opportunities for their teacher educators to gain either some direct experience in the classroom of working with EAL learners or at least the vicarious experience of watching recordings of accomplished teachers in a range of classrooms interacting with EAL learners and then talking about their practice. Such recordings would also be a very valuable resource for student teachers.

If the picture that has emerged from our survey is mirrored in other institutions, there would seem to be a need for a comprehensive programme of professional development for teacher educators themselves in relation to EAL. The literature that has been reviewed in Chapter 2 of this report could provide the conceptual underpinnings for such a programme. In taking ahead such a programme, there would be scope for universities and other Teacher Education providers to share expertise, strategies and resources. This would seem to be particularly necessary given that in England so much of the responsibility for the development of student teachers now lies with individual primary and secondary schools. Mentors in schools, who in effect have the role of the educators of trainee teachers, would clearly benefit from the creation of national or regional programmes of development in the area of EAL.

In sum therefore, given the need in the first instance to ‘educate the educators’ of teachers, advocacy for strategic initiatives by the UK governments to invest resource in building this foundation of knowledge and skill related to EAL would seem to be a priority.

Initial Teacher Education students
Any general introduction to issues in, knowledge concerning, and strategies for, working with EAL learners is likely to need to need at least some tailoring to the needs and characteristics of particular cohorts of student teachers. However, we would suggest that the general contours of the intervention that
we designed and delivered could be adopted in other teacher education settings. We have noted how the intervention was underpinned by relevant literature and the student evaluation of the intervention was sufficiently favourable to suggest that it connected with much of its audience. In particular, we would advocate that any general introduction of this type includes an exercise which forces student teachers to struggle with a language that is unfamiliar to them and that there is a session which allows them to raise their own questions and concerns in a safe, and interactive fashion. The following paragraph addresses the criticism of some of our student respondents that more subject-specific discussion and strategies could have been provided.

Our findings would seem to reveal that this group of teacher educators saw a distinct need to provide students on their programmes with a comprehensive preparation for supporting EAL learners, but also did not demonstrate a very distinct appetite for change in the face of competing pressures. We suggest that this challenge of taking ahead preparation for EAL work in the midst of other claims on curriculum time may well be the case across many teacher education programmes where there are customarily pressures to cover a wide agenda in a comparatively short period of time.

A key recommendation that we would make in response to this situation, and in relation to the student findings, is therefore that a ‘dual’ approach is taken to the development of EAL practice within teacher education programmes. Consideration can be given to how sessions that would give a grounding of knowledge and strategies in EAL could be provided. However, rather than seeing all of EAL practice as needing to take the form of a large additional block of input, attention could be given to how this input might be infused throughout individual subjects, e.g., drama, mathematics, and, importantly, across all of the core concerns of a Teacher Education programme, such as differentiation, feedback, assessment, group work, etc. We would argue that

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‘folding’ EAL into the teacher education curriculum in this way could have a number of advantages, including responding, at least to a degree, to students who may wish to see a very subject-specific treatment of EAL questions and strategies. This is also, in our view, the most practical way of achieving change. Writing on evaluation, Clarke (1999: 176) points up the danger of taking a simplistic view ‘which effectively ignores the existence of the social and political realities in which programmes operate.’ The dual approach that we are advocating does, we feel, take such ‘social and political realities’ into account and would be more likely to be effective than attempting to add a large EAL ‘bolt-on’ to existing programmes.
### Appendix A: additional tables

