

# Language Diversity and Attainment in English Secondary Schools: A Scoping Study

A report for Arvon by:

**The Institute for Policy Studies in Education (IPSE)**

**London Metropolitan University**

**May 2012**

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**arvon**



**Supported by:**



**CALOUSTE  
GULBENKIAN  
FOUNDATION**

## **Acknowledgements**

The research team would like to thank all those who have contributed to this research. Specifically we would like to thank Tozun Issa, John Eversley, Michelle Von Ahn, Anthony Sanderson, Raymonde Sneddon, Charmian Kenner, Uvanney Maylor, Robin Richardson, Karen Elvidge and Tim Spafford for their expert advice and guidance on the research topic and Una Mee (Newcastle), Julie Bunn and Maureen Coverdale (Middlesbrough), Joe Flynn (Manchester), Rona Grabowski and Rosalind Paul (Luton) for providing data and knowledge to us at the local level for the focus regions. We are also grateful to all other the local authority staff, ethnic minority achievement specialists, and other experts who shared their views and experiences, and provided data to us.

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Arvon is a flagship literature organisation, internationally renowned for its residential courses in four centres around the UK in Devon, Shropshire, West Yorkshire and Inverness-shire. Based on the principle that everyone can benefit from the transformative power of writing, Arvon's courses ignite a lifelong love of imaginative writing and help to develop the creative voice of each participant.

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[www.arvonfoundation.org](http://www.arvonfoundation.org)

### **About the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation**

The Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation is an international charitable foundation with cultural, educational, social and scientific interests. Based in Lisbon with offices in London and Paris, the Foundation is in a privileged position to support national and transnational work tackling contemporary issues. The purpose of the UK Branch in London is to help enrich and connect the experiences of individuals and secure lasting, beneficial change, with a special interest in supporting those who are most disadvantaged. (M)Other Tongues is supported under our Cultural Understanding theme, which aims to improve understanding *between* cultures and *through* culture.

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Institute for Policy Studies in Education (IPSE) was commissioned by Arvon's *(M)other Tongues* programme to identify which linguistic minorities are at a 'disadvantage' in education in England and to identify where they are located – paying particular attention to areas outside of London. Hence, this report identifies and maps linguistic minority attainment in the secondary school population in England in 2011. This is the first scoping study of its kind with a national focus, and complements the excellent work of Eversley and colleagues (2010) who have examined, in-depth, the London context. The report draws on a combination of DfE published data on attainment by first language other than English; attainment by ethnicity and available local authority information on specific linguistic communities in select regions. In the report we make specific recommendations to Arvon regarding specific linguistic groups and localities on which to focus their work.

What is clear from this research is that there is a real dearth of information examining which specific linguistic groups are attaining less well at school, and where they are located in the country. Indeed, this data is generally not systematically collected, and where it is collected, attainment is often not analysed by linguistic group, only ethnicity. Nevertheless, we have the following key findings:

- While other first language speakers, and minority ethnic pupils in general, attain better results in London, there are still persistent gaps in attainment between English first language, and other first language speakers, nationally.
- There are large attainment gaps in the Yorkshire and the Humber and the North West regions, which need further exploration.
- Overall, many of the widest attainment gaps are present in local authorities with substantial Pakistani ethnic minority groups – for example, Peterborough, Oldham, Bedford, Bury, Derby, Sheffield, and Calderdale – who tend to speak Urdu, Punjabi or Mirpuri and experience economic disadvantage. This association clearly needs further examination.
- There is clearly a need for further research into new ethnic communities from Eastern Europe, whose educational and language profile, and needs, tends to be obscured in the White, or White Other ethnic category
- Similarly, Black African ethnic groups need to be specified in relation to language to gain a fuller picture of their educational achievements. In particular, more recent migratory flows from Central and East Africa (e.g. Congo, Angola, and Zimbabwe).

