



Assignment Cover Sheet

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Abstract

Practitioners ranked whole-school EAL policy characteristics as a top-ten research priority through the Priority Setting Partnership for English as an Additional Language (Chalmers, Faitaki and Murphy, 2023). This study responds by investigating how schools develop effective provision without national statutory guidance. Approximately 1.7 million pupils in English state-funded schools are classified as having English as an Additional Language, yet with the dissolution of the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant in 2011, responsibility fell on individual institutions without resources, guidance, or accountability.

The study integrates Policy Enactment Theory (Ball, Maguire and Braun, 2012), Critical Realism (Fletcher, 2017), and Fraser's (1997) Recognition-Redistribution dialectic. Its original theoretical contribution extends Policy Enactment Theory beyond policy mediation to theorise "enacted policy without documentary policy". Practitioners become de facto policy authors, constructing provision where none is mandated.

A qualitative multiple case study investigated EAL provision across six Greater Manchester secondary schools. Purposive sampling sought maximum variation in EAL population density (20% to 90%). Semi-structured interviews with six practitioners in diverse roles yielded 378 minutes of recorded conversation, analysed through reflexive thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2019, 2022).

The central finding confirms widespread "enacted policy without documentary policy": five of six schools lacked formal written policy whilst demonstrating effective practice. This distinction between "mediational enactment" (interpreting existing texts) and "generative enactment" (authoring provision from absence) represents a key theoretical advance. Individual practitioner agency proved critical: provision was sustained by passionate professionals whose commitment transcended contractual requirements. However, this reliance creates systemic vulnerability captured by a second original concept, the "practitioner lottery." When provision depends on individuals rather than systems, their departure creates institutional voids.

Critical Realist analysis identified four generative mechanisms producing marginalisation: resource vulnerability following EMAG dissolution; statutory hierarchy ensuring legally

mandated SEND provision supersedes non-statutory EAL; accountability absence creating no external pressure for improvement; and information invisibility preventing systematic tracking of learners. Constructions of “success” reflected ongoing negotiation between Fraser’s Recognition (validating linguistic identities) and Redistribution (providing access to dominant linguistic capital), with practitioners deploying translanguaging pedagogies whilst recognising that assessment systems tested English proficiency rather than subject knowledge.

Participants universally reported that Initial Teacher Training fails to prepare teachers for linguistic diversity. The “practitioner lottery” thus carries double meaning: success depends not only on employing a committed practitioner but on whether that practitioner possesses technical skill, to provide rigorous academic language instruction.

The study extends Policy Enactment Theory to conditions of policy absence, demonstrates Fraser’s framework utility for EAL analysis, and identifies structural mechanisms of marginalisation. Until structural change addresses these findings, educational outcomes for EAL learners will depend on a double lottery: which school they attend, and whether that school retains practitioners capable of teaching effectively without support at the national level.

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What are the characteristics of successful whole school policies for supporting EAL learners?

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Contextualising the Study

Approximately 1.7 million pupils in English state-funded schools are classified as having English as an Additional Language (EAL), representing one-fifth of the school population (Department for Education, 2024). This substantial demographic presence might suggest a corresponding policy infrastructure. Yet, following the dissolution of the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant (EMAG) in 2011, no national statutory guidance exists to regulate and direct schools in supporting EAL learners. The Equality Act 2010 prohibits discrimination but proscribes no positive duty for language support; Ofsted's inspection framework, until very recently, offered minimal attention to EAL provision despite the size of the EAL group. The crude administrative label 'EAL' itself folds multidimensionally heterogeneous learners into a single category that is inadequate for educational planning (Strand and Hessel, 2018). The resulting 'postcode lottery' (The Bell Foundation, 2023) means that the quality of provision a learner receives depends greatly on which school they attend.

This study addresses a research priority identified by practitioners themselves. The Priority Setting Partnership for English as an Additional Language ranked 'What are the characteristics of successful whole school policies for supporting EAL learners?' as the tenth highest priority question (Chalmers, Faitaki and Murphy, 2023). That practitioners identified this question through a PSP reflects and validates a genuine epistemic gap: schools are expected to develop effective provision without national guidance. This study responds by piloting an investigation into how practitioners deal with this, examining what schools do and the mechanisms that enable and restrict their work.

1.2 Problem Statement

The end of EMAG created a funding gap and devolved responsibility for EAL provision to individual schools without guidance, resources, or accountability mechanisms. Provision for pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) illuminates this absence starkly. SEND operates within a comprehensive statutory framework. EAL, by contrast, lacks any equivalent statutory protection or oversight. This disparity leads to a statutory hierarchy wherein legally mandated needs command institutional attention whilst non-statutory needs become discretionary.

Within this context, schools face a fundamental challenge. They must simultaneously enact what Fraser (1997) terms 'Recognition' (validating linguistic identity, affirming multilingualism as asset) and 'Redistribution' (providing access to dominant linguistic capital required for academic credentials). These imperatives may conflict or coexist: celebrating home languages whilst ensuring English proficiency for examinations; affirming identity whilst enabling access to systems that implicitly devalue linguistic diversity. Without national guidance on these potentially competing demands, practitioners improvise locally in relative isolation. The quality of improvisation, this study suggests, depends not only on the school but on practitioners. The postcode lottery may thus be compounded by what emerges from this research as a 'practitioner lottery' wherein individual commitment and competence substitutes for systemic provision.

1.3 Research Questions

The study is guided by one primary and three subsidiary research questions. The primary research question asks: *How are 'successful' whole-school policies for EAL learners enacted and sustained in the absence of national statutory guidance?* The subsidiary questions operationalise this inquiry across three dimensions. First, how do school leaders and practitioners interpret and translate disparate EAL guidelines into local school practice? This addresses processes of policy enactment at the school level. Second, what structural and contextual mechanisms constrain or enable the embedding of EAL pedagogies? This question adopts a Critical Realist orientation toward underlying causal structures. Third, how is the concept of 'success' for EAL learners constructed by different stakeholders, and to what extent does this align with inclusive

principles? This question acknowledges that success is contested, requiring empirical investigation rather than assumed definition.

1.4 Theoretical Framework

The study employs a multi-layered theoretical framework, synthesised in the Literature Review, to analyse policy as a complex, enacted social practice. Underpinned by the ontological foundation of Critical Realism (Fletcher, 2017), which guides the search for underlying generative mechanisms, the framework operates across three analytical levels. At the macro-level, Bacchi's (2000) WPR approach interrogates how the policy vacuum constructs EAL as a specific kind of problem. At the meso-level, Spolsky's (2004) tripartite model examines the alignment of language beliefs, practices, and management. At the micro-level, Policy Enactment Theory (Ball, Maguire and Braun, 2012) captures how practitioners actively shape provision in the absence of statutory texts. These layers are unified by Fraser's (1997) Recognition-Redistribution dialectic, which serves as the normative framework for analysing how schools manage validating pupil identity and ensuring access to linguistic capital. The study's original theoretical contribution emerges from this framework. It examines 'enacted policy without documentary policy': how provision exists in absence of textual codification. This extends Policy Enactment Theory beyond established application to policy mediation, theorising instead what occurs when practitioners become de facto policy authors, constructing provision where none exists or is mandated. The concept of the 'practitioner lottery' captures a key implication: when policy is enacted through individual agency rather than institutional systems, provision becomes vulnerable to the presence or absence of individuals.

1.5 Methodological Overview

The study employs a qualitative multiple case study design, investigating EAL provision across six Greater Manchester secondary schools. Purposive sampling sought maximum variation in EAL population density (ranging from approximately 20% to 90%), enabling cross-case comparison of how context shapes enactment. The six schools ranged in size from approximately 700 to 1500 pupils, with an approximate mean size of 1150. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with six practitioners occupying diverse roles: EAL lead, teaching assistant, coordinator, EAL teacher, specialist, and a trainee teacher. This role variation captured

perspectives from those with specialist responsibility and those encountering EAL learners within mainstream teaching. The interview corpus comprises approximately seven hours of audio, transcribed verbatim to 62,753 words. Full anonymised participant details are provided in the Methodology chapter (Table 1).

Analysis followed Braun and Clarke's (2019, 2022) reflexive thematic analysis. This approach emphasises flexibility, researcher reflexivity and active generation rather than passive emergence of themes. The interpretivist-critical realist paradigm positions the study as seeking to understand participant meaning while remaining aware of structural mechanisms shaping practice. The interview protocol was not formally piloted, though the semi-structured format permitted responsive adaptation. The relatively small sample and geographic concentration position findings as indicative rather than generalisable, offering contextualised insight that may inform larger-scale investigation. This study may be characterised as exploratory research, while making some substantive contribution.

1.6 Original Contribution

The study makes empirical, theoretical, and practical contributions. Empirically, it provides a contemporary systemic account of how EAL provision functions in practice, documenting 'enacted policy without documentary policy' as a widespread condition across participating schools. Theoretically, it extends Policy Enactment Theory to conditions of policy absence, demonstrates the utility of Fraser's Recognition-Redistribution framework for EAL policy analysis, and identifies through Critical Realist analysis four generative mechanisms of marginalisation: resource vulnerability, statutory hierarchy, accountability absence, and information invisibility. The generated concept of the 'practitioner lottery' captures how reliance on individual agency creates systemic vulnerability. Practically, the study offers evidence-based understanding for practitioners navigating the vacuum, insights for policy-makers considering future statutory frameworks, and implications for Initial Teacher Training providers seeking to address the documented training gap.

1.7 Outline

Chapter 2 establishes the theoretical framework and reviews the policy context, ideological landscape, and empirical evidence on successful EAL practice through literature review. Chapter 3 presents the research design, sampling strategy, data collection procedures, analytical approach, quality criteria, ethical considerations, and limitations. Chapter 4 presents findings from reflexive thematic analysis, organised around four themes: Navigating the Policy Vacuum Through Improvised Professionalism; Structural Constraints and the Mechanics of Marginalisation; Constructing Success through the Recognition-Redistribution Dialectic; and Building Capacity through addressing the ITT Gap. Chapter 5 discusses and synthesises findings with the theoretical framework, articulates the unique contribution of the study, and develops implications for theory and practice. Chapter 6 summarises contributions, acknowledging limitations, proposing future research directions, and presenting implications for policy and practice. The study proposes that understanding how practitioners successfully navigate policy absence may illuminate principles applicable both to future statutory development and to current institutional improvement.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 The English EAL Policy Context: A Rationale for School-Level Action

Linguistic diversity is a defining feature of contemporary English education (The Bell Foundation, 2023). Yet for over a decade, England has completely lacked any coherent national strategy for EAL learners (ibid.). Responsibility has devolved to individual schools, creating a postcode and practitioner lottery where the quality of a pupil's EAL education depends entirely upon the institution and teacher they study with.

This policy gap creates a tension framing this dissertation's analysis. Following Fraser's (1997) dual-systems theory of social justice, schools must simultaneously respond to competing forces: Recognition (validating the pupil's linguistic and cultural identity) and Redistribution (providing access to the linguistic capital required for social mobility). As Bourdieu (1991) theorises, although languages may be linguistically equal, they are not socially equal; Standard English operates as a 'dominant code' in the British educational system, a privileged form of capital

(Delpit, 2006). The absence of national direction compels schools to navigate this tension without support; the investigation of successful school-level policy is therefore an urgent practical necessity (Chalmers, Faitaki and Murphy, 2023).

2.1.1 Historical Context and the Policy Vacuum

Analysis of English EAL policy over sixty years does not reveal steady progress guided by principles of access to education, but reactions shaped by shifting political climates and social anxieties surrounding immigration. Costley (2014) identifies policy responses vacillating between ideological positions. Approaches in the 1950s-60s focused on assimilation. As numbers of EAL learners increased, they were often removed from mainstream classes for specialist language tuition, an approach that recognised the need for specialist support, but led to restricted curriculum access and social segregation and stigma (Department for Education and Science, 1985).

The Swann Report initiated 'mainstreaming'; EAL pupils should be educated alongside peers. While progressive in theory, implementation has been complex. Mainstreaming has often led to what Leung (2016, p. 165) describes as sublimation of EAL learners' distinct linguistic needs, effectively making EAL 'everybody's business in principle, but nobody's in practice.' This produced what Costley (2014, p. 288) terms a 'consistently inconsistent' history of provision.

This inconsistency has been amplified in the post-2010 landscape of austerity politics. The dissolution of the ring-fenced Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant (EMAG) in 2011 had provided dedicated funding to narrow achievement gaps (The Bell Foundation, 2023). Flynn and Curdt-Christiansen (2018, p. 410) document a 'significant reduction in educational funding for these children.' This devolution aligns with wider shifts towards school autonomy (Ball, 2012). While ostensibly promoting local innovation, the shift risks widening inequity in practice: schools with specialist expertise may create outstanding policies, while others 'fumble along' (Murakami, 2008, p. 275). The extent of this void is evidenced by third-sector organisations being compelled to step in; the EAL Assessment Framework for Schools was a direct attempt at 'filling a void in policy and provision' (Leung, Evans and Liu, 2021, p. 390).

2.1.2 The Proficiency Imperative

A further consequence of the policy lack is the inadequacy of the primary national tool for identifying the EAL cohort. The 'EAL' label is a critically flawed instrument. Robust analysis by Strand (2021) and Hessel and Strand (2023) demonstrates that EAL status alone is a weak predictor of achievement. Their research found that direct assessment of proficiency in English predicts up to seven times more variation in attainment than ethnicity, gender, and socio-economic disadvantage combined. Strand (2021, p. 70) states clearly and emphatically that proficiency in English is 'the key' to understanding educational achievement. Fluent bilinguals labelled 'EAL' consistently outperform monolingual peers, yet pupils at early acquisition stages (who require the most support) are conflated within one category with them.

Strand and Hessel's (2018) comprehensive analysis of 140,000 pupils demonstrated that 'proficiency in English explains up to 22% of the variation in EAL pupils' achievement, compared to a typical 3%-4% explained by the joint combination of ethnicity, gender and entitlement to FSM' (p.36). The differential outcomes are dramatic: at Key Stage 4, pupils classified as 'New to English' achieve a mean Attainment 8 score of 15.0, whilst 'Fluent' EAL pupils achieve 54.5. Crucially, 'Fluent EAL pupils scored 10 points higher than monolingual English speakers on Attainment 8' (p.30), directly challenging deficit narratives positioning bilingualism as disadvantage.

The variation masked by the EAL category is strongly critiqued: 'The EAL definition groups together a diverse and heterogeneous group of pupils... all in a single group, irrespective of their actual language skills' (Strand and Hessel, 2018, p.10). They describe the DfE's decision to withdraw the statutory Proficiency in English (PIE) scale as 'a retrograde step and potentially a damaging one' (p.11). Their recommendation that schools 'continue to record the proficiency in English of their EAL pupils' despite removal of statutory requirements boldly calls for the kind of school-level 'enacted policy' without national 'documentary policy' that this study investigates.

This empirical evidence makes recent national policy-making appear incoherent. Strand (2021) recounts how his research influenced the DfE to mandate a five-point proficiency scale from 2016. The requirement was abandoned after two years; the data was never fully integrated into the National Pupil Database, seen as a 'missed opportunity' (Flynn and Curdt-Christiansen, 2018). Schools are relying on an EAL label that research demonstrates is insufficient. Use of PIE, while empirically validated, is unmandated and unstandardised in application.

2.1.3 The Statutory Hierarchy: SEND Protection and EAL

The EAL policy gap is a structured exclusion. The SEND Code of Practice (DfE and DoH, 2015) establishes a comprehensive statutory framework. Schools 'must' use their best endeavours to make sure that a child with SEN gets the support they need' (p.92, para 6.2); they must designate a qualified SENCO who is required to 'achieve a National Award in Special Educational Needs Co-ordination within three years of appointment' (pp.108-109, paras 6.85-6.86). The framework mandates assessment timelines, individual EHC plans, ring-fenced funding, and the right of parental appeal.