**Table A.1**: responses in the second survey to the statement ‘English is best acquired by being immersed in an English speaking environment’.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response categories</th>
<th>University A</th>
<th>University B</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>strongly agree</td>
<td>11 19.6%</td>
<td>43 54.4%</td>
<td>54 40.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>agree</td>
<td>18 32.2%</td>
<td>28 35.4%</td>
<td>46 34.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unsure</td>
<td>11 19.6%</td>
<td>7 8.9%</td>
<td>18 13.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>disagree</td>
<td>15 26.8%</td>
<td>1 1.3%</td>
<td>16 11.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>strongly disagree</td>
<td>1 1.8%</td>
<td>0 0.0%</td>
<td>1 0.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table A.2**: responses in the second survey to the statement ‘English is best acquired by the explicit teaching of the vocabulary and structure of the language’.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response categories</th>
<th>University A</th>
<th>University B</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>strongly agree</td>
<td>8 14.3%</td>
<td>11 14.0%</td>
<td>19 14.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>agree</td>
<td>20 35.7%</td>
<td>39 49.4%</td>
<td>59 43.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unsure</td>
<td>23 41.1%</td>
<td>20 25.2%</td>
<td>43 31.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>disagree</td>
<td>5 8.9%</td>
<td>9 11.4%</td>
<td>14 10.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>strongly disagree</td>
<td>0 0.0%</td>
<td>0 0.0%</td>
<td>0 0.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table A.3: responses in the second survey to the statement ‘EAL learners acquire language best through participating in mainstream classes’.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response categories</th>
<th>University A</th>
<th>University B</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>strongly agree</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>agree</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unsure</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>disagree</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>strongly disagree</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table A.4: responses in the second survey to the statement ‘EAL learners acquire language best through out-of-class provision’.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response categories</th>
<th>University A</th>
<th>University B</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>strongly agree</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>agree</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unsure</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>disagree</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>strongly disagree</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table A.5: responses in the second survey to the statement ‘Learners need to be taught explicit strategies for transferring meaning from their first language to their second language’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response categories</th>
<th>University A</th>
<th>University B</th>
<th>Both universities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>strongly agree</td>
<td>22 39.3%</td>
<td>23 29.1%</td>
<td>45 33.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>agree</td>
<td>26 46.4%</td>
<td>31 39.2%</td>
<td>57 42.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unsure</td>
<td>8 14.3%</td>
<td>24 30.4%</td>
<td>32 23.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>disagree</td>
<td>0 0 %</td>
<td>1 1.3%</td>
<td>1 0.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>strongly disagree</td>
<td>0 0 %</td>
<td>0 0 %</td>
<td>0 0 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table A.6: responses to the question in the second survey ‘At this point in your ITE programme, how confident do you feel in your ability to support EAL learners?’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response categories</th>
<th>University A</th>
<th>University B</th>
<th>Both universities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>very confident</td>
<td>1 1.8%</td>
<td>3 3.8%</td>
<td>4 3.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>confident</td>
<td>9 16.1%</td>
<td>12 15.2%</td>
<td>21 15.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>some confidence</td>
<td>27 48.2%</td>
<td>39 49.4%</td>
<td>66 48.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>little confidence</td>
<td>16 28.6%</td>
<td>21 26.6%</td>
<td>37 27.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>not at all confident</td>
<td>3 5.4%</td>
<td>4 5.1%</td>
<td>7 5.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix B
Extracts from the reflective journals of two students in University A that summarise the insights that they had taken from the EAL intervention.

Extract A
Thursdays EAL tutorials were a beneficial experience and opened up numerous questions and issues discussed throughout the day. This is a very interesting obstacle to overcome in education and this day provided some methods and strategies to consider when integrating EAL learners into the class. I think we have an advantage as PE students as we use numerous visual and kinaesthetic learning styles. In my opinion this makes are obstacles slightly easier to overcome.

The key focus of this week has centred around the English as an Additional Language. I felt that the lectures and tutorials helped to convey the diverse nature of EAL learners in Scotland. A number of strategies were conveyed which may be helpful in the classroom but these were not easily applicable to PE and this was a struggle for myself and my fellow PE students who felt at times we were not as involved in conversations as we could have been. I learned however that in order for these pupils to learn the language the best way to do so is to learn through another topic using the language and this could be applied to my subject through a specific sport beginning with the use of key words. At this point I consider the use of key-words while an EAL learner observes a performer within the class allowing them to make a mental connection through the use of a visual aide.

Moreover, I feel that it is important not to put the responsibility of learning the language on the pupil, in classroom and in my case PE, it is essential that the language is directed to the child in order to allow them to interact with and use the language so that it becomes more organically learned rather than through a rigid read and remember process. These learners need to learn
through use of the language in a practical sense. It is also important to consider pupils prior learning and build upon this through a scaffolding approach.