This report highlights, that, given the growing “super-diversity” of England and the rest of the UK, crude ethnic categories (of Black, White, Asian) in published DfE data mask a great deal of ethnic, national, linguistic, religious and social diversity which may be getting in the way of how we ‘make sense’ of minority communities’ relative achievement, and how we understand who is at a disadvantage. If we are to get any closer to understanding the role of language / bilingualism and multilingualism in children’s relative attainment we need better data and more fine grained analysis.

## INTRODUCTION

Britain is becoming more linguistically diverse, with multilingualism spreading beyond typically multi-ethnic areas. The National Centre for Community Languages (CILT) *Trends in Community Languages* survey (CILT, 2005a) identifies over 100 languages that are being spoken in Scotland and nearly as many in Wales. Sneddon (2011, drawing on Ruiz 1994) outlines three policy orientations towards bilingualism/ multilingualism: first as a problem; second as a resource; and third as a right. She highlights how in English education policy there has been a tendency towards viewing bilingualism as a 'problem', reflecting a legacy whereby bilingualism or multilingualism has historically been constructed as a liability in British schooling (Mehmedbegovic, 2007). There is now a substantial body of research which suggests bilingualism has a positive effect on linguistic and educational development (CILT, 2005a, 2005b) and can be a business asset in our increasingly globalising society (CILT, 2005c). Pioneered by Arvon, *(M)other Tongues* is a new creative writing programme for young people from emerging communities in the UK to write in their mother tongue and English, exploring both languages and cultures. Funded by the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, under its Cultural Understanding theme, the pilot of *(M)other Tongues* has so far benefited 48 young people from Lambeth, including two Portuguese-speaking groups in 2009 and 2010 and a Yoruba-speaking group of Nigerian heritage in 2011. The project has achieved strong outcomes for the young people, including an enhanced sense of integrated identity, increased self-confidence and self-esteem and a revitalised appetite for learning and writing across the whole curriculum.

During the next phase of development *(M)other Tongues* seeks to continue to promote and encourage bilingualism and multilingualism among England's increasingly multicultural and multilingual youth, to contribute to this conceptual shift from 'problem' to 'right', and to develop and nurture bilingual and multilingual students' educational attainment in a context in which they are often at a disadvantage. The findings from this scoping study will inform the choice of community language groups and localities that will benefit most from participating in *(M)other Tongues*, and other creative writing projects based on the model developed by Arvon, over the coming years. The research aims to identify which specific linguistic minorities are at a 'disadvantage' in education and to identify where they are located – paying particular attention to areas outside of London. Thus, this report seeks to facilitate this aim by identifying and mapping linguistic minorities in the secondary school population in England in 2011. This is the first scoping study of its kind with a national focus, and complements the excellent work of Eversley and colleagues (2010) who have examined, in-depth, the London context.

## METHODS AND METHODOLOGY

While this at first glance appears to be a straightforward data analysis task, issues of *what* data is collected, *how* that data is collected (and hence the accuracy) and what of that data is *available*, present some challenges. Below we outline what data and key sources are available, a note on terms and *categories*; and our ensuing methods, given these complications.

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### THE DATA SOURCES: WHAT DATA IS AVAILABLE?

Currently, only the Annual School Census datasets provide comprehensive language information for children of school age. Until 2007 schools simply recorded yes or no, whether students spoke English as an Additional Language (EAL). However, from January 2007, where a pupil's first language is not English, schools were asked by the government to record the actual language (from a list of 322 language categories). However, it was not

compulsory for schools to provide this level of detail and not all schools have chosen to use the extended language codes. Nevertheless CILT claim that in 2008, language data were received for almost 79 per cent of pupils whose first language was other than English<sup>1</sup>, making this a reasonably useful dataset. Further it should be noted that the language information collected by the government is *not* publically available and must be specially requested.

A key piece of research in this field was carried out by Eversley and colleagues (2010) who mapped the languages of school pupils in London with access to this dataset. The same team have also carried out some indicative research on attainment by language group with this London dataset, and we draw on this here, in some instances as the only point of comparison.