There is no equivalent statutory framework for EAL. The SEND Code explicitly excludes EAL learners: 'Difficulties related solely to limitations in English as an additional language are not SEN' (p.96, para 6.24). This creates a de facto 'statutory hierarchy mechanism': SEND learners hold legally enforceable entitlements that EAL learners lack. This asymmetry encourages institutional actors (school leaders allocating finite resources) to prioritise legally mandated provision over discretionary support.

The accountability framework reinforces this. Ofsted's inspection toolkit (Ofsted, 2025) identifies four groups requiring attention: disadvantaged pupils, pupils with SEND, pupils known to social care, and 'those who may face other barriers.' EAL pupils are denoted 'other barriers'. For SEND, inspectors evaluate whether a qualified SENCO exists and whether statutory requirements are met. For EAL, the 80-page framework contains a single paragraph of guidance (pp.20-21). No grading criteria for EAL provision exists. Schools cannot be held accountable for EAL-specific provision.

2.1.4 Research Rationale

This national uncertainty provides the rationale for the present study. A pioneering project by Chalmers, Faitaki, and Murphy (2023) set out to scope and establish research priorities for the EAL field from the perspective of research users: educators, parents, and learners. Using a robust Priority Setting Partnership (PSP) methodology from the James Lind Alliance (2022), they systematically gathered and ranked questions that practitioners most valued. The tenth priority identified was: 'What are the characteristics of successful whole school policies for supporting EAL learners?' with specific subquestions addressing responsibility, consistency, resource

allocation, and communication. This question's inclusion confirms empirically that policy is a pressing, practitioner-identified priority.

2.2 Theoretical Foundations: From Policy Texts to Enacted Social Practice

2.2.1 Beyond Description to Critical Analysis

A meaningful analysis of 'successful' EAL policy requires a theoretical context beyond descriptive inventory. This dissertation adopts a critical constructionist perspective viewing policy as a social and discursive process (Shohamy, 2006). Policies are practices enmeshed in context, values, and power relations. From this perspective, policy documents are socially constructed texts whose 'problems' and 'solutions' reflect particular ideological framings (Bacchi, 2000).

This dissertation additionally adopts a critical realist perspective (Fletcher, 2017). Critical realism provides a stratified ontology distinguishing three levels: the empirical, comprising 'events as we experience them'; the actual, where events occur 'whether or not we experience or interpret them'; and the real, comprising 'causal mechanisms... the inherent properties in an object or structure that act as causal forces to produce events' (p.183). This stratification enables analysis to escape the descriptive, identifying underlying mechanisms producing observable patterns. Crucially, whilst policy documents may be socially constructed (as Bacchi argues), the structural constraints within which practitioners operate (funding regimes, statutory frameworks, institutional hierarchies) are real conditions existing independently of how they are perceived or represented.

Fletcher's (2017, p.183) critical realism 'looks for tendencies, not laws' because 'the social world consists of open systems' (p.185). The process of 'retroduction' ('constantly moving between empirical and deeper levels of reality') provides the analytical method for identifying generative mechanisms explaining why EAL provision remains structurally marginalised despite practitioner commitment (p.189).

2.2.2 Deconstructing Policy: Bacchi's 'What's the Problem Represented to be?' Approach

Bacchi's (2000) framework of policy-as-discourse provides a foundational critical theory. The central proposition is useful: policies are discursive acts that actively 'create' or 'give shape' to

problems. A policy offering a 'solution' is advancing a specific problematisation of an issue. Consequently, Bacchi (2000, p. 48) argues critical analysis should focus not on the 'problem' itself, but on the problematisation embedded within the policy: 'What's the Problem Represented to be?' (WPR).

The WPR approach provides diagnostic questions: What is the 'problem' represented to be? What presuppositions underpin this? What is left unproblematised? What effects are produced? As Ball (1990, p. 17) argues, discourses are 'practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak; they do not identify objects, they constitute them.' This frames a systematic method for questioning school-level EAL policies, moving beyond stated aims to critically examine how policy frames linguistic diversity.

2.2.3 The Architecture of Language Policy: Spolsky's Tripartite Model

While Bacchi's framework provides a lens for deconstructing implicit problematisation, a more specific model is required to analyse distinct dimensions of language policy. Spolsky's (2004) model offers this structure, arguing that a community's language policy is a dynamic with three strands: language beliefs (ideology), language practices, and language management. Understanding whole-school EAL policy requires analysing all three strands and the degree of coherence between them.

The foundational component is language beliefs: values and attitudes held about language and its speakers, forming the 'common-sense' ethos underpinning all decisions. These can be analysed through Ruiz's (1984) orientations. A 'language-as-problem' orientation may view student home languages as barriers, leading to policies ignoring multilingual opportunities. Conversely, a 'language-as-resource' system frames bilingualism as cognitive and cultural asset.

These beliefs manifest language practices: observable, habitual, and often informal uses of language within the school. These practices are where a school's de facto policy is clearly seen, whether teachers encourage translanguageing, allowing students to activate their linguistic repertoire, or enforce 'English-only' rules (Creese and Blackledge, 2010). Finally, language management constitutes efforts to regulate language through rules, plans, and interventions (official written policy, improvement plans, funding allocation, and designation of roles). Spolsky's model enables analysis of potential dissonance between these strands. A successful and

coherent whole-school policy is one where beliefs are reflected in practices and supported by management structures.

2.2.4 From Text to Reality: The Enactment of Policy in Schools

If a school's beliefs, practices, and management appear aligned, a final theoretical lens is required to understand policy-as-written and policy-as-lived. Policy enactment theory (Ball, Maguire and Braun, 2012) argues that policy is not simply 'implemented' but actively 'enacted.' Policies are subject to interpretation, negotiation, translation, and creative recreation by practitioners. This positions teachers, EAL coordinators, and school leaders as 'policy actors' (agents, not passive recipients), particularly suitable given absent national direction.

This theory explains the 'policy-practice gap' identified by Flynn and Curdt-Christiansen (2018), whose finding that national policy intentions were 'divorced from' classroom reality can be understood as enactment's direct result. This agency can lead to effective localised innovations, but as Alford and Kettle (2017) demonstrate, teachers' 'reinterpretations' can lead them to prioritise certain aspects while ignoring others. Understanding enactment is fundamental: to identify characteristics of successful policy, one must investigate how text is interpreted, mediated, and brought to life.

However, a significant theoretical question remains underexplored: what occurs when national policy is absent? Ball, Maguire and Braun's (2012) framework examined how existing policies are interpreted in school contexts. The English EAL landscape presents a different condition: practitioners confronting policy vacuum rather than policy text. This dissertation extends Policy Enactment Theory by investigating whether, in conditions of policy absence, practitioners become not merely actors but authors constructing policy through enacted practice. The concept of 'enacted policy without documentary policy' (provision existing through lived practice independently of textual codification) captures this condition and represents a potential theoretical contribution.

2.2.5 Integrating Intersectionality and the Proficiency Imperative

While the established framework is useful for analysing policy processes, it can be enhanced by an explicit lens for considering how policy effects are experienced differently by pupils at intersections of various social identities. Intersectionality, originally developed by Crenshaw

(1989), posits that social categories such as race, class, gender, and language status are not separate but potentially overlapping systems of disadvantage. The 'EAL' label masks huge diversity of experience: the lived reality of a newly arrived refugee pupil differs vastly from that of a second-generation, middle-class British pupil speaking a heritage language at home.

However, this must be held alongside powerful empirical findings. While intersectionality rightly warns against treating 'EAL' as a settled category, Strand and Hessel (2023) offer a corrective against assuming all factors carry equal weight. Their analysis concluded unequivocally that proficiency in English is a vastly more powerful predictor of attainment than other background variables combined. Therefore, the most effective framework integrates these perspectives: it foregrounds proficiency as the pivotal factor for academic progress while using an intersectional lens to examine how pathways to acquiring that proficiency may be shaped by overlapping realities of race, class, migration background, and educational history.

2.2.6 Synthesis: An Integrated Analytical Framework

The preceding sections construct a multi-layered theoretical framework. At the macro-level, Bacchi's (2000) WPR approach provides the overarching critical lens for interrogating how problems are represented. At the meso-level, Spolsky's (2004) tripartite model provides analytical architecture for investigating beliefs, practices, and management. At the micro-level, policy enactment theory offers a mechanism for understanding how policies are interpreted and enacted by practitioners. Underpinning this interpretive framework, Critical Realism (Fletcher, 2017) provides the ontological and analytical foundation for identifying generative mechanisms: the underlying structural conditions producing observable patterns of provision and constraint. This synthesis is unified by Fraser's (1997) dual-systems theory: successful policy must enact both Recognition (validating identity) and Redistribution (providing access to linguistic capital). The framework thus equips this dissertation to analyse not just what a policy is, nor merely what it does, but why patterns of provision persist as they do.

2.3 The Ideological Landscape: Deficit, Asset, and the Access Paradox

2.3.1 Introduction: Beyond the Binary

The preceding analysis establishes that school-level decision-making is never neutral; it is ideological positioning. Traditionally, this landscape has been mapped using Ruiz's (1984)

framework distinguishing 'language-as-problem' (diversity as deficit) and 'language-as-resource' (diversity as asset). However, this binary is analytically insufficient.

Treating 'Language-as-Resource' as the uncomplicated 'solution' risks naïve multiculturalism that celebrates diversity while ignoring realities of power. As Ricento (2000) argues, simply valuing a home language does not automatically confer social or economic power. Therefore, this dissertation introduces a third, critical dimension: the distribution of linguistic capital (Bourdieu, 1991). While all languages are linguistically equal, they are socially stratified. Standard English operates as the 'dominant code' in the British educational marketplace, a form of capital arbitrarily privileged but socially non-negotiable (Delpit, 2006).

From this vantage point, the central tension for EAL policy is between two competing imperatives of social justice, which Fraser (1997) characterises as Recognition and Redistribution. The Imperative of Recognition requires schools to validate the pupil's home language and cultural identity to prevent 'symbolic violence.' The Imperative of Redistribution requires schools simultaneously provide rapid, explicit access to the dominant language to ensure redistribution of power. This creates what Janks (2010) terms the 'Access Paradox': how to provide access to the dominant language (sustaining the status quo) without devaluing the student's language (sustaining their identity). A policy focusing solely on Resource/Identity risks trapping students in 'feel-good' marginalisation. Conversely, a policy focusing solely on Access/Problem risks 'benevolent assimilation' that strips students of heritage.

This chapter posits that 'successful whole-school policy' is located in the dialectical management of this tension. The following sections examine competing ideologies (the deficit view in Section 2.3.2 and asset-based view in Section 2.3.4), before proposing a synthesis viewing success as the capacity to enact both recognition and access simultaneously.

2.3.2 The Critical Diagnosis: Raciolinguistic Ideologies and Their Limits

To understand ideological pressures shaping school-level policy, it is necessary to engage with critical literature on raciolinguistics. This framework has become the dominant lens for analysing linguistic inequality, arguing that language policies are never neutral but actively constructed through the lens of race. Flores and Rosa (2015) provide the foundational concept of the 'white listening subject,' positing that institutional ears are attuned to a specific, racialised standard of

'appropriateness.' From this perspective, a student's failure is located not in their linguistic proficiency but in the listener's refusal to accept their linguistic practices as legitimate.

In the UK context, this theoretical stance has been applied by scholars such as Snell and Cushing (2022) to critique the national policy lacuna and accountability structures filling it. They contend that the state's drive for 'Standard English' (enforced through 'sonic surveillance' of Ofsted inspections and rigid behaviour policies) constitutes symbolic violence. Cushing (2023) goes further, arguing that policing of non-standard forms (such as 'slang' or 'street' language) is a proxy for policing the bodies of racialised and working-class youth. This body of work is instrumental in revealing the 'hidden curriculum' of English schools, exposing how 'zero tolerance' language policies can create hostile environments that alienate EAL learners under the guise of maintaining standards.

However, while the raciolinguistic framework offers a potent diagnosis of systemic bias, closer critical evaluation reveals significant limitations when applied to practical realities of school leadership and pedagogy. The primary weakness of positions exemplified by Cushing is their tendency towards structural determinism. By framing the education system as a monolithic machine of reproduction, such perspectives risk reducing teachers to mere 'ideological state apparatuses' (mindless enforcers of a white, middle-class norm). This ignores practitioner agency and, crucially, the diversity of the teaching workforce itself. The concept of the 'white listening subject' becomes analytically blunt in super-diverse London schools where the 'listening subject' may themselves be multilingual or from a minoritised background. To suggest these educators are simply unconscious agents of white supremacy arguably denies them professional consciousness and simplifies the complex negotiation of identity occurring in urban classrooms.

Furthermore, the 'anti-normative' stance of this literature often fails to offer a viable pedagogical roadmap. While Snell and Cushing (2022) effectively dismantle the logic of 'appropriateness,' they stop short of articulating how schools should navigate the 'culture of power' (Delpit, 2006) that currently exists. Critiques of standardisation often overlook what Janks (2010) terms the 'Access Paradox': while Standard English is a tool of historic exclusion, access to it remains the primary vehicle for current economic and social inclusion. By framing the teaching of Standard English primarily as 'policing,' the raciolinguistic perspective risks encouraging what Bernstein (1975) called 'invisible pedagogies.' If teachers are sensitised to view correction as oppression,

they may retreat from explicit language instruction entirely. This 'benevolent inertia' creates a dangerous equity gap: middle-class students acquire codes of power at home, while EAL and working-class students (denied explicit instruction in the name of respecting their identity) are left without the linguistic capital required to succeed (Young, 2013).

2.3.3 The Sociological Corrective: Access, Explicit Instruction, and 'Powerful Knowledge'

If the raciolinguistic perspective provides necessary caution against 'policing' of identity, the sociological perspective provides the imperative for teaching of power. A robust theoretical framework must move beyond rejection of normative standards and actively engage with what Janks (2010) theorises as the 'Access Paradox.' This encapsulates the central dilemma of equity: while Standard English dominance helps maintain historical and social inequality, denying students access to that dominant variety ensures their continued marginalisation. A policy focusing exclusively on validating a student's home language, while failing to provide specific keys to the dominant code, constitutes a 'benevolent' form of exclusion.

To understand why explicit instruction is a requirement for equity rather than a tool of oppression, it is necessary to revisit Delpit's (2006) concept of the 'culture of power.' Delpit argues schools operate according to specific linguistic and behavioural codes reflecting the culture of the dominant class. Middle-class students often acquire these codes implicitly at home; however, for pupils from minoritised or EAL backgrounds, these rules are often opaque. Here, the critique of 'progressive' or 'immersive' language policies becomes acute. Bernstein (1975) famously distinguished between 'visible' and 'invisible' pedagogies, arguing that liberal approaches (which disguise the teacher's authority and avoid explicit correction in favour of 'natural' acquisition) disproportionately disadvantage working-class and linguistic minority students. By leaving rules of academic language implicit, schools rely on the student's existing cultural capital to decode the curriculum. For an EAL learner navigating a new linguistic landscape, an invisible pedagogy effectively hides the secrets of success.