I recalled a number of decoding strategies to help learners such as visual clues, key words, identifying similarities in English. It is essential to let the learner draw on things they know about the world. It is important not to neglect the learner’s home language in the classroom while they are speaking and writing. Other strategies include buddy systems, connections to be made between topics learned and their own experiences. It is interesting to note that this also applies to those whose prominent language IS English and this promotes inclusion through dialogue in the classroom.

To conclude, the pupil should be used as a resource and I need to tap into their, “current knowledge” through content that relates to their own life and perhaps their own country, nationality and culture.

**Extract B**

At the end of this week, the PGDE Secondary cohort participated in a full-day event which addressed the specific needs of EAL students and the ways in which teachers can support them. As detailed below, the workshops presented a number of new ideas which will be useful to my practice as a MFL teacher.

The Power of Language:

The activity which demonstrated how The Guardian varied its language to report on the Gulf War was an interesting lesson on semantics. By comparing the nouns, verbs, and adjectives used to describe the English and the Iraqis, we noticed how language is politically charged and nuanced. The Guardian (and other media sources) clearly manipulate language to convey particular images and messages, ultimately resulting in a biased portrayal of events. However, the connotations of such language may be lost on non-native speakers of English.
Depending on their level of English competence, non-native English speakers may only take words at face value because their priority is to understand the language, rather than analyse its use. This draws on Bourdieu’s (1990, 1991) theory of cultural capital, which refers to the non-financial social assets that promote social mobility, such as education, intellect, style of speech, dress, or physical appearance. Bourdieu conceptualized cultural capital as having several subtypes, one which he labelled “embodied capital”. Embodied cultural capital consists of the consciously and passively inherited properties of one’s self. Within this subtype there is linguistic capital, defined as the mastery of a language acquired from one’s surrounding culture. In this sense, mastery of a language entails the ability to use the right words, grammar, register, tone, and body language when communicating. In other words, it means to speak in a manner that is suitable for the circumstances and objectives of a given interaction.

Referring back to EAL learners, teachers must recognize that they typically do not have the same amount of linguistic capital as their English-speaking counterparts. As such, EAL learners may face additional challenges when engaging with English texts; more specifically, they may not understand the subtle connotations of word choice or the symbolism associated with certain words or images. This further applies to MFL learning as students in French and Spanish classes are additional language learners who have not inherited linguistic capital in the L2 during childhood. MFL teachers consequently need to consider how their learners’ lack of linguistic capital in the target language impacts on their learning and they may need to make salient the meanings and connotations of the language studied and used.

Writing Frames:

The second workshop highlighted how writing frames can be used to support EAL learners in all subjects. I worked with a fellow MFL peer to develop a writing frame (in French) which would guide students in the production of a text. The purpose of the text was to convince readers that they should visit a
Francophone country or city. In developing this writing frame, we quickly realized that this would be beneficial not just for EAL learners, but also for lower-ability learners. The writing frame is ultimately a form of differentiation and scaffolding that can be used in any MFL class to help students who struggle to think of sentences or ideas in the target language. A teacher may decide to provide detailed writing frames early on in the school year and to gradually reduce the detail as the year progresses in order to promote more independent thinking among students.

Text Wall:

The text wall debrief at the end of the EAL event was a useful way of summarizing the day and discovering how other student teachers think and feel about supporting EAL learners. It was interesting to see that other students, like myself, are curious about a number of issues: how dictionaries should be used in class to support students; whether it is fair and useful to allow other multilingual students help the EAL learner in class; how to ensure that EAL learners are supported, but not at the expense of other students’ education, and so on. Teaching EAL learners - and differentiation in general - is clearly a complex issue, therefore it is not surprising that new teachers may grapple with it. I believe that as we gain more teaching experience, differentiating lessons and materials for all learners will become a habitual action. Until then, we need to make a conscious effort to support students so that they feel welcomed and included in the classroom.
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