CILT also carry out a nationwide community languages survey, last undertaken in 2005, which surveys local authorities and complementary/supplementary schools. This study provides some data on which languages are spoken in which local authorities nationwide. Local authorities do also publish their information on languages, largely in relation to the demographic profile of residents, and rarely in relation to school attainment data.

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) release data on resident population by nationality and country of birth by region. However this is based on annual population survey and labour force survey data, and therefore does not reflect school age population and discrepancies may be large. ONS also provide data on GP registrations of people previously living overseas, which can be used as an indication of in-migration<sup>2</sup>, but again this does not reflect school age population.

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#### TERMINOLOGY AND A NOTE ON CATEGORIES

In this report, we refer to **bilingualism and multilingualism** to denote students and their families who speak two or more languages. Following CILT we also may use the term ‘community languages’ collectively to refer to languages used in the UK other than the official languages of the state (English and Welsh). In this context this most often refers to English and one or more other languages. However the School Census differentiates between first language and other languages, collecting data on ‘school pupils whose first language is known or believed to be other than English’. According to the DfES guidance issued in 2006, the school census requires the recording of:

a first language other than English ... where a child was exposed to this language during early development and continues to be exposed to this language in the home or in the community.  
If a child was exposed to more than one language (which may include English) during early

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<sup>1</sup>[http://www.cilt.org.uk/home/research\\_and\\_statistics/statistics/languages\\_in\\_the\\_population/annual\\_school\\_census.aspx](http://www.cilt.org.uk/home/research_and_statistics/statistics/languages_in_the_population/annual_school_census.aspx) accessed 10th March 2012

<sup>2</sup> Flag 4 records are provided to ONS from the Patient Register Data Service (PRDS) data provided by NHS Connecting for Health (NHSCfH). Flag 4s are codes within the PRDS system which indicate that someone who has registered with a GP in England and Wales was previously living overseas. Flag 4 data are based on the Patient Register— an NHS administrative data source which is not designed for capturing information directly about migrants. However, using Flag 4 data an indication of in-migration to local authorities may be derived. See website for issues regarding comparability with other sources. <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/hub/search/index.html?newquery=flag+4+nationality> Accessed 07 March 2012

development, a language other than English should be recorded, irrespective of the child's proficiency in English.<sup>3</sup>

Of course the way in which these statistical categories are constructed affects the data that is collected. So in this sense, students represented in the category of first language other than English includes, for example second/third generation minority ethnic children for whom English may be their 'main' language and they may be fluent in it and have little exposure to any other languages which may be in their heritage, but also new migrant students who may speak no English, and may have varying levels of literacy in their previous country of origin. As the CILT survey highlights, there is 'huge diversity of students' experiences ... [in terms of what] may be their 'mother tongue', their 'second language', a language they use for specific purposes, or a language which is part of their cultural heritage, but not one which they actually use at all' (CILT, 2005a). These considerations must be kept in mind particularly in relation to our later discussion of attainment gaps between English first language pupils and those whose main language is recorded as other.

The sheer number of languages and variants of languages makes their accurate collection a difficult task. The 322 languages recorded include variants of wider language groupings e.g. Bengali (main category) or Bengali (Sylheti) or Bengali (Chittagong/Noakhali) or Bengali (any other) and there are inconsistencies arising from the fact that local authorities collect data at different levels of detail (Von Ahn et al, 2010). There are less detailed categories such as 'believed to be English' and 'other than English' and again local authorities differ on how sparingly they use these categories. There are also potential inaccuracies due to coding errors and insufficient knowledge /understanding on the part of the school staff entering the data (Eversley et al., 2010).

In addition, Eversley and colleagues (2010) point to issues of over and under reporting. Over-reporting can occur with languages of higher status; most obviously English. Pupils or parents may choose to identify their first language as English because they perceive the request as either a challenge to their proficiency and/or assume that schools favour English. Eversley and colleagues (2010) also suggest that French and Portuguese may also be over-reported due to their colonial history and consequent status (and consequently certain African languages underreported). These fine-grain complexities will become important when we go on to explore the data.