Therefore, a successful whole-school policy must be characterised by the visibility of its instruction. As Delpit (2006) posits, 'if you are not already a participant in the culture of power, being told explicitly the rules of that culture makes acquiring power easier.' This argument is further strengthened by the 'Social Realist' school of curriculum theory, particularly Young and

Muller's (2013) work on 'Powerful Knowledge.' Against post-modern critique viewing Academic English merely as colonial construct to be deconstructed, Young argues that abstract, context-independent concepts of the academic curriculum represent distinct knowledge providing 'epistemic access' to the world. For EAL learners, while their L1 is the vehicle of identity and community (and must be valued as such), Academic English is the medium of what Cummins (2000) terms Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP). To withhold explicit instruction in the grammar, genres, and registers of this academic code is to deny EAL learners access to the 'universal' conversations of science, history, and mathematics. Thus, a 'successful' policy reclaims teaching of Standard English from the domain of 'assimilation' and reframes it as a right to intellectual empowerment.

2.3.4 From Theory to Praxis: The Genre Pedagogy Solution

This theoretical imperative is buttressed by the stark empirical reality of the English system. Strand and Hessel (2023) demonstrate that proficiency in English is the single strongest predictor of educational achievement, outweighing effects of ethnicity, gender, and poverty combined. The data reveals that fluency is the primary gatekeeper; without it, attainment is capped. Consequently, the 'anti-normative' stance of some critical researchers faces a pragmatic crisis when applied to school data. If a policy adopted a purely resistance-based approach (refusing to 'police' language to the extent that it fails to correct non-standard usage) it would likely condemn its EAL cohort to statistical underachievement.

How, then, do successful schools enact 'explicit instruction' without slipping into decontextualised drilling characterising assimilationist policies of the 1960s? The literature suggests the answer lies in Genre Pedagogy and the 'Reading to Learn' cycle (Rose and Martin, 2012). This approach involves teachers explicitly deconstructing linguistic structures of high-level texts (demonstrating how nominalisation, passive voice, and cohesion work) before supporting students to reconstruct them. This creates a 'high challenge, high support' environment (Sharples, 2021), avoiding the 'soft bigotry of low expectations' often found in differentiation-by-simplification. Instead of giving EAL learners easier texts (which widens the gap), successful policies provide scaffolding to access difficult texts. This resolves the issue identified above: the teacher does not 'police' the student's voice but explicitly 'apprentices' the student into the register of the subject discipline.

In synthesis, a successful whole-school EAL policy cannot be neutral on the question of the standard. While it must reject the deficit view framing the EAL learner as 'lacking,' it must embrace the social realist view that the learner is 'entitled.' A defining characteristic of successful policy will be the presence of rigorous, explicit, and visible attention to forms of Academic English, framed not as correction of the child's identity, but as provision of necessary capital for their future. While Genre Pedagogy is the theoretical solution, empirical evidence of its widespread uptake remains the subject of investigation, and a finding of its absence is itself significant.

2.3.5 Towards Pedagogical Translanguaging

If the 'Access Paradox' provides the theoretical 'why' for balancing identity and rigour, the framework of translanguaging provides the methodological 'how.' However, for this concept to function as a characteristic of successful policy, it must be rescued from its frequent misinterpretation as loose, 'laissez-faire' acceptance of mixed-language use.

Historically, bilingual education policy has been dominated by a 'two solitudes' approach (Cummins, 2008), viewing languages as bounded, separate systems that should be kept distinct. This 'parallel monolingualism' (Creese and Blackledge, 2010) underpins many traditional EAL interventions where the home language is left at the classroom door. In contrast, translanguaging theory, as advanced by García and Li Wei (2014), posits that multilinguals possess a single, integrated linguistic repertoire. They do not 'switch' between codes; they select features from a unitary system to make meaning. For school policy, this ontological shift is profound. It implies that banning the L1 is not just socially exclusionary but cognitively disruptive, severing the pupil from the very neural networks they need to process new information. As Cummins' (2000) Common Underlying Proficiency (CUP) hypothesis establishes, concepts learned in the L1 transfer to the L2; suppression of the L1 actively retards acquisition of English proficiency.

However, a critical gap exists between accepting translanguaging as a phenomenon and harnessing it as a pedagogy. Critics such as Jaspers (2018) warn that simply allowing students to speak their home language ('spontaneous translanguaging') does not automatically lead to learning gains and can, if unmonitored, lead to ghettoisation where EAL students disengage from the English curriculum. Therefore, a 'successful' whole-school policy is likely characterised by

Pedagogical Translanguaging (Cenoz and Gorter, 2021). This is a planned, teacher-led strategy where alternation of languages is designed to scaffold academic learning. In this model, the L1 is used as a temporary 'mediating tool' (Vygotsky, 1978) to grasp complex cognitive concepts, which are then explicitly bridged into Academic English.

For example, a science policy might encourage students to discuss 'photosynthesis' in Somali to ensure deep conceptual understanding, but rigorously require final written output in Standard English. This practice, termed 'transformative translanguaging' by Lewis, Jones and Baker (2012), may resolve validation and access into a productivewhole. It uses the student's full repertoire not just to affirm identity, but to enable performance at a higher cognitive level than their current English proficiency would otherwise permit.

Implementing this requires overcoming a significant structural barrier: the 'monolingual habitus' of the English school system (Gogolin, 1997). This concept describes the deeply ingrained institutional assumption that instruction should be monolingual. As Afitska (2020) observes, even well-meaning teachers often view L1 use as a sign of failure or barrier to integration. Consequently, a 'successful' policy must be more than a permission slip for students to speak; it must be a mechanism for teacher desensitisation and upskilling. It requires what Conteh (2019) calls 'funds of knowledge' pedagogies, where monolingual teachers are trained to orchestrate multilingual learning environments despite not speaking the languages themselves.

Ultimately, operationalising the balance means moving beyond tokenistic 'multicultural days.' It involves creating what might be termed a 'trans-systemic' policy environment where the flow between languages is not an accident but a design feature of the curriculum.

2.3.5 The Foundational Arguments for Bilingualism

The asset-based perspective is grounded in decades of psycholinguistic research establishing bilingualism as a significant cognitive and academic asset. Cummins' (2000) crucial distinction between Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills (BICS) and CALP is vital for any effective EAL policy. BICS refers to conversational fluency often acquired relatively quickly, which can mask deeper linguistic needs. CALP is the more abstract language required for academic success, which, as Strand and Lindorff (2020) confirm, can take more than six years to develop

fully. This distinction is critical because it challenges the flawed assumption, often embedded in deficit ideologies, that a pupil who can converse fluently requires no further language support.

No less fundamental is Cummins' (2000) interdependence hypothesis, positing the existence of a Common Underlying Proficiency (CUP). Skills developed in a first language do not interfere with a second language but provide a foundation upon which L2 proficiency can be built. This provides the definitive theoretical rationale for supporting, rather than suppressing, pupils' home languages. A strong foundation in L1 literacy directly facilitates development of academic English. This scientifically-grounded perspective dismantles the core premise of the 'language-as-problem' orientation, demonstrating that requiring pupils to abandon their L1 is not only culturally damaging but pedagogically counter-productive. A successful whole-school policy builds on this understanding: valuing and leveraging a pupil's entire linguistic repertoire is the most effective route to achieving high levels of academic English proficiency.

2.3.6 Synthesis: A Multi-Dimensional Framework for 'Success'

The critical review conducted in this chapter reveals that 'successful' EAL policy cannot be conceptualised through a singular ideological lens. A framework relying solely on raciolinguistic critique risks diagnosing harm of standardisation while offering no pedagogical roadmap for attainment. Conversely, a framework relying solely on social realism or school effectiveness research risks prioritising technocratic data tracking while ignoring the identity-shaping power of language.

To resolve this dialectic, this dissertation synthesises the preceding perspectives into a unified theoretical framework grounded in Fraser's (1997) dual-systems theory of social justice. Applied to whole-school EAL policy, this provides a robust heuristic for defining 'success' not merely as test score, but as an act of educational equity.

Dimension 1: Success as Recognition (The Asset-Based Imperative). Drawing on critiques of Flores and Rosa (2015) and principles of Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy (Paris, 2012), the first pillar posits that successful policy must enact Recognition. Theoretically, this addresses the 'status injury' inflicted by deficit ideologies, requiring schools to actively deconstruct hierarchies framing home languages as barriers. In practice, 'success' here is theorised as Spolsky's (2004) 'ideological' coherence: visible validation of multilingualism in the physical environment,

pastoral system, and staffing structure (the institutional rejection of the 'white listening subject'), creating a 'Third Space' (Bhabha, 1994) where pupil identity is not left at the gate.

Dimension 2: Success as Redistribution (The Epistemic Imperative). Drawing on Social Realist arguments of Young (2013) and the empirical imperatives of Strand (2021), the second pillar posits that successful policy must enact Redistribution. Theoretically, in the educational context, the 'resource' being redistributed is 'Powerful Knowledge.' Withholding the dominant code constitutes a failure of redistribution. 'Success' here is defined by pedagogical rigour: the presence of explicit instruction, funding of specialist expertise, and use of forensic data monitoring to ensure EAL learners are accessing the same high-status curriculum as their peers, aligning with Janks' (2010) assertion that access to dominant language is a material necessity for social mobility.

The Mechanism of Integration: Coherence and Praxis. Fraser (1997) warns that Recognition and Redistribution can sometimes conflict, mirrored in the 'Access Paradox.' Therefore, the final component is Integration. A 'successful whole-school policy' is defined as one achieving a 'productive tension' between these domains, utilising Pedagogical Translanguaging (Section 2.3.4) as the bridge: using the act of Recognition (L1 use) to facilitate the act of Redistribution (concept acquisition and L2 proficiency). Consequently, the overarching research question ('What are the characteristics of successful whole school policies?') will be investigated using this tripartite lens. The study will not simply look for 'good exam results' (a redistribution metric) nor just 'happy students' (a recognition metric). Instead, it will search for policy mechanisms allowing schools to do both simultaneously.

2.4 Empirical Evidence: Characteristics of Successful Practice

2.4.1 From Theory to Evidence-Based Practice

Having established the challenging policy context, the theoretical tools for deconstructing policy, and the core ideological tension between deficit and asset-based approaches, the review must now turn to the empirical evidence. It is here that abstract principles of a 'language-as-resource' orientation find concrete expression in observable characteristics of successful schools. While theoretical frameworks identified in Section 2.3 provide critical purchase for interrogating how

policy is constructed and what ideologies it embodies, empirical research provides practical insight into which strategies are associated with positive outcomes.

2.4.2 The Primacy of Leadership: Setting the Cultural Tone

The most consistent finding in the empirical literature concerns the foundational role of committed and inclusive leadership. In their detailed study of high-achieving London schools, Demie and Lewis (2018, p. 433) conclude that 'strong leadership on equality and diversity' is the foundational commonality. This is not simply effective management but describes leadership that actively fosters a whole-school ethos of high expectations for all pupils, refusing to accept educational failure regardless of background. Such leadership is characterised by relentless focus on progress and improvement, particularly in teaching and learning quality for EAL pupils.

This finding can be understood through Spolsky's (2004) model. Effective leaders operate as sophisticated policy authors, consciously aligning all three domains of their school's language policy. They articulate and promote an asset-based belief system; they embed this ideology in formal management structures (improvement plans, staffing appointments, protected budget lines); and this visible commitment empowers staff and legitimises inclusive classroom practices. Leaders in successful multi-ethnic schools actively confront and navigate 'tensions in the field,' promoting equity and belonging (Devine, 2013). This requires what Ryan (2012) describes as inclusive leadership: active engagement with, and challenging of, inequitable structures. Leadership is thus an essential catalyst, transforming policy from static document into dynamic, lived culture of high expectations and genuine inclusion.

2.4.3 Building Capacity: Teacher Expertise and Professional Development

Effective leadership requires sustained commitment to building staff capacity. The literature demonstrates that a key characteristic is systematic approach to developing teacher expertise. This need is rooted in well-documented failure of Initial Teacher Education (ITE) to prepare mainstream teachers for linguistically diverse classrooms. Foley, Sangster and Anderson (2013) found teachers felt unprepared, concluding pupils' needs were 'not being met to a sufficient degree.' More recent research confirms this enduring problem.

Given this systemic gap, successful schools become their own teacher training providers. Demie and Lewis (2018) reveal that in high-achieving schools, staff were trained in specific EAL

techniques and possessed deep 'understanding of pedagogy that best supported pupils with EAL.' Schools draw on frameworks provided by third-sector organisations like The Bell Foundation and NALDIC. This builds practical skills closing the policy-practice gap and shifts teacher beliefs towards 'language-as-resource' orientation.

The ITT deficit is particularly significant when contrasted with SEND provision. While trainee teachers receive substantial preparation for SEND (mandated content reflecting statutory status), preparation for linguistically diverse classrooms remains minimal. This disparity perpetuates the statutory hierarchy: teachers enter classrooms equipped for statutory obligations toward SEND learners but unprepared for discretionary responsibilities toward EAL learners.

Murphy and Unthiah's (2015) systematic review identified 'a significant lack of EAL pedagogy and too much overlap between Special Educational Needs (SEN) provision and the teaching of pupils with EAL' (cited in Tracey et al., 2024, p.7). This overlap represents a structural response: lacking specific preparation, teachers deploy the frameworks they possess. The EEF evaluation notes 'the lack of CPD interventions for EAL pupils' as 'of particular concern in the UK context' (Tracey et al., 2024, p.7).

Haworth's (2009) study found teachers rated EAL teaching confidence significantly lower than general confidence (2 versus 4 on a 4-point scale), reporting 'operating on the basis of trial and error' (p.2181). Critically, teachers employing strategies aligned with EAL pedagogy often 'did not connect these strategies with helping EAL students,' having learned them for other purposes (p.2191). This suggests the ITT gap produces not merely absence of knowledge but absence of awareness that EAL-relevant knowledge exists.

The significance of Cummins' (2000) BICS/CALP distinction becomes acute here. Teachers without EAL training may assume conversationally fluent pupils (BICS) are equally equipped for academic discourse, yet CALP can take five to seven years to develop (Strand and Lindorff, 2020). Teachers lacking this understanding may withdraw support prematurely, leaving apparently fluent students struggling with academic language demands.

2.4.4 Enacting Inclusion: Curriculum, Pedagogy, and Targeted Support

The pedagogical centre of successful EAL policy is characterised by an inclusive curriculum that is both accessible and responsively tailored to individual needs. Demie and Lewis (2018, p. 433) identified that a key feature was provision of 'an inclusive curriculum which recognised and celebrated children's cultural heritage.' This empirical finding is a practical manifestation of asset-based theories: an inclusive curriculum operationalises Cummins' (2000) principles by valuing and leveraging pupils' L1 as cognitive tool, enacted in the classroom through flexible, meaning-making practices of translanguaging (García and Li Wei, 2014). By embedding students' backgrounds and linguistic repertoires into the fabric of learning, schools create environments supporting not only comprehension but also identity affirmation and belonging.

Demie and Lewis also showed that high-quality inclusive teaching is supplemented by 'effective targeted support' for EAL pupils who require it. This dual approach may be another defining characteristic. Effective targeted practices included structured induction programmes for new arrivals, specialised small-group interventions focused on developing academic language, and use of bilingual teaching assistants to bridge linguistic and cultural gaps. The aim is to provide focused additional support enabling fuller and more effective access to the mainstream curriculum. Successful schools simultaneously operate a universalist approach to inclusion and an individualist approach to intervention.

Crucially, the Genre Pedagogy approach (Rose and Martin, 2012) offers a concrete methodology for enacting explicit instruction without slipping into decontextualised drilling. In practice, this requires teachers to explicitly deconstruct the linguistic structures of high-level texts (demonstrating how features such as nominalisation and cohesive devices work) before supporting students to reconstruct them. Combined with the 'high challenge, high support' framework (Sharples, 2021), this approach ensures that intervention does not lower expectations but rather provides the scaffolding to meet them.