**Ethnicity** is clearly an important category which is connected to language, though obviously does not map straightforwardly onto it. As Von Ahn and colleagues note 'while many languages "attach" to particular ethnic groups ... knowing a person's language does not tell us about their country of origin or ethnic heritage' (2010, p. 6). Equally, ethnic categories such as "Black African" or "Indian" gloss over enormous linguistic diversity and differences.

Ethnicity is also a complicated categorisation that is not without issues either. Ethnicity usually refers to some kind of *cultural* distinctiveness, such as religion, language, history and ancestry (real or imagined) (Malesevic, 2004) but also has its roots in historical categorisation of biological 'racial' groups which is now largely redundant. The recording of ethnicity in England usually refers, confusingly, to a combination of national boundaries (Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi) but also colour (Black, White) and more general geographic distinctions, that supersede national boundaries (Black Caribbean, Black African) (Amin et al. 1997). The way in which ethnicity is categorised is therefore socially and historically specific. It is produced out of specific relations between different groups of people, and indeed perceived inequalities between groups, rather than it being something fixed and given. Thus 'ethnic' differences which make a difference will vary nationally but

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<sup>3</sup>DCSF (2006) *Pupil Language Data: Guidance for Local Authorities on schools' collection and recording of data on pupils' languages* [http://www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/ethnicminorities/collecting/Pupil\\_First\\_Lang/](http://www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/ethnicminorities/collecting/Pupil_First_Lang/) Accessed 20 March 2010 Cited in Eversley et al 2010

also locally. **We therefore recognise that ethnic categories are often imprecise, and our reporting is constrained by the categorisations of the official data available.** We do however attempt to unpick how these particular categorisations can lead to different 'sense-making' (or non-sense) in terms of understanding language and attainment.

Migration histories also complicate the 'ethnic' category further with different social class histories of different ethnic and linguistic communities. For example as Sneddon and Martin's (2012) research on complementary schools in London revealed teachers working with hugely diverse communities, with different needs such as:

- established communities of Bengali speakers from rural areas of the Indian subcontinent;
- established Gujarati communities but who came as refugees from mainly middle class families fleeing Uganda;
- recently arrived Iranian, Iraqi, Somali refugees;
- Yoruba speaking Nigerians, Chinese from Hong Kong and Mainland China and African Caribbean settled communities, but constantly receiving new members

Understanding the complexities of intersecting categories of difference has been termed 'super-diversity' (Vertovec, 2006) and adding linguistic diversity certainly adds to this complexity.

We are interested in students who are **at a disadvantage educationally**, and this can be conceived of, and thus measured in a number of different ways. For example, how they are achieving at school (in relation to local or national averages in attainment), but also progress at school (as measured by valued added<sup>4</sup>), what school they go to (state, selective, private), and that schools' overall attainment record; which area of the country they live in (e.g. the north /south divide/ London-effect) or which neighbourhoods they live in (areas of deprivation by postcode) or even employment prospects (official employment rates). For the purposes of this research exercise we focus on officially recorded school attainment, using the well-used benchmark/threshold grades of 5 A\*-C GCSE grades (including English and Maths). The inclusion of English and Maths is fast becoming a 'gold standard', and further, given Arvon's focus on writing, and the focus of this report on English language, it seems prudent to include a measure of English. We understand educational attainment as relative (Amin, et al., 1997), and refer not to under-achievement or under-attainment, but the *relative* attainment of different ethnic groups, and of those whose first language is English, relative to those for whom it is not. For the purposes of this study we focus on this narrow threshold measure, (where possible bearing in mind other contextual factors mentioned) but further research could explore other more complex measures of educational disadvantage.

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## METHODS

In this short report, time and budget constraining, we only have access to DfE *published* data, which does not show extended language categories, but simply shows the aggregate category 'school pupils whose first language is known or believed to be other than English'; against those for whom their 'first language is English'. This data is available by local authority. In addition, ethnicity data is publically available by region. Hence in this report we are able to explore attainment by 'English as first language,' against 'first language other than English' and we are able to map this by region and local authority. So we are able to see:

- **In which regions and which local authorities are pupils with a first language other than English, in large proportions?**

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<sup>4</sup> This measure has recently been abolished by the coalition government.