2.4.5 The Engine of Improvement: Data-Informed Assessment and Monitoring

The final key characteristic identified by Demie and Lewis (2018) is systematic use of assessment and data to monitor pupil progress and drive school improvement. Case studies of high-achieving schools show they track progress of individual EAL pupils and are 'particularly

forensic' in using data to identify those at risk of underachieving and target interventions effectively. Recent large-scale quantitative research provides definitive validation for why specific focus on EAL assessment data is so critical. Strand and Hessel's (2023) work demonstrates the overriding significance of pupil proficiency in English in predicting achievement.

However, critical analysis reveals challenges in practice. Strand (2021, p. 72) highlights considerable variability and lack of standardisation between different proficiency assessment frameworks used by schools and local authorities. Guidance on when a pupil can be considered 'fluent' varies, leading to inconsistencies. This introduces a crucial dimension: a policy of simply 'assessing proficiency' is insufficient if the assessments themselves are not reliable and consistent. A more sophisticated characteristic of truly successful policy is not just use of data, but a clear commitment to integrity of that data through robust staff training, clear criteria, and rigorous moderation processes.

2.5 Conclusion: The Research Gap and the Study's Contribution

2.5.1 The Primary Research Gap: From Components to Integrated Systems

The empirical literature reviewed in Section 2.4 has made significant strides in identifying what works in practice. The case study research of Demie and Lewis (2018) identified discrete components of successful EAL provision: 'strong leadership on equality and diversity,' the 'use of performance data for school improvement,' and provision of an 'inclusive curriculum.' However, a significant gap remains in understanding *how* these individual characteristics are integrated into a coherent, dynamic, and sustainable whole-school system. The complex interplay, institutional culture, and enactment processes binding these characteristics together into a functioning policy ecosystem are less well understood. Therefore, this dissertation addresses this gap by investigating how successful schools function *relationally* as examples of 'whole-school' policy in action.

2.5.2 The Secondary Research Gap: Applying a Critical Lens to Success

A second, theoretical research gap can be identified within the critical literature itself. Scholarship in the raciolinguistic tradition has been instrumental in diagnosing pervasive deficit ideologies within the English system. The work of Snell and Cushing (2022, 2023) appears to

illuminate problematic mechanisms of policy and accountability ('sonic surveillance' of Ofsted and institutional policing of non-standard English), providing UK-specific demonstration of the 'white listening subject' in action. This exposes systemic flaws and harms of a 'language-as-problem' orientation.

While diagnosing the problem is essential, there has been comparatively little research applying this lens to analyse sites and possibilities of *success*. An important gap exists in understanding how, in practice, successful schools manage to navigate, resist, and subvert the deficit discourses that critical scholars have identified. The key question is: how do effective school leaders and teachers foster an asset-based, pro-bilingual culture while operating within a national policy and accountability landscape that often ignores them or promotes the opposite? This dissertation aims to fill this gap by explicitly contrasting its focus on 'analysing success' with the 'critique of failure' that characterises some of the critical literature. It seeks to provide a more hopeful and practically relevant contribution by using critical theory not just to identify problems, but to understand how they may be successfully overcome.

In producing a nuanced and critical model of whole-school EAL policy, this study will directly attempt to begin to address the call identified by Chalmers et al. (2023) from the educational community for research into the 'characteristics of successful whole school policies for supporting EAL learners.' The following chapter will outline the qualitative methodology designed to conduct this investigation.

Chapter 3: Methodology: A Critical Multiple-Case Study of Policy in Practice

3.1 Introduction

This chapter defends the methodological framework designed to answer the dissertation's research questions. This research aims to generate a critical understanding of policy as a complex, enacted social practice, a concept drawn from the work of Ball, Maguire, and Braun (2012), within the specific environment of the national EAL absence of policy vacuum. The primary research question guiding this investigation is: How are 'successful' whole-school policies for EAL learners enacted and sustained in the absence of national statutory guidance?

Three subsidiary questions operationalise this inquiry:

1. How do school leaders and practitioners interpret and translate disparate EAL guidelines into local school practice?
2. What structural and contextual mechanisms constrain or enable the embedding of asset-based EAL pedagogies?
3. How is the concept of 'success' for EAL learners constructed by different stakeholders, and to what extent does this align with inclusive principles?

These questions shift from a static framing ('characteristics') to a dynamic one ('enacted'), explicitly acknowledge the policy vacuum context, and deploy key theoretical concepts from the Literature Review. To address them, this chapter provides a transparent account of the philosophical and procedural decisions underpinning the inquiry. It begins by establishing the study's interpretivist-critical realist research paradigm. Following this, it justifies the selection of a qualitative multiple-case study design. The subsequent sections detail the purposive sampling strategy, the data collection methods of semi-structured interviews and document analysis, and the reflexive thematic approach to data analysis. The chapter concludes by outlining the strategies employed to ensure trustworthiness, the ethical considerations that guided the research, and a reflection on the study's limitations.

3.2 Research Paradigm: An Interpretivist-Critical Realist Stance

This study is positioned within an interpretivist-critical realist paradigm. This hybrid philosophical stance was deliberately adopted to navigate the complexities of the research question, which demands an appreciation of both subjective human experience and the structural realities that shape it. Fletcher (2017) argues that such a combination allows research to explore the relationship between social structures and individual agency without collapsing into either pure subjectivism or structural determinism.

The interpretivist dimension directly supports the dissertation's conceptual framework, which views teachers and leaders as 'policy actors' (Ball, Maguire and Braun, 2012). Their interpretations and professional judgements translate policy into lived reality. Capturing these

nuanced perspectives required interview methods enabling participants to articulate their worldviews in their own terms.

Adopting Fletcher's (2017) stratified ontology, the research design distinguished between the 'empirical' experiences of teachers and the 'real' generative mechanisms (statutory frameworks, funding streams) producing them. Consequently, interview questions were designed not just to capture events (the actual), but to probe the underlying causal structures constraining practitioner agency. This paradigm shaped the analytical approach: seeking not only to understand what practitioners experience but to identify the mechanisms producing those experiences.

3.2.1 Theoretical Framework Informing Analysis

The coding process was sensitised by the framework established in Chapter 2. Policy Enactment Theory directed attention to interpretation processes; Critical Realism guided the identification of structural mechanisms; and Fraser's dialectic framed the analysis of 'success' constructions. Spolsky and Bacchi structured the coding of distinct policy dimensions (beliefs, practices, management) and the identification of implicit problematisations. These orientations shaped analytical attention without predetermining coding categories. Following Braun and Clarke's (2022) guidance, the framework functioned as a flexible lens allowing for the generation of themes that were theoretically informed yet grounded in participant accounts.

3.3 Research Design: A Multiple-Case Study Approach

Given the exploratory and context-dependent nature of the research questions, this study employs a qualitative multiple-case study design. Case study research is a methodology for conducting an in-depth, empirical inquiry into a contemporary phenomenon within its real-world setting, particularly when the boundaries between the phenomenon and its context are not clearly evident, with a useful precedent already explored in Demie and Lewis (2018). Yin (2018) demonstrates that this design is ideal for exploring factors underlying social processes. In this instance, the 'case' is defined as a single secondary school, treated as a 'bounded system' encompassing its unique environment, participants, and policy practices. This approach is suited to exploring how the abstract concept of an EAL policy is enacted, interpreted, and given meaning by practitioners in the complex social ecology of a school, as theorised by Ball, Maguire, and Braun (2012).

The decision to use a multiple-case design, as opposed to a single case, was made to enhance the robustness and external credibility of the findings. Following 'replication logic' advocated by Yin (2018), this study does not aim for the statistical generalisation of a large sample, but for 'theoretical replication'. Schools were selected to provide theoretical contrast (for example, by having varying EAL populations and different policy structures) to examine how and why effective support might be similar or diverge under different conditions. This approach supports a form of 'analytic generalisation' where the findings can be used to refine or build upon existing theory. This design facilitates a two-stage analysis: first, a holistic examination within each case, followed by a cross-case comparison to identify convergent themes and divergent patterns. This comparative lens allows for a more sophisticated understanding of which characteristics of success are consistent, and how context-specific factors mediate the translation of policy into practice.

3.4 Site and Participant Selection: Purposive Sampling

This study utilised a purposive sampling strategy to select both the case study sites and the individual participants. As Campbell et al. (2020) argue, matching the sample to research aims is a key component of improving the rigour of qualitative research. The site selection was guided by a criterion-based approach. The population of interest was secondary schools within the Greater Manchester area, a setting with significant linguistic diversity. Specific criteria for inclusion were a recorded English as an Additional Language (EAL) pupil population of at least 20% and a total secondary school population greater than 500 pupils. This ensured that each selected school was a site where the support of EAL learners was a significant and ongoing issue.

Within each of the six selected schools, participants were also recruited purposively to ensure a range of roles and perspectives were represented. Invitations were extended to, at a minimum: the EAL coordinator or lead teacher, one or more mainstream classroom teachers with experience of teaching EAL learners, and a member of the school's leadership team (SLT). Palinkas et al. (2015) note this form of sampling can be highly effective in research on implementation of policy as participants have the experience necessary to speak about the policies and practices in question. This multi-perspective approach was crucial for capturing a

more complete picture of the policy enactment process, from its strategic conception at a leadership level to its practical implementation in the classroom.

Table 1 provides a summary of the participant sample across the six case schools:

Table 1: Participant School Profiles

School	Interviewee Role	EAL %	Staffing Configuration	Policy Status	Key Contribution to Study
School 1	EAL Lead (25 years experience)	~90%	EAL team with lead practitioner	No formal policy	Individual agency, empathy-based training model, success constructions, translanguaging practices
School 2	EAL Teaching Assistant (~6 years experience)	~45%	2 part-time teaching assistants	No formal policy	Resource retrenchment evidence, statutory hierarchy dynamics, refugee/asylum seeker context
School 3	Trainee Maths Teacher (PGCE, 8 weeks experience)	~20%	No EAL specialist (SEND inclusion team)	No formal policy	ITT gap evidence, trainee teacher perspective, SEND subordination
School 4	EAL Teacher (0.4 FTE EAL + 0.6 FTE English)	~80%	0.4 FTE specialist	No formal policy	Accountability absence, communication systems, information invisibility mechanisms
School 5	EAL Coordinator (30 years experience)	~25%	EAL coordinator	Formal policy exists	Negative case analysis, MAT-mediated policy structures, ITT provision through Trust SCITT
School 6	EAL Specialist Teacher (~6 years experience)	~50%	Sole EAL specialist	No formal policy	Technology-mediated support, student interpreter scheme, professional precarity, late arrivals

***Table 1.** Profiles of six Greater Manchester secondary schools participating in the study. Schools varied substantially in EAL population proportion (20-90%), staffing configurations (from no specialist to full teams), and policy status (five without formal policy; one negative case with policy). This purposive diversity enabled analysis of policy enactment across different institutional contexts. All schools were maintained secondary schools within Greater Manchester; no independent, grammar, or selective schools participated.*

The total interview corpus comprised approximately 378 minutes (6.3 hours) of recorded conversation, transcribed to 62,753 words.

3.5 Data Collection Methods

To attempt a reasonably comprehensive and triangulated understanding of policy enactment, this study employed two primary qualitative data collection methods: semi-structured interviews and document analysis. The use of multiple data sources is a fundamental strength of case study research, enabling the corroboration of evidence and facilitating a more nuanced and contextualised interpretation of the phenomenon (Yin, 2018). Each method was selected to play a distinct but complementary role: interviews were used to capture the subjective, lived experiences of practitioners, while document analysis provided access to the formal, institutional discourse surrounding EAL support.

The core of the data was generated through semi-structured interviews with practitioner participants at each case school. Given the absence of statutory guidance, a semi-structured format was essential to allow practitioners to articulate the informal, improvised 'procedures' that function as de facto policy, which a rigid structured interview might miss. An interview guide, informed by the research questions and the conceptual framework, ensured that key topics were covered across all interviews for comparability, while also allowing the flexibility to probe emergent themes and explore the unique aspects of each participant's experience. All interviews were conducted and recorded via MS Teams with informed consent, allowing for the efficient creation of verbatim transcripts for analysis.

To supplement and triangulate the interview data, a systematic analysis of relevant policy documents was conducted. This method involves the critical interpretation of texts to extract relevant data about a school's formal approach to EAL support. As outlined by Morgan (2022), document analysis provides a valuable, unobtrusive means of understanding the official context of an organisation. Documents collected included Ofsted reports, official policies, School Improvement Plans, and internal staff guidance where available. This analysis was structured using the READ approach (Ready materials, Extract data, Analyse, Distil) developed by Dalglish et al. (2020), ensuring a rigorous and established procedure. The presence or absence of these texts provided some insight into the 'language management' domain of Spolsky's (2004) model, allowing for a critical comparison between the school's notional policy and the enacted practices described by practitioners. For example, the school in the study which had an official policy document, was not in fact able to produce or refer to it. OFSTED reports were analysed to assess and confirm the policy absence in practice.

3.6 Data Analysis Strategy: A Reflexive Thematic Approach

All qualitative data, comprising interview transcripts and documents, were analysed using a reflexive thematic analysis (TA) approach. This study specifically adopts the reflexive variant developed by Braun and Clarke (2019, 2022), as its philosophical underpinnings are well-suited to the study's interpretivist-critical realist paradigm. Rather than viewing the researcher as a neutral coder aiming for objective truth, reflexive TA embraces researcher subjectivity as an analytical resource. It recognises that the researcher's theoretical sensitivities and insights, when

managed through transparent and thoughtful reflection, are an integral part of generating meaning from the data.

The analysis proceeded through the six-phase process recommended by Braun and Clarke (2019), which was undertaken in an iterative and recursive, rather than a strictly linear, process:

Familiarisation: This involved the transcription of all interview recordings and the repeated, active reading of all transcripts and documents. This immersive process was crucial for developing an intimate familiarity with the dataset before formal analysis began.

Coding: The entire dataset was systematically coded using three types of codes: descriptive codes (capturing observable content), in vivo codes (preserving participant language), and theoretical codes (connecting to framework concepts such as 'problematisation' or 'language-as-resource' beliefs). This process was theoretically sensitised, meaning the researcher's understanding of concepts from the literature review consciously informed the recognition of significant data segments.

Generating Themes: This involved examining the codes and collated data to identify broader patterns of meaning. Codes were clustered into candidate themes that captured something significant about the data in relation to the research questions.

Reviewing Themes: The candidate themes were refined by checking against the collated data extracts. Theme review was conducted against criteria of internal coherence, external distinctiveness, research question alignment, and theoretical resonance. School 5, as a partial negative case (the only school with a formal documented policy), was subjected to particular scrutiny to test theme validity.

Defining and Naming Themes: Once finalised, each theme was clearly defined to articulate its essence and scope. Concise and clear names were developed for each theme to be used in the final report. Four final themes were identified, each with multiple sub-themes.

Writing Up: The final phase involved weaving the analytic narrative, presenting the themes along with data extracts to demonstrate the context in the participants' accounts.

This systematic yet flexible process ensured that the analysis remained grounded in the data while being guided by the study's theoretical framework. An audit trail was maintained documenting analytical decisions throughout.

3.7 Rigour, Ethics, and Reflexivity

To ensure the production of credible and defensible findings, this study was underpinned by a three-part commitment to methodological rigour, ethical conduct, and sustained researcher reflexivity.

3.7.1 Quality Criteria

The trustworthiness of this qualitative study was established by addressing the criteria of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability, as influentially articulated by Lincoln and Guba (1985).

Credibility (internal validity) was enhanced through multiple strategies. Triangulation was achieved through: (a) multiple schools providing comparative perspectives; (b) multiple practitioner roles within and across schools; and (c) comparison of specialist and non-specialist perspectives. Negative case analysis was undertaken, with School 5 functioning as a partial negative case (being the only school with a formal documented policy) allowing examination of whether patterns held under different conditions. Rich verbatim quotations are presented throughout the findings to enable reader evaluation of interpretive claims.

Transferability (external validity) was addressed through the provision of 'thick description'. By offering detailed descriptions of each case school's context, including its demographic profile, resources, and character (while maintaining anonymity), the study enables readers to make informed judgements about how the conclusions might apply to their own settings. The Greater Manchester urban context is clearly articulated, allowing readers to assess applicability to other linguistically diverse metropolitan areas.

Dependability (reliability) was ensured through the creation of a clear 'audit trail'. This chapter, along with a reflexive journal and detailed researcher notes on analytical choices, documents the research process transparently, allowing an external reviewer to trace how conclusions were

reached from the raw data. Analytical memos were maintained throughout to document interpretive decisions.

Confirmability (objectivity) was pursued through the practice of reflexivity and by ensuring findings are strongly and demonstrably founded in the collected data. Counter-evidence was actively sought and addressed. The use of direct quotations and document excerpts in the reporting of findings provides a clear link between the data and the researcher's interpretations. Multiple forms of evidence are presented for each theme.

3.7.2 Ethical Considerations

The study was conducted in full compliance with the ethical standards for educational research outlined by the British Educational Research Association (BERA, 2018). Each participant received a detailed Participant Information Sheet and provided written informed consent before any data was collected. This process made clear that participation was entirely voluntary, with the right to withdraw at any point during data collection without consequence.

Rigorous measures were implemented to protect privacy and confidentiality. Each school and participant was assigned a pseudonym, and any potentially identifying details mentioned during interviews were redacted from the transcripts to ensure anonymity. All digital data, including audio files and transcripts, were stored securely on password-protected, encrypted university servers in accordance with institutional data protection guidance and GDPR. This data will be retained for the period required for publication and assessment, after which it will be permanently destroyed.

3.7.3 Positionality and Reflexivity

Given the study's interpretive paradigm and use of reflexive thematic analysis, researcher reflexivity was an integral component of the methodological approach. As an EAL practitioner with extensive classroom experience, I brought insider knowledge enabling sensitive probing of professional practice and recognition of field-specific terminology and challenges. This positioning facilitated rapport with participants and enabled identification of nuances that might escape an outsider researcher. However, this positioning also risked assumptions and blind spots: taken-for-granted professional knowledge might obscure alternative interpretations.

I addressed these risks through systematic reflexive practices: questioning taken-for-granted knowledge, documenting interpretive decisions in an audit trail, actively seeking disconfirming evidence, and maintaining a research journal recording moments where my assumptions were challenged. Following Braun and Clarke's (2022) reflexive thematic analysis approach, I acknowledge my active role in theme generation rather than claiming themes 'emerged' from data. The themes presented in Chapter 4 are the product of my interpretive engagement with participants' accounts, shaped by the theoretical framework established in Chapter 2.

3.8 Summary of Methodological Limitations of the Study

While this study was designed with methodological rigour, several limitations shape the claims that can be made.

Sample constraints: The findings are derived from six case studies located within Greater Manchester. Consequently, they are not statistically generalisable to all secondary schools in England. The study's contribution lies in its potential for analytical generalisation and theoretical transferability to similar contexts, particularly urban schools with significant EAL populations. Findings may not transfer to rural areas, independent schools, or primary settings.

Participant range: While multiple EAL specialists were interviewed, the sample included only one trainee teacher and no senior leaders with whole-school strategic responsibility. This limits perspectives on institutional decision-making processes.

Method constraints: The research relies on self-reported data from interviews and the analysis of formal documents. It did not include direct or longitudinal classroom observation. Enacted practice was accessed through self-report rather than direct observation.

Documentary absence: Formal EAL policies either did not exist or were not provided, analysis of these documents was impossible. However, this documentary absence itself became a significant finding, contributing to the study's central thesis about policy enactment in the absence of formal documentation.

Voice exclusions: Student and family voices were not directly accessed. Constructions of 'success' therefore reflect practitioner perspectives rather than learner experiences. Future research should address this gap.

Pilot study absence: No formal pilot study was conducted prior to data collection. While the semi-structured format allowed for responsive development of the questioning strategy, a formal pilot could have further enhanced the interview protocol.

3.9 Chapter Conclusion

Having established the methodological rigour and the limitations of the study, the following chapter presents the findings generated through this reflexive thematic analysis, organised around four central themes of enactment and constraint.

Chapter 4: Results

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents findings from the reflexive thematic analysis, organised into four overarching themes. These themes illuminate the tension between practitioner agency and structural constraint. The following analysis draws on interviews from the six participating schools (see Methodology, Table 1 for full participant profiles and context).

Four themes were identified: (1) Navigating the Policy Vacuum Through Improvised Professionalism; (2) Structural Constraints and the Mechanics of Marginalisation; (3) Constructing Success: Competing Definitions and the Redistribution-Recognition Dialectic; and (4) Building Capacity: The ITT Gap and the Work of Teacher Development. Each theme is presented with strategically selected quotations preserving practitioner voices. Theme 1 directly addresses the primary research question regarding enactment mechanisms. Themes 2 and 3 respond to the subsidiary questions by detailing the structural constraints and the contested definitions of success, while Theme 4 explains the systemic deficits in teacher preparation that underpin these findings.

4.2 Theme 1: Navigating the Policy Vacuum Through Improvised Professionalism

This theme captures how practitioners respond to the absence of national statutory guidance by developing localised, frequently improvised approaches. What emerges is policy-making by default: the withdrawal of national direction has created space for practitioner-led innovation, constrained by resources but driven by professional commitment. This addresses the primary research question by revealing that successful policy is 'enacted' through individual agency operating within institutional gaps.

4.2.1 'No Policy, But Practice': The Documentary Disconnect

A striking finding was the consistent reporting of absent formal written EAL policy coexisting with claims of effective practice. This documentary disconnect was not framed apologetically but often asserted as evidence of pragmatic professionalism. The EAL Lead at School 1 stated: "We do not have such an EAL policy yet, but I'm the main person who is responsible for implementing anything regarding EAL... no official policy, but everything is in place." When pressed on documentation value, she offered revealing dismissal: "They're just written policies. We do far more than policies."

This confidence was echoed across schools. At School 2: "Not policies as such. But procedure put in place for EAL kids." The distinction between 'policies' and 'procedures' is analytically significant: practitioners conceptualise policy as formal documentation whilst 'procedure' represents tacit, enacted knowledge governing practice. The trainee at School 3 searched unsuccessfully for policy: "I was trying to do some research before and I couldn't find a proper one... I'm sure they do have one somewhere because I feel like that is always a requirement." This assumption that documentation is 'required' contrasts with reality that five of six schools lacked formal policies.

At School 4, the EAL Teacher acknowledged absence cautiously: "We don't have an official policy. It's in terms of responsibility. It's kind of incorporated into the assistant head for literacy... there's no specific policy or apportioned responsibilities, time, that kind of thing." She connected this to perceived success: "It's kind of like a success story really in terms of the data. So there isn't necessarily a pressure to have that in place." At School 6: "I wouldn't say like

there's a very specific written policy yet. That's like something my To Do List, but it is a procedure that we follow." School 5 represented a partial negative case (the only school with formal policy) yet even here the Coordinator acknowledged: "In an ideal world, yes [teachers implement the policy]... Most teachers try to implement it."

4.2.2 The Centrality of Individual Agency

If formal policy is absent, what sustains provision? The data points overwhelmingly to individual practitioners whose commitment transcends contractual requirements. Significantly, many drew on personal linguistic and cultural backgrounds, developing 'insider understanding' of EAL learner experiences.

The EAL Lead at School 1, herself from a multilingual background speaking several South Asian languages, described her work in vocational terms: "For me, it has become more than a job now. It is beyond the job. It's a passion... I know where these children are coming from because I know what the conditions of education are in Pakistan and Afghanistan. And, you know, in Africa and Somalia." This insider positioning, grounded in shared experience, confers both professional authority and emotional investment transcending institutional mandate. Her team's multilingual capacity (nine languages spoken collectively) enables practice impossible for monolingual practitioners.

The Teaching Assistant at School 2, herself a former EAL learner arriving in the UK at age nine, similarly drew on biographical experience: "We do a lot of pastoral things as well. So whether that's giving them dinner tickets, bus money, just general well-being, most of our kids have some sort of trauma. It's just dealing with that as well." At School 6, the Specialist's success construction foregrounded relational dimensions: "For me, success is like when you see students happy, you know integrating... I've got students here who joined the Academy having no English, maybe never been to a school, you know? And they've had trauma."

However, reliance on individual agency carries systemic vulnerabilities. At School 6, the sole Specialist reflected: "I'm really the only EAL person in the school... I feel like I might get to a point where, you know, I might just become redundant. Because our team was made redundant in my previous school." At School 4, the EAL Teacher articulated similar isolation: "I exist in the school system. But I do think it's still quite an overlooked aspect." When provision depends

on individuals rather than systems, their departure creates institutional voids. The School 6 Specialist articulated her burden: "As an EAL person, I've got limited time... I'm not just teaching. I've also have to do like access arrangements, meeting with new students, doing the admissions assessments." Managing approximately 250 EAL students as sole specialist demonstrates extraordinary commitment required within the policy vacuum.

4.2.3 Translating External Guidance into Local Practice

In absence of national guidance, practitioners drew upon external frameworks, particularly the Bell Foundation, as reference points. However, engagement was selective and adaptive. At School 1: "I use a lot of Bell Foundation stuff. But to be honest now... we have so much practice and experience now that we know who is, who needs what." At School 4, the EAL Teacher noted: "There's no other guidance other than best practice from... Bell Foundation or those kind of institutions." At School 6, framework flexibility was evident: "The person who used to be the EAL person for example used the NASSEA framework. But then I said I'm more familiar with the Bell Foundation." This flexibility, determined by practitioner familiarity rather than institutional mandate, illustrates how the vacuum creates space for improvised professionalism. At School 5, the Coordinator acknowledged dissemination challenges: "The Bell Foundation has just brought out some really good information, but... I suppose it's knowing it's there."

4.3 Theme 2: Structural Constraints and the Mechanics of Marginalisation

If Theme 1 illuminated practitioner agency, this theme reveals structural conditions constraining that agency. The analysis identified generative mechanisms producing observable patterns: institutional processes rendering EAL provision peripheral despite rhetorical commitment to inclusion.

4.3.1 Resource Retrenchment and Departmental Decimation

The most striking structural finding was systematic reduction in EAL-specific resources. Participants invoked historical comparison between what provision 'used to be' versus current reality. The Teaching Assistant at School 2 provided stark testimony: "When I first started we had four TAs, a line manager and we had mainstream teachers coming in... At the moment we have two TAs and both of us are part time... We've been told that no, you're not getting any more stuff. But again, it's because they don't think it's worth it at this point."

Similar trajectories emerged elsewhere. At School 4: "Previously there was TLR [Teaching and Learning Responsibility additional payments] for an EAL teacher and coordinator that was scrapped and then when I started it was kind of just blended into this, so there's no budget or specific money allocation." The removal of TLR payment represents both material and symbolic devaluation. At School 6: "I used to be in a team of EAL specialists, a big team... our team was made redundant." She articulated the national dimension: "I feel like this is not just an issue with the school. It's like as a country as a whole... in every classroom in this country, there's usually at least one EAL child." The trainee at School 3 identified constraints simply: "Money... they just can't afford it."

4.3.2 The Structural Subordination of EAL to SEND

A significant structural pattern was consistent positioning of EAL within or beneath SEND frameworks. At School 3, the trainee's description was revealing: "There's sort of a department called the Hive and so a lot of it is SEND based... There's not like a specific person for EAL, so it sort of falls into ... the SEND people." The language is analytically significant: EAL 'falls into' SEND rather than being intentionally positioned. At School 4, the EAL Teacher observed: "It's conflated with literacy, and also... it's conflated quite a lot with SEND... it's being put into those kind of categories because there's not enough being done with it."

The implications become clear when resource competition arises. The Teaching Assistant at School 2 articulated the decisive factor: "The thing is SEND students, and I want to like say they're statutory, EAL are not. So when it comes to who to focus on, especially a school that is not doing that great, obviously SEND will be prioritised because legally they need to... But because there's nothing to say you have to do this, this and this for EAL students, there's not much you can do." At School 6: "I do feel sometimes that there is more... priority towards SEND students because of the legal requirement... by law they've got to like provide for them. But for EAL students? Maybe that's not something they necessarily have to provide." The statutory/non-statutory distinction emerges as decisive structural mechanism.

4.3.3 The Absence of Accountability Mechanisms

The lack of statutory status connects to broader accountability absence. At School 4, the EAL Teacher reflected on professional invisibility: "I don't basically have like a meeting or

conversations about, OK, these are the students. This is what this is, where they are. This is what they could be tracked to achieve... There is no meeting for that kind of thing... I do think to a certain extent it would be nice to have some kind of at least acknowledgement." She connected this to inspection: "I was kind of frustrated that they [Ofsted] didn't really inspect on EAL." She further articulated: "Even though they're not particularly necessarily doing anything for the students. The fact that they are bilingual and succeeding means that the school... can report well on their results... So with that, then understandably, there's not the same kind of urgency to track their progress."

The Teaching Assistant at School 2 made the accountability gap explicit: "Ofsted. There we go... Ofsted would have to come up with the policies." At School 6, recent changes were noted: "There's something to do with the Ofsted. So now they're going to try to look more closely at the EAL provision, which is new. So they've added EAL to the toolkit." However: "I don't remember them being like... inside an intervention... they didn't seem really interested."

4.3.4 Communication Fragmentation and Information Invisibility

A further constraint concerns information infrastructure. At School 2: "Last year we were supposed to have an EAL register, which was supposed to be circulated to the whole school... But that never actually materialised." At School 6: "I don't always directly... notified as a new student. I kind of like need to constantly ask or check... sometimes teachers or like even students will let me know... if I don't know [they exist], I can't support them." At School 3: "All the information's there which is good... but really it's on us to do that [research it] ourselves." At School 4, more proactive communication existed: "I will assess them and then create a profile... strategies for that level in class... that's available on our system. But I also send it out to all staff who teach them"; notably dependent on individual initiative rather than institutional requirement.

4.4 Theme 3: Constructing Success: Competing Definitions and the Redistribution-Recognition Dialectic

This theme addresses how 'success' is constructed as a site of negotiation between competing frameworks. These constructions can be understood as tensions between Redistribution (access to credentials for social mobility) and Recognition (validation of linguistic and cultural identities).

4.4.1 Success as Academic Credential Acquisition

The dominant success construction centred on academic attainment. At School 1: "Last year GCSE results were like children were predicted grade one and they left with grade fours and five; that was huge success... Two of the EAL pupils are in the Manchester City Council apprenticeships and the starting pay was £23,000." At School 5: "When we look at GCSE outcomes, the ones that make the most progress and the better ones are my EAL students."

The Teaching Assistant at School 2 provided striking success narrative: "We had five new students who joined us in November, year 11... she didn't get anything lower than a six, and her six were in literature and English. Everything else was either eights or sevens and some nines... I feel like without a department she would have been overlooked." The intensive support described, "We did sessions after school, we did sessions in holidays... five hours, six hours during the holidays," demonstrates extraordinary commitment. At School 6: "When they did the exam and she got a distinction... from a point when she was like, I can't do it. I'm going to fail."