- **And in which regions and which local authorities are they attaining less well relative to English as a first language students, and relative to the national average?**

We are also able to explore attainment by ethnicity, which is also available by region and local authority. So we are able to see:

- **In those regions and local authorities, how are different ethnic groups are attaining, relative to each other?**

Having carried out this mapping of what we can know from the statistics by region, **we identify fifteen key local authorities** (beyond London), which have high proportions of bilingual or multilingual students and in which the attainment of bilingual or multilingual learners is lower relative to their peers. We have selected those local authorities according to a range of practical and data driven criteria, which we detail later. We then report what information we have available for each of those local authorities.

In this exercise we have to make informed inferences about: those ethnic groups who are attaining less well, which of those groups' language is likely to be a contributing factor, and where possible, which language groups they are likely to be<sup>5</sup>. Of course, we are not suggesting that language is a causal factor in attainment, but building on this report we can begin to explore the relationship between ethnicity, language and attainment more complexly. As extended language data is not publically available, we do this by cross referencing a combination of information from different published and unpublished sources:

- DfE published data on attainment by ethnicity and region;<sup>6</sup>
- The CILT survey Appendix A on Languages spoken by school children in England;<sup>7</sup>
- Local authority data provided directly;
- The professional views of local authority education staff in Ethnic Minority Achievement (EMA) or equivalent teams;
- Existing published and unpublished research reports and web-based information.

This is the best available picture possible, in the absence of officially collected language data. It is important to note the varying status of these different information sources. In addition to the caution that needs to be taken when interpreting official statistical data, some of this unofficial information is incomplete, or is based on opinion (albeit professional opinion). In the appendices we provide detailed information on what was involved in this scoping exercise.

Given the good work carried out in London we begin by summarising the picture we have for London. It is useful also in providing a point of comparison. We then go on to map more extensively the picture for the rest of England (contextualising with Wales and Scotland), before discussing in detail four key regions and a selection of key local authorities within those regions for which we have received information. We then make tentative recommendations to Arvon for potential areas or language groups to focus on, whilst also making recommendations for further work on this important and under-researched topic.

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<sup>5</sup> Of course, this is not to say that language is a causal factor in attainment, but building on this report we can begin to explore the relationship between ethnicity, language and attainment more complexly.

<sup>6</sup> Publically available data on attainment by local authority is also not provided in detailed extended ethnic categories but is aggregated into broad categories White, Mixed, Asian, Black, Chinese, which, as will become apparent, does not always make 'sense' in relation to language and/or attainment.

<sup>7</sup> Listing languages spoken by local authority, and country of origin

## WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT LANGUAGE DIVERSITY AND ATTAINMENT IN LONDON?

London is the most linguistically diverse region of the UK. Figures from the Labour force survey suggest about one fifth of adults in London have a first language other than English (GLA, 2006). More is known about the status of pupils in London who have a first language other than English, in terms of linguistic, ethnic diversity and attainment (Von Ahn, et al., 2010; Von Ahn, et al, 2011). London has the largest proportion of students who have a first language other than English: forty-one per cent of state school pupils in London speak another language besides English – up from 33 per cent ten years ago (Eversley et al., 2010). Forty-two languages (up from 25) are now spoken by more than 1,000 pupils across London and 12 languages (up from 8) are spoken by more than 10,000 pupils (Eversley et al., 2010).

In London, four languages have declined in numbers: Gujarati, Punjabi, Greek and Chinese – all established communities. The languages which have seen the biggest numerical increases are Somali, which has more than doubled in ten years, Tamil, Polish and Albanian (Eversley et al., 2010). Polish and Albanian appear in the rankings in 2008 for the first time in comparison to Greek, Cantonese and Creole speakers (Von Ahn, et al., 2010).