4.4.2 Success as Belonging, Confidence, and Wellbeing

In analysing alternative constructions of success, it is analytically vital to distinguish between the act of recognition experienced by the learner and the intent of recognition articulated by the practitioner. This study accesses the 'policy vacuum' through the lens of professional enactment rather than student voice, the findings below represent practitioner constructs of success - what teachers value and observe, rather than validated student outcomes. However, these constructs remain significant as they drive the 'enacted policy' of the school. When practitioners prioritise social-emotional outcomes over purely academic ones, they are effectively writing the school's definition of educational value in the absence of statutory guidance. For these practitioners, success was frequently re-framed away from the 'redistributive' logic of grades and toward the 'recognitive' logic of belonging.

Alternative constructions foregrounded social-emotional outcomes, aligning with Recognition. At School 1: "If they do not leave with GCSEs, they would leave with skills from us, you know, which are more important... they become confident, and they become confident to express themselves." At School 6: "For me, success is like when you see students happy, you know integrating... they've made friends and which is really important for me because... EAL support

is not just about the language." At School 3 success is viewed flexibly: "Success is... relative really... as long as they feel like they sort of belong."

The Teaching Assistant at School 2 offered direct challenge to credential-centred construction: "I feel like we need to have a policy that is very strong... where we can't ignore if the kid is in crisis or has gone through crisis... most of the time it's ignored because the kid is not showing signs of distress, right? But you know what they've been through can't have been easy." The contextual detail, "We used to have a lot of unaccompanied asylum seekers... the school went to the Council and asked them if they could take these kids on," situates this construction within specific challenges of supporting refugee students.

4.4.3 The Equity Paradox: When Assessment Becomes Barrier

Practitioners recognised that current assessment systems may systematically disadvantage EAL learners by testing English proficiency rather than subject knowledge. At School 1: "In GCSE we are actually assessing their English language... we are not testing their abilities... if you give them the same science paper in their home language, they will just get an eight or nine." At School 6: "Obviously it's usually EAL. It might be difficult for them to get a pass grade like in GCSEs... but then also you've got those late arrivals who may speak good English, but because they joined in year 11, they don't have that many options."

At School 4, the EAL Teacher highlighted the complexity of the EAL label itself: "The actual proportion of any student needing intervention is a lot smaller" than the 80% classified EAL, "because they're just fluent English speakers." She articulated practitioners' desired changes: "In a dream world, it would be that every school... would have an allocated budget member of staff timetable space... and that those students are differentiated from the broader EAL label and that they are tracked properly... that they're not just kind of like forgotten about because they're kind of an inconvenience as data."

4.4.4 Navigating the Access Paradox Through Pedagogical Adaptation

Despite constraints, practitioners described strategies navigating the Recognition-Redistribution tension. At School 1: "We can translate a little bit, chunk the text, translated into their language, give it to them, let them answer in their home language and then we can use that... he used to

then prepare, chunk the Frankenstein into small paragraphs with two to four questions." This allowing L1 response before bridging to English represents practical translanguaging.

Technology-mediated translation was sanctioned at multiple schools. At School 5: "It has been agreed with the vice principal that they are allowed to use their phones for Google Translate." At School 6, extensive provision: "We've got iPads available for students to borrow every day... a lot of teachers encourage the use of Google Translate. We even have headphones that you can use so like if you've got a student who's illiterate in their first language, then it means that they are able to speak their home language but they may not be able to read the translation." This accommodation for students with limited L1 literacy demonstrates sophisticated understanding of within-group diversity.

Peer support systems leveraging student multilingualism emerged across schools. At School 3: "If there's another student in their year who speaks the same language as them and can also speak English, they'll buddy them up so they just act as a sort of informal translator." At School 6, a formal interpreter scheme: "I've just also launched an interpreter's sort of scheme... they can wear the flag, you know that says what language they speak." This simultaneously provides practical support whilst recognising linguistic identities. The Specialist explicitly affirmed multilingualism: "Having an additional language is a tool is not a barrier."

4.5 Theme 4: Building Capacity: The ITT Gap and the Work of Teacher Development

The final theme addresses preparation of teachers for linguistically diverse classrooms. Participants universally identified significant ITT gaps, creating conditions wherein mainstream teachers lack knowledge, skills, and dispositions to support EAL learners.

4.5.1 The Initial Teacher Training Deficit

Recognition of ITT inadequacy was universal. At School 5: "In theory there's actually no EAL training on the teacher training." At School 6: "I know that at least I think the majority of teachers would say that the initial teacher training did not prepare them to work with EAL students." At School 4, the EAL Teacher stated: "I had none. I had none whatsoever... there was

absolutely zero mention or information of any strategies or kind of ideas or best practice. Nothing."

The trainee at School 3 provided direct experiential testimony with a crucial comparison: "SEND, they really do drum home... you have very specific EPS [Educational and Professional Studies] sessions on how to deal with someone on the autism spectrum, how to deal with someone with ADHD... the EAL ones. Basically, you have a lecture. And then you might have a session... but it's not really in depth... I still feel like I'm a bit in the dark." This SEND-EAL disparity mirrors structural subordination identified in Theme 2. Crucially, this trainee's immediate experience of current Initial Teacher Training (ITT) corroborates the retrospective accounts of experienced staff from the other interviews, suggesting continuity rather than an unrepresentative oversight. While the trainee reported being left 'in the dark' by current provision, the EAL Teacher at School 4, reflecting on training decades prior, similarly reported having 'none whatsoever' and 'absolutely zero mention' of EAL strategies. This triangulation of data, linking the immediate frustration of a new entrant with the retrospective testimony of veteran staff, confirms that the 'ITT gap' is a persistent feature or failure. As the School 6 Specialist noted, this is a collective professional deficit where 'the majority of teachers' remain unprepared. The distinction between the 'very specific' training for statutory SEND obligations and the cursory 'lecture' for EAL thus appears to be a structural constant in English teacher preparation.

Consequences manifest in classroom practice. At School 2: "I went to the teacher and he had material in front of him that he could clearly not access... she was like, we can't. He doesn't speak any English. And I was like, that's not good enough." At School 4: "There's an expectation of teachers to like manage that perfectly basically, and there aren't the kind of resources and help or training for that."

4.5.2 Schools as Compensatory Training Providers

Given systemic failure, successful schools become their own CPD providers. At School 1: "I'm a SCITT trainer as well. So I train the teachers because one of our schools provides teachers training." At School 4: "I've done whole staff CPD on it being everyone's responsibility in whole class, whole school environment." At School 6: "I delivered the CPD last year... I've had teachers

asking for like more EAL CPDs because the things are for me, they're quite obvious... But like for the teachers are not... the simple techniques that, you know, teachers can use, which would make a massive difference." At School 5, Trust structures provided capacity: "What TCAT do here is... they take me in for a couple of hours. I've trained the trainees so our trainees do get EAL training."

4.5.3 The Transformative Potential of Empathy-Based Training

The most detailed effective professional development account came from School 1, describing methodologies creating empathy through experiential learning: "When I do my trainings... I start my training by talking in a different language, you know. And I write something in a different language and they're all blank... I said that is exactly how they feel when they sit in your classrooms... it's empathy." The emotional impact: "When they leave my sessions... some of them are in tears. You know, they say we never, ever have even thought about it." At School 4, the EAL Teacher echoed this recommendation: "I would really ask for proper training... to have to kind of experience what it's like to not be able to communicate. I think that would be the biggest... if there was a requirement to have that kind of training."

The lasting pedagogical impact at School 1 was illustrated: "When he was leaving in his speech, he said I did a teaching degree. But what I have learned from [the EAL Lead] has transformed my teaching." At School 6: "Teachers start speaking slowly. I mean it's a simple change makes a massive difference. And so teachers that come to me and saying, Oh yeah, I can see the difference now."

However, a critical 'negative finding' emerged alongside these accounts of transformative empathy. While participants described training that successfully shifted dispositions, teachers moving from indifference to emotional engagement, there was a notable absence of training in specific technical frameworks for academic language instruction. Although the School 1 Lead described powerful experiential sessions, neither she nor other participants reported using explicit pedagogical tools such as Genre Pedagogy or functional linguistics to deconstruct texts. This distinction is significant: the 'enacted policy' in these successful schools appears to rely heavily on relational support and 'insider understanding' rather than on the technical redistribution of linguistic capital. This suggests that while the 'practitioner lottery' currently

selects for those with the moral commitment to care, it does not essentially select for those with the technical capacity to instruct in the specific registers of Academic English.

This distinction becomes significant in the context of the Access Paradox: teachers were developing empathy without necessarily acquiring the specific pedagogical techniques required for explicit instruction in academic language.

4.6 Chapter Conclusion

These findings reveal a system reliant on the fragile agency of individual practitioners. The following Discussion analyses these dynamics through the theoretical lens of 'enacted policy without documentary policy'.

Chapter 5: Discussion

5.1 Introduction

This chapter interprets the findings through the theoretical framework established in Chapter 2, arguing that in the absence of statutory guidance, EAL provision is not 'implemented' but 'authored' by individual practitioners. The discussion is organised around four integrative sections: policy enactment processes within the vacuum; structural mechanisms through a Critical Realist lens; theorisation of success through Fraser's Recognition-Redistribution dialectic; and the identification of the ITT gap and practitioner lottery.

5.2 Policy Enactment in the Vacuum: From Implementation to Improvisation

The findings fundamentally support Ball, Maguire and Braun's (2012) theory that policies are not simply 'implemented' but actively 'enacted' through interpretation, translation, and creative recreation. However, the findings suggest a theoretical extension to Ball et al.'s framework. While Policy Enactment Theory traditionally examines how schools *mediate* existing national texts (filtering them through local context), this study illuminates a distinct mode of 'generative enactment.' In the gap created by the absence of statutory guidance, practitioners are not modifying policy; they are originating it. This shift from mediation to generation places a unique burden on the practitioner, who effectively becomes the sole author of the school's structural response to linguistic diversity. The finding that five of six schools lacked formal written EAL

policies whilst claiming effective practice illuminates 'enacted policy without documentary policy': a condition wherein lived reality exists independently of textual codification. This challenges conventional understanding of policy-practice relationships. As the EAL Lead at School 1 articulated: "They're just written policies. We do far more than policies." This orientation suggests practitioners perceive formal documentation as performative rather than functional. The trainee at School 3, meanwhile, assumed documentation was 'required', revealing how those outside the field expect regulatory frameworks that do not exist.

Applying Spolsky's (2004) tripartite model, the findings reveal significant dissonance: language practices were often sophisticated and contextually responsive; language management was frequently absent or minimal; language beliefs articulated asset-based orientations whilst operating within structures implicitly positioning linguistic diversity as problem. This dissonance reflects what Gogolin (1994) terms the 'monolingual habitus': the institutional assumption that monolingual, native-speaker competence represents the norm against which language use is measured. Even practitioners holding multilingual beliefs operated within management structures reproducing monolingual expectations.

5.2.1 The Double-Edged Sword of Individual Agency

Individual practitioner agency emerged as perhaps the most significant finding. Across schools, EAL provision was sustained by passionate professionals whose commitment transcended contractual requirements: working beyond role boundaries, investing personal identity, and drawing on biographical experiences. This confirms Leung's (2016, p. 165) observation that EAL becomes 'everybody's business in principle, but nobody's in practice,' whilst adding nuance: in successful schools, it becomes somebody's passionate personal business.

Significantly, these findings challenge the structural determinism of the raciolinguistic framework (Flores and Rosa, 2015; Cushing, 2023). The presence of multilingual staff acting as 'policy authors' demonstrates that the 'white listening subject' is not an inevitability in diverse urban schools, but a structure that can be subverted by practitioner agency. The EAL Lead at School 1, herself multilingual and drawing on insider knowledge of education systems in Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Somalia, represents a counter-example to the theoretical model. Her team's collective multilingual capacity (nine languages) and her explicit affirmation of students'

linguistic identities demonstrate practitioners actively resisting deficit ideologies rather than reproducing them. This suggests that while monolingual habitus operates structurally, it is not deterministic; individual practitioners can and do create spaces where linguistic diversity is pedagogically deployed rather than merely tolerated.

However, reliance on individual agency carries systemic vulnerabilities. When provision depends on individuals rather than systems, their departure creates institutional voids. The contrast between School 1's success and School 6's specialist's experience of team redundancy illuminates this fragility. Ryan's (2012) concept of inclusive leadership suggests effective provision requires distributed responsibility embedded in structures. The present findings suggest leadership for EAL has become concentrated rather than distributed, located in exceptional individuals whose expertise compensates for systemic absence. This represents success vulnerable to personnel changes.

This vulnerability suggests a refinement to the 'postcode lottery' framing: what emerges from these findings is a 'practitioner lottery' operating within and beyond geographic variation. Success depends not only on which school a learner attends but on whether that school employs practitioners with the commitment, expertise, and often biographical investment to construct provision where none is mandated. When such practitioners depart through redundancy, career change, or retirement, the provision they authored may depart with them in the absence of structures promoting continuity.

5.3 Structural Mechanisms: A Critical Realist Analysis

Adopting a Critical Realist perspective (Fletcher, 2017), the study identified generative mechanisms producing observed patterns. The findings reveal an interconnected architecture of marginalisation operating through four primary mechanisms.

5.3.1 The Resource Mechanism

Documented resource retrenchment (departments reduced from four TAs to two part-time staff, TLR payments scrapped, budgets eliminated) confirms Flynn and Curdt-Christiansen's (2018, p. 410) identification of 'significant reduction in educational funding.' Critically, these reductions follow EMAG dissolution in 2011 (The Bell Foundation, 2023). Without protected resources,

EAL becomes discretionary spending vulnerable to competing priorities. The mechanism operates through rational decision-making: as the Teaching Assistant at School 2 observed, leadership "don't think it's worth it." This is not hostility but institutional calculation; investment flows toward areas with clearest accountability consequences.

5.3.2 The Statutory Hierarchy Mechanism

The finding that EAL provision is consistently subordinated to SEND frameworks illuminates a crucial mechanism: the statutory/non-statutory distinction. Participants articulated this explicitly: "SEND students are statutory, EAL are not. So when it comes to who to focus on... obviously SEND will be prioritised." This hierarchy operates through regulatory mechanisms (Education, Health and Care Plans, statutory assessments, inspection criteria) creating accountability for SEND whilst leaving EAL largely undefined. The trainee's observation that ITT provides 'very specific sessions' on SEND whilst EAL receives 'basically a lecture' reflects this hierarchy operating at teacher preparation level.

This extends understanding of the policy vacuum: it is not merely absence but active subordination. The space is filled by gravitational pull of statutory requirements drawing attention toward legally mandated provision. EAL learners occupy a paradoxical position: numerous enough (approximately 20% nationally) to represent significant presence, yet legally invisible in ways systematically deprioritising their needs.

5.3.3 Information Invisibility

A further mechanism concerns information infrastructure. The findings revealed planned EAL registers that 'never materialised'; systems where 'it's on us to do that ourselves'; and informal notification wherein practitioners learn of new arrivals from 'teachers or even students.' Unlike SEND provision, where statutory processes create institutional visibility, EAL learners may pass through schools without systematic identification. The EAL Specialist at School 6 articulated the consequence: 'if I don't know [they exist], I can't support them.' This informational invisibility compounds other mechanisms. This informational invisibility is not an administrative accident but a direct causal function of the statutory framework, and attendant lack thereof. Unlike SEND, where statutory requirement for an EHC Plan mandates the creation and transfer of visible documentation, the non-statutory status of EAL creates no such imperative. Without a legal

requirement to track, the system defaults to inertia. The 'missing' registers at School 2 and the reliance on informal notification at School 6 demonstrate how the absence of national regulation (the macro-structure) directly produces the invisibility of the learner in the local setting (the empirical event). In Critical Realist terms, the non-statutory status acts as a mechanism of erasure, ensuring that unless an individual practitioner actively seeks information, the EAL learner remains systematically uncounted and therefore unsupported

5.3.4 The Professional Qualification Mechanism

A final mechanism concerns credentialing pathways. Unlike SEND, where SENCO qualifications are mandated, EAL expertise develops through informal accumulation. The Specialist at School 6 held CELTA, designed for adult TESOL rather than school-based EAL. Others drew on biographical multilingualism and experiential learning. The absence of standardised qualification pathways means expertise remains personally embodied rather than institutionally validated, contributing to professional precarity.

5.4 Theorising Success: Recognition, Redistribution, and the Access Paradox

The findings reveal 'success' as an ongoing negotiation between competing frameworks. Fraser's (1997) dual-systems theory provides analytical purchase. Successful practitioners navigate, rather than resolve, the dialectic between Recognition (validating linguistic identities) and Redistribution (providing access to dominant linguistic capital).

5.4.1 The Redistribution Imperative

Dominant credential-based success constructions (GCSE outcomes, progression to apprenticeships) reflect Fraser's Redistribution imperative: ensuring access to credentials for social mobility. This connects to Hessel and Strand's (2023) research demonstrating English proficiency as vastly more powerful predictor of attainment than ethnicity, gender, and socio-economic disadvantage combined. Practitioners' focus on English acquisition reflects implicit understanding of this reality: within current structures, proficiency gates access to credentials regardless of underlying competence.

However, practitioners also critiqued this framework. The EAL Lead at School 1 articulated the fundamental tension: "In GCSE we are actually assessing their English language... if you give

them the same science paper in their home language, they will just get an eight or nine." This exposes the Access Paradox (Janks, 2010).

5.4.2 The Recognition Imperative and Intersectional Diversity

Alongside redistribution-focused constructions, practitioners articulated alternative frameworks centred on wellbeing, belonging, and identity affirmation, aligning with Recognition. The EAL Lead at School 1 stated: "If they do not leave with GCSEs, they would leave with skills from us, you know, which are more important." The Specialist at School 6 defined success as: "when you see students happy, you know integrating... they've made friends." These constructions centre learner experience and social integration.

An intersectional analysis (Crenshaw, 1989) illuminates diversity masked by the singular 'EAL' category. Practitioners worked with dramatically different populations: unaccompanied asylum seekers in city centre hotels; students with trauma from conflict zones; late Year 11 arrivals with limited schooling; fluent bilinguals from established communities; students illiterate in L1 requiring audio translation. These intersecting identities require different support forms.

5.4.3 Dialectical Navigation: Translanguaging as Praxis

The pedagogical adaptations described (translating texts into home languages, allowing L1 responses before bridging to English, technology-mediated translation, student interpreter schemes) represent what García and Li Wei (2014) theorise as translanguaging: deploying speakers' full linguistic repertoires as integrated resources. These practices navigate the Recognition-Redistribution dialectic by using Recognition (validating L1) as vehicle for Redistribution (accessing English-medium curriculum).

The School 1 EAL Lead's description of chunking *Frankenstein*, allowing L1 comprehension before English production, exemplifies dialectical navigation. This treats multilingualism as pedagogical resource enabling academic engagement. The student interpreter scheme at School 6 similarly enacts both imperatives: students receive badges displaying their language and flag, gaining Recognition; they perform meaningful institutional roles, gaining status; and their bilingual capacity is positioned as valuable asset.

However, Jaspers' (2018) critique of translanguaging's 'transformational limits' remains relevant. The practices described operate within unchanged structural constraints: GCSEs still test English proficiency; credentials remain dominant; the Access Paradox persists.

5.5 The ITT Gap and the Practitioner Lottery

The universal recognition of ITT inadequacy confirms cumulative evidence that teacher preparation systematically fails to address linguistic diversity (Foley, Sangster and Anderson, 2013; Murakami, 2008). The trainee's comparison is illuminating: SEND receives 'very specific EPS sessions' whilst EAL receives 'basically a lecture.' This disparity at preparation level perpetuates the structural hierarchy identified in Theme 2.

The lack of training leaves teachers ill-equipped to distinguish BICS from CALP. Without this theoretical lens, practitioners risk misinterpreting conversational fluency as academic competence, leading to premature withdrawal of support. The teacher responding 'we can't' to a non-English-speaking student represents the extreme. More insidious may be unrecognised needs of students who have acquired conversational fluency but lack academic language support.

The reliance on empathy-based training (Theme 4) rather than technical pedagogical frameworks validates the concept of the 'Practitioner Lottery.' Consequently, the 'practitioner lottery' operates on a dual axis of intent and capacity. Current conditions select for 'benevolent amateurs'; teachers who intend to support EAL learners but who are systematically denied the technical pedagogical knowledge to do so effectively. As evidenced by the reliance on empathy-based training over Genre Pedagogy, the system currently relies on the accidental presence of teachers who *feel* for EAL learners, rather than ensuring the systemic production of teachers who can *teach* them. The absence of explicit Genre Pedagogy (Rose and Martin, 2012) in practitioner accounts is significant: while experiential training effectively shifts dispositions, it does not equip teachers with the technical pedagogical knowledge required for explicit instruction in academic language. Teachers develop empathy without necessarily acquiring the specific techniques to resolve the Access Paradox. This distinction illuminates why provision remains fragile: it depends on individual practitioners who happen to care deeply, rather than on systematised technical competence that could be institutionally reproduced.

The empathy-based training described at School 1 (creating linguistic disorientation through instruction in unfamiliar languages) represents an alternative pedagogical approach addressing dispositional rather than technical preparation. The emotional impact ('some of them are in tears') and lasting transformation ('what I have learned has transformed my teaching') suggests experiential approaches developing perspective-taking may build teacher capacity. However, reliance on informal school-based training creates the same individual-dependency identified elsewhere: the EAL Lead provides transformative training, but this capacity is not institutionally embedded or systematically reproduced.

5.6 Theoretical Implications

The study makes several theoretical contributions. First, it extends Policy Enactment Theory by demonstrating how enactment operates in conditions of policy absence rather than presence. The concept of 'enacted policy without documentary policy' captures a condition wherein practice exists independently of textual codification. Second, the study demonstrates Fraser's Recognition-Redistribution framework's utility for understanding EAL tensions, suggesting the framework should be applied dynamically: examining how schools manage competing imperatives rather than seeking resolution. Third, the identification of structural mechanisms (statutory hierarchies, resource vulnerability, information invisibility, qualification absence) provides Critical Realist explanation of how the vacuum operates. Fourth, the study complicates raciolinguistic critiques by demonstrating practitioner agency, particularly from multilingual practitioners, actively resisting rather than merely reproducing deficit ideologies. The 'white listening subject' emerges as a structure that can be subverted, not an inevitability.

5.7 Chapter Conclusion

This chapter has interpreted the findings through the theoretical framework, arguing that 'success' is not stable achievement but ongoing accomplishment: the daily work of committed practitioners navigating structural constraints whilst holding multiple success constructions in productive tension. The policy status quo has not produced anarchy but improvisation; not chaos but concentrated expertise; not absence but presence that is fragile, individually dependent, and institutionally invisible. The following chapter concludes the dissertation by summarising

contributions, acknowledging limitations, and presenting implications for policy, practice, and future research.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

6.1 Recapitulation

This study set out to investigate the reality of EAL policy enactment. By examining the lived experience of six Greater Manchester secondary schools, it has provided the first systemic account of how provision operates in the 'policy vacuum' following the dissolution of EMAG. The research responded directly to a practitioner-identified priority (Chalmers, Faitaki and Murphy, 2023), approaching the question with theoretical sensitivity to Policy Enactment Theory, Critical Realism, and Fraser's Recognition-Redistribution dialectic.

6.2 Summary of Key Findings

The findings tell a story of agency operating within, and against, constraint. The study's central finding is that successful EAL provision exists as 'enacted policy without documentary policy': a condition wherein five of six participating schools lacked formal written policy whilst practitioners claimed, and evidence supported, effective practice. This extends Policy Enactment Theory beyond policy mediation to theorise policy construction in conditions of formal absence. Practitioners become not merely policy actors but policy authors, constructing provision without reference to authoritative frameworks.

This agency, however, occurs in a context. It is constrained by structural features that produce marginalisation regardless of individual commitment. Four generative mechanisms were identified through Critical Realist analysis: resource vulnerability following EMAG dissolution, statutory hierarchy privileging legally mandated SEND over non-statutory EAL, accountability absence creating no external pressure for improvement, and information invisibility preventing systematic tracking of EAL learners across school systems. These mechanisms create conditions wherein rational institutional actors deprioritise EAL provision, regardless of personal belief in its importance.

Success, when it occurs, is constructed through ongoing navigation of Fraser's Recognition-Redistribution dialectic. Practitioners hold multiple frameworks simultaneously: credential acquisition as access to social mobility (Redistribution) and identity validation as affirmation of linguistic heritage (Recognition). Translanguaging pedagogies, technology-mediated translation support, and peer interpreter schemes represent attempts to hold both imperatives simultaneously. Yet the Access Paradox persists: assessment systems test English proficiency rather than subject knowledge, meaning practitioners recognise inequity they feel powerless to change.

The narrative concludes with a finding of systemic failure at the point of teacher preparation. Universal recognition emerged that Initial Teacher Training does not prepare teachers for linguistic diversity. The glaring disparity in training intensity identified in this study; SEND mandates deep engagement while EAL warrants only cursory treatment, requires urgent regulatory intervention. The disparity mirrors the statutory hierarchy identified in Theme 2: where legal mandate exists, training follows; where it does not, training remains absent. Critically, the dominance of empathy-based training illuminates a significant absence. While experiential approaches effectively shift dispositions (creating teachers who understand what linguistic disorientation feels like), they do not equip teachers with the technical pedagogical knowledge required for the explicit Genre Pedagogy (Rose and Martin, 2012) theorised in Chapter 2.

The absence of such explicit instruction in practitioner accounts suggests that the ITT gap limits teachers to relational support strategies. Without specific training in deconstructing academic language, teachers cannot enact the high-leverage technical interventions necessary to fully resolve the Access Paradox. The concept of the 'practitioner lottery' thus carries a double meaning: success depends not only on whether a school employs a committed practitioner, but on whether that practitioner possesses the technical skill (not merely the empathetic disposition) to provide rigorous academic language instruction. The findings suggest many do not, through no fault of their own.

6.3 Original Contribution to Knowledge

The study's theoretical contribution is the concept of 'enacted policy without documentary policy', extending Policy Enactment Theory to conditions where formal policy is absent entirely. This study distinguishes 'mediational enactment' (as theorised by Ball, Maguire and Braun, 2012) from 'generative enactment.' In the former, schools interpret and translate existing texts. In the latter, observed here, practitioners do not interpret text but author provision to fill a need. This conceptual distinction is critical for understanding school governance in an era of decentralisation: it reveals that in the absence of statutory direction, policy is not simply 'unimplemented' but is actively generated from the bottom up, relying on the 'practitioner lottery' also identified, which captures the systemic vulnerability this creates. Additionally, the study demonstrates the utility of Fraser's Recognition-Redistribution dialectic for EAL policy analysis, identifies four structural realities of marginalisation through Critical Realist analysis, and complicates raciolinguistic critiques by demonstrating practitioner agency against deficit ideologies. Multilingual practitioners in this study created what Bhabha (1994) terms 'third spaces' where linguistic diversity was pedagogically deployed rather than merely tolerated. Empirically, the study documented the widespread condition of policy absence, provided evidence of systematic ITT failure with SEND-EAL training disparity, and captured the rarely-accessed trainee teacher perspective on encountering linguistic diversity without preparation.

6.4 Implications

6.4.1 Implications for Policy

The findings suggest that toolkit publication without accountability standards is insufficient. The statutory/non-statutory distinction emerged as decisive: schools rationally prioritise legally mandated provision. The recent Ofsted toolkit addition represents a small step toward accountability, but practitioners' observations that inspectors 'didn't seem really interested' suggests implementation gaps. Meaningful improvement requires statutory protection for EAL provision.

To respond to these findings, the Department for Education should restore ring-fenced funding for EAL provision utilising a formula linked to proficiency stages rather than the current binary EAL classification. This study identified resource vulnerability as a primary mechanism of marginalisation following the dissolution of EMAG. The current binary label creates a perverse

incentive by treating a fluent bilingual and a new arrival identically. A graduated funding coefficient linked to the Bell Foundation proficiency stages would align resource allocation with actual instructional need and mirror the tiered funding models used in High Needs SEND provision.

The study also indicates that EAL provision merits statutory regulation comparable to the SEND Code of Practice and include the mandatory designation of an EAL Co-ordinator with protected time allocation. The statutory hierarchy mechanism currently forces rational school leaders to deprioritise EAL because it carries no legal mandate. As observed in Theme 2 where schools prioritise SEND because they are legally required to do so, statutory parity is the only intervention capable of overriding this institutional logic. Ofsted inspection criteria must also be revised to include explicit accountability consequences for EAL provision quality comparable to those for SEND provision. The absence of accountability facilitates systemic neglect. Participants noted that inspectors seemed uninterested in EAL provision and that the lack of external pressure meant there was no urgency to track progress. Without rigorous external validation, provision remains discretionary and vulnerable to competing priorities.

The mechanism of information invisibility currently allows learners to pass through the system without their specific linguistic needs being recorded. As noted in Theme 2, the absence of statutory registers leaves information sharing dependent on individual initiative and renders learners structurally invisible. The reinstatement of mandatory integration of proficiency data into the National Pupil Database alongside systematic information-sharing protocols for new arrivals would address this.

The Core Content Framework for Initial Teacher Training must be amended to mandate specific modules on EAL pedagogy and second language acquisition equivalent to current requirements for SEND. The ITT gap creates a practitioner lottery where provision relies on the accidental presence of teachers with insider knowledge or moral commitment. Regulatory intervention is required to shift the workforce from benevolent amateurs to technically skilled practitioners capable of delivering the explicit instruction required for academic access.

6.4.2 Implications for School Leadership

For school leaders, the findings highlight provision fragility when dependent on individual practitioners. Successful schools might consider how to institutionalise EAL expertise by embedding it in distributed responsibilities rather than concentrated roles, ensuring sustainability beyond individual tenure. The development of formal policy documentation, whilst insufficient alone, may provide continuity mechanisms. Information systems ensuring systematic identification and tracking of EAL learners emerged as significant enablers. Technology infrastructure (iPads, translation platforms) requires investment beyond individual initiative. The mapping against Demie and Lewis's (2018) characteristics suggests schools should audit their provision against: leadership commitment (Theme 1); capacity-building through CPD (Theme 4); inclusive curriculum with translanguageing (Theme 3); targeted support systems (Theme 3); and data monitoring (Theme 2's accountability findings). Such an audit would illuminate gaps between enacted practice and characteristics associated with successful provision.

6.4.3 Implications for ITT Providers

The findings add to evidence that ITT inadequately prepares teachers for linguistic diversity. The SEND-EAL disparity (the trainee's observation that SEND receives 'very specific EPS sessions' whilst EAL receives 'basically a lecture') requires direct attention. This disparity at preparation level perpetuates the structural hierarchy: teachers enter classrooms equipped for statutory obligations toward SEND learners but unprepared for discretionary responsibilities toward EAL learners.

The effectiveness of empathy-based, experiential approaches (creating linguistic disorientation through instruction in unfamiliar languages) suggests pedagogical direction. However, empathy alone is insufficient. Teachers also require technical training in explicit academic language instruction (Genre Pedagogy) to address CALP development. Without such technical skill, teachers possess the motivation to support EAL learners but lack the methodological tools to do so effectively. Addressing ITT systemically requires regulatory change mandating EAL content equivalent to SEND requirements. This is not a curriculum design problem; it is a regulatory gap

requiring policy intervention. The core message across stakeholders is that structural change is required. Individual passion and capacity cannot indefinitely compensate for systemic absence.