**Table 1: The ‘top 15’ languages spoken other than English in London, in rank order**

Rank Order	Year 1999	Year 2008	Numbers 2008
1	Bengali and Sylheti	Bengali	46681
2	Punjabi	Urdu	29354
3	Gujarati	Somali	27126
4	Hindu/ Urdu	Punjabi	20998
5	Turkish	Gujarati	19572
6	Arabic	Arabic	19378
7	English based Creoles	Turkish	16778
8	Yoruba	Tamil	16386
9	Somali	Yoruba	13961
10	Cantonese	French	13020
11	Greek	Portuguese	10991
12	Akan	Polish	11915
13	Portuguese	Spanish	8647
14	French	Albanian/Shqip	8380
15	Spanish	Akan	8117

(Source: Von Ahn, et al., 2010)

Von Ahn and colleagues’ research highlights the complex interactions between first language status, ethnicity/‘race’, social class and migration histories. The authors suggest that language spoken “provides a means to better understand the relationship between ethnicity and educational performance” (Von Ahn, et al., 2010). Language can enable us, where there is good quality data, to make fine grade distinctions amongst ethnic categories.

Again, it is apparent that language does not straightforwardly follow ethnicity. London data reveals that for example 57% of French speakers in London are Black and of those, nationalities will vary. Some may be French, some may be from French speaking countries in Africa or the Caribbean and some may be British but with French speaking heritage. Some language groups are quite ethnically homogenous. For example, 84 per cent of London pupils identified as Bangladeshi speak Bengali at home, whereas 98% of white British and 95% of Black Caribbean children speak English at home. However other ethnic groups are very linguistically diverse. The **Black African, White Other** and **Indian** are the most linguistically diverse ethnic categories. Key findings from their research in London include the following:

- The Black African category is one of the most linguistically diverse: with 30 % speaking English as their only language at home, followed by Somali (20%), Yoruba (9%), Akan (6%);
- The White Other category is also highly linguistically diverse, with Turkish the most commonly spoken language (14%), followed by Polish (10%), Albanian/Shqip (8%) and Portuguese 6%;
- The Indian category alone (without being collapsed into Asian) features Gujarati (29%) and Punjabi (22.6%);

In terms of educational attainment, there are significant differences within ethnic categories, by language. For example, Von Ahn and colleagues' (2010) analysis of **Key Stage 2** 2008 results for London indicates, that the Black African group has some of the highest and some of the lowest achieving groups. For example, the three lowest achieving groups – Lingala, French and Somali speakers tend to have low attainment well below that of the lowest attaining ethnic group overall (Black Caribbean), whilst Igbo, Yoruba and English speaking Black Africans achieve as well as the White British group.

Clearly socio-economic class and poverty play an important role, with some groups such as Somalis suffering from multiple disadvantages (Mitton, 2011). Small scale research in Newham for example found Yoruba speakers appeared to be more economically advantaged than Black African Somalis, and White British English speakers were more disadvantaged than Black Caribbean English speakers, whilst Pakistani Punjabi speakers are more disadvantaged than Indian Punjabi speakers (Von Ahn, et al., 2010 and see Mitton, 2011).

In terms of attainment, gender, ethnicity and social class all interact with language status to complicate outcomes. Low achievement at school is associated with poverty (as measured by Free School Meal eligibility) but not straightforwardly. For example some ethnic or linguistic communities may be considered to be at a disadvantage in economic terms but achieve well at school (e.g. Chinese, see (Archer and Francis, 2007)), or vice versa. Researchers have found that African Caribbean pupils from more professional homes were the lowest attaining of the middle class groups. In some cases these pupils barely matched the attainment of working class pupils in other ethnic groups (Gillborn & Gipps, 1996; Gillborn & Mirza, 2000). Some previous research also suggests large variation in social background within the Black African category with large numbers in the highest and lowest social groups (Amin, et al., 1997).

London data shows that within the 'White Other' category, five groups have particularly low