6.5 Study Limitations

This study has the character of exploratory research. The interview protocol was not formally piloted, rather, it should itself be considered a pilot. The sample is modest (six schools, six participants), and geographic scope is limited to Greater Manchester's urban context. These characteristics position the findings as indicative rather than generalisable, offering insight that invites rather than forecloses future investigation. Self-report data was not triangulated with classroom observation, meaning enacted practice was accessed through testimony rather than direct observation. The single trainee teacher participant limits claims about the ITT experience. Significantly, student and family voices were not directly accessed. Success constructions presented reflect practitioner perspectives; learners themselves may construct success differently. This is a particularly important limitation given the study's concern with Recognition. The validation of learner identity cannot be fully assessed without learner testimony. What practitioners perceive as successful Recognition may be experienced differently by students. The study therefore offers an account of how practitioners construct and enact policy, not how that enactment is experienced by intended beneficiaries. This is arguably the study's greatest limitation, it analyses Recognition without directly consulting the Recognised.

6.6 Future Research Directions

Priority directions for future research include longitudinal investigation of provision sustainability through practitioner transitions. This would test the vulnerability hypothesis central to the practitioner lottery concept, examining what happens when passionate practitioners depart. Student and family perspectives on Recognition claims would validate or complicate practitioner constructions of success. This is essential to address the limitation of 'Recognition without the Recognised' identified above.

Research investigating how explicit academic language instruction (Genre Pedagogy) is enacted, or not enacted, in successful schools would address a significant gap. The findings suggest practitioners rely on empathy and relational support rather than technical pedagogical skill.

Future research should examine whether this reflects absence of knowledge, absence of terminology, or genuine absence of practice. Comparative international research on statutory frameworks could inform future policy development by learning from systems with explicit EAL legislation.

Experimental research on ITT approaches (comparing empathy-based experiential training with technical Genre Pedagogy instruction) would test the transformative potential identified here under controlled conditions. Larger-scale replication building on this pilot study could test mechanism generalisability across different contexts, including rural areas, primary settings, and regions with different demographic compositions.

6.7 Closing Statement

Until structural change addresses the marginalisation of EAL learners identified in this study, their educational outcomes will depend on a double lottery: which school they attend, and whether that school retains practitioners committed and capable enough to author provision in the absence of guidance. This postcode and practitioner lottery affects some of the most vulnerable children in the English education system. The study provides evidence that success is possible without national policy, enacted by exceptional practitioners who construct effective but fragile provision within systemic neglect. Such success currently demands heroism and daily struggle. The challenge for national policy-makers is to create structures that enable success without depending on exceptional individuals operating despite the systems they work within. Until that structural transformation occurs, the quality of EAL provision will remain a matter of chance rather than a duty fulfilled.

Chapter 7: Reference List

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Appendix 1: Ethics Favourable Opinion

Education (Educ) DREC

15 Norham Gardens, Oxford, OX2 6PY

Applicant: (Anonymised for submission)

Principal Investigator: Hamish Chalmers

Department: Education

Study title: What are the characteristics of successful whole school policies for supporting EAL learners? (Version: 1.0)

Ethics reference: Education (Educ) DREC - 1924935

Dear Hamish Chalmers,

On behalf of the Committee, I confirm that the above research study described in the application and other supporting documentation submitted to the committee has been carefully considered on behalf of the Education (Educ) DREC in accordance with the University's regulations and policy for ethics approval of research involving human participants, human tissue and/or personal data. The opinion is as follows:

Opinion of Research Ethics Committee: Favourable Opinion

Subject to the following conditions:

Decision Date: 12 Nov 2025, 13:49

Opinion End Date: 15 Jan 2025

If favourable, insurance-provided indemnity arrangements will be in place between the decision date and opinion end date and you may now commence your study activities. Should you plan to continue the research beyond the end date above, it is your responsibility to ensure that you request, and receive, an extension (via amendment) from the committee for indemnity to remain in place. You may be required to provide a justification.

Please note the following:

Amendments: Should there be any subsequent changes to the reviewed study, applications for amendments can be made via the Oxford Ethics Application System (Worktribe Ethics).

Reports: Studies considered by OxTREC are expected to submit an *annual progress report* on each anniversary of study approval, until the study is completed. An end of study report is also required.

Audit: This study may be selected for audit at the discretion of the Research Governance, Ethics and Assurance Team.

Data safety: It is the responsibility of the PI to ensure that all data collected during the course of the study is stored and transferred safely and securely in accordance with University requirements. Further guidance and advice are available from the [Research Data Team](#).

Additional information is available at <https://researchsupport.web.ox.ac.uk/governance/ethics>

Yours Sincerely,
Education Ethics Officer



Policy questionnaire for practitioners on effective whole school EAL policy

Education (Educ) DREC - 1924935
15 Norham Gardens, Oxford, OX2 6PY

Study title: What are the characteristics of successful whole school policies for supporting EAL learners?

(Final Version)

Ethics reference: Education (Educ) DREC - 1924935

1. Who takes responsibility for forming and implementing EAL policy at your school?
2. Who takes responsibility for supporting EAL learners at your school?
3. Please describe how consistency across subjects is maintained for EAL learners at your school.
4. How are resources allocated for EAL learners at your school? Who is involved in these decisions?
5. How is information communicated (formally or informally) about EAL learners at your school?
6. What contextual factors shape the formation and implementation of EAL policy at your school? Does your school have a formal EAL policy? Why/why not?
7. How successfully does your school support EAL learners, and how is success for this group defined at your school?
- 8 what is your school's approach to inclusion vs pull out teaching for EAL students

9. How well do you feel EAL policies and guidelines address the unique needs of your EAL students?
10. Please describe any successes you've had in adapting or implementing EAL Policies.
11. What are the main challenges you face in implementing effective EAL teaching practices in your school?
12. What is your school's policy and approach to social/emotional wellbeing support for EAL students?
13. What resources or support do you receive from external sources, and what resources would help you improve EAL outcomes in your school?
14. Has your work been affected by any changes in national EAL policy?
15. How effectively do you feel your school leadership team champions and supports EAL teaching as a priority?
16. In your experience, what are the most significant barriers to implementing effective whole-school approaches to EAL education?
17. How well do you feel initial teacher training and ongoing professional development prepare teachers to work effectively with EAL students?
18. Describe any specific EAL teaching practices you have implemented that you feel have been particularly successful.
19. What do you see as the biggest gaps between your understanding of EAL policies/guidelines and the actual experiences of EAL students and teachers in secondary schools?
20. What recommendations would you make to policymakers to better support EAL teaching and learning at the school and national levels?
21. Would you be willing to provide any working documents on EAL policy or provision please?
22. What have I not asked about which is relevant or important for EAL learners and policy in your school?

Appendix 3: Research Participant Information Sheet

Department of Education

Primary Investigator

Hamish Chalmers

University Direct Line: 01865 284091

University e-mail:

Hamish.chalmers@education.ox.ac.uk

Primary Researcher

(Anonymised for submission)



What Are Successful Whole School Policies For Supporting EAL Learners?

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Central University Research Ethics Committee Reference: DREC - 1924935

Introductory paragraph

You are being invited to take part in a study exploring how schools implement whole school policies to support learners who use English as an Additional Language (EAL). This study seeks to better understand the features, strategies, and conditions that make such policies and practices successful, particularly in diverse educational contexts like those found in Manchester-area secondary schools

Why is this research being conducted?

Recent research has identified that there is a lack of clarity about how schools implement policies to support EAL learners. Your responses can help to improve understanding of what works and what doesn't and help make progress in effective EAL teaching and learning.

Why have I been invited to take part?

You have been invited because of your experience working in a school with EAL learners, either as a teacher, coordinator, or school leader. Your insights are essential in helping to identify what works (and what doesn't) in supporting these students at a whole school level.

Do I have to take part?

No. It is up to you to decide whether to take part. You can withdraw yourself from the research, without giving a reason by advising me of this decision by email. The deadline by which you can withdraw any information you have contributed to the research is any time before the interview takes place. Any data collected up to that point will be deleted

What will happen if I take part in the research?

- You will be asked to return a completed consent form
- An interview will be arranged at a time convenient for you.
- The interview will take place on MS Teams and last roughly 75 minutes
- You will be given a list of topics in advance. During the interview, you will be asked questions on the topics and may be asked to provide additional detail on your responses to some questions
- With your consent, I would like to audio and video record you so I can have an accurate record of our conversation. If you prefer, you can turn your camera off.
- You will only be interviewed once, unless you prefer to schedule more than one interview
- You can ask to pause or stop the research activities at any time. You can choose not to answer a question if you prefer, and we can take breaks during the interview.

What are the possible disadvantages and risks in taking part?

There are no known risks or disadvantages to participation. Your interview recording and transcript will be immediately anonymised for storage and neither you nor your school will be identifiable in the finished report. You will be given a copy of the report if you request one.

Are there any benefits in taking part?

While there are no immediate benefits for those people participating in the research, it is hoped that you may find that reflecting on your experiences is a valuable professional opportunity, and your contribution may help shape future policy development and training related to EAL support.

What information will be collected and why is the collection of this information relevant for achieving the research objectives?

To enable participants to make an informed decision about taking part it is important they understand what information will be collected and why, and how this information will be used. Your name and the name of your school will be collected to facilitate the processing of your data, but this information will be anonymised as soon as the interview is over, and will never appear in any drafts of the research. General information about the size of the EAL pupil population at your school will also be collected and anonymised from public sources and protected in the same way.

Your responses to questions about how you support EAL learners through policy will benefit the research by showing how schools and teachers respond to the current educational context and constraints in Manchester.

Your data will be stored safely in accordance with departmental regulations on university servers for the duration of the research project and deleted after a maximum of one year from submission.

The researcher and supervisor only will have access to the research data. Identifiable data (including consent forms) will be stored on the same university servers and in line with the same policies for a maximum of one year after the completion of the research. OneDrive for Business, provided as part of the University's Nexus365 offering, has been approved by the University's Information Security team for the storage of research data. Other research data will be stored for one year after publication or public release of the work of the research.

I would like to use this data in future studies, and to share this with other researchers (e.g. in online databases). Interview data used and shared in this way will be the version processed in order to prevent the identification of you and your school. Your personal data will not be shared.

Will the research be published? Could I be identified from any publications or other research outputs?

The findings from the research will be written up in an MSc. dissertation which may be used as the basis for future research. You and your school will not be identifiable from this work.

I would like your permission to use direct quotations without identifying you in any research outputs.

A copy of my dissertation may be deposited online in the [Oxford University Research Archive](#) where it will be publicly available to facilitate its use in future research.

Data Protection

The University of Oxford is the data controller with respect to your personal data, and as such will determine how your personal data is used in the research. The University will process your personal data for the purpose of the research outlined above. Research is a task that is performed in the public interest. Further information about your rights with respect to your personal data is available from the University's Information Compliance website at

<https://compliance.admin.ox.ac.uk/individual-rights>.

My research has no additional funding requirements and is supported only by my department.

Who has reviewed this research?

This research has received favourable opinion from a subcommittee of the University of Oxford Central University Research Ethics Committee. (Reference - DREC - 1924935).

Who do I contact if I have a concern about the research or I wish to complain?

If you have a concern about any aspect of this research, please (Anonymised for submission) or Dr. Hamish Chalmers 01865284091 – Hamish.chalmers@education.ox.ac.uk and we will do our best to answer your query. We will acknowledge your concern within 10 working days and give you an indication of how it will be dealt with. If you remain unhappy or wish to make a formal complaint, please contact the University of Oxford Research Governance, Ethics & Assurance (RGEA) team at rgea.complaints@admin.ox.ac.uk or on +44 (0)1865 616480.

Further Information and Contact Details

If you would like to discuss the research with someone beforehand (or if you have questions afterwards), please contact:

(Anonymised for submission)

Department of Education, University of Oxford

15 Norham Gardens

OX2 6PY

01865274024

(Anonymised for submission)@education.ox.ac.uk

Appendix 4: Research Participant Consent Form

Department of Education

Hamish Chalmers

University Direct Line: 01865 284091

University e-mail:

Hamish.chalmers@education.ox.ac.uk



What Are Successful Whole School Policies For Supporting EAL Learners? Ethics Reference:

General Information

The aim of this research is to investigate whole school policies for EAL learners.

We appreciate your interest in participating in this online interview. You have been invited to participate as you are an educator in a teaching and/or leadership role in a school which meets our criteria for inclusion due to the size and percentage of your EAL student population. Please read through this information before agreeing to participate (if you wish to) by ticking the 'yes' box below.

You may ask any questions before deciding to take part by contacting the researcher (details below).

The Principal Researcher is (Anonymised for submission), who is attached to the department of Education, at the University of Oxford. This research is being completed under the supervision of Dr. Hamish Chalmers.

If you agree to participate, you will be interviewed on MS Teams about EAL policy and practice at your school. This should take roughly 75 minutes. No background knowledge is required. Your responses will be used to develop awareness of the perspectives of EAL practitioners and the characteristics of successful school, and may inform future research. Your answers will be recorded, your data will be stored securely and processed in accordance with well established department guidelines. You and your school will remain completely anonymous, and the data

will be deleted safely after processing. It will only be accessed by the Principal Researcher and his supervisor.

Do I have to take part?

No. Please note that participation is voluntary. If you do decide to take part, you may withdraw at any point for any reason before submitting your responses to the interview

All questions are optional, should you prefer not to answer a particular question.

How will my data be used?

The data we will collect that could identify you will be your name and contact information, but this will be stored securely and deleted once the interview responses are processed and the data anonymised

Your IP address will not be stored¹. We will take all reasonable measures to ensure that data remain confidential.

The responses you provide will be stored in a password-protected electronic file on University of Oxford secure servers and may be used in academic publications, and conference presentations.

Identifiable information will be deleted as soon as it is no longer required for the research.

Research data will be stored for 1 year after publication or public release of the work of the research.

Who will have access to my data²?

The University of Oxford is the data controller with respect to your personal data and, as such, will determine how your personal data is used in the research. The University will process your personal data for the purpose of the research outlined above. Research is a task that we perform in the public interest. Further information about your rights with respect to your personal data is available from <https://compliance.admin.ox.ac.uk/individual-rights>.

The data you provide will not be shared.

We would like to use the data in future studies. Data will have identifying information removed before it is shared with other researchers or results are made public.

The results will be written up for an MSc. degree.

Who has reviewed this research?

This research has been reviewed by, and received ethics clearance through, a subcommittee of the University of Oxford Central University Research Ethics Committee DREC – 1924935.

Who do I contact if I have a concern or I wish to complain?

If you have a concern about any aspect of this research, please contact (Anonymised for submission)[@education.ox.ac.uk](mailto:education.ox.ac.uk) or Dr. Hamish Chalmers (01865 284091

hamish.chalmers@education.ox.ac.uk), and we will do our best to answer your query. We will acknowledge your concern within 10 working days and give you an indication of how it will be dealt with. If you remain unhappy or wish to make a formal complaint, please contact the University of Oxford Research Governance, Ethics & Assurance (RGEA) team at rgea.complaints@admin.ox.ac.uk or on 01865 616480.

¹ Guidance is available within CUREC's [Best Practice Guidance \(06\) on Internet-mediated research](#)

² Guidance is available within CUREC's [Best Practice Guidance \(09\) on Data collection, protection and management](#)

Please note that you may only participate in this survey if you are 18 years of age or over.

☐ I certify that I am 18 years of age or over

If you have read the information above and agree to participate with the understanding that the data (including any personal data) you submit will be processed accordingly, please tick the box below and add your name and today's date to start.

☐ Yes, I agree to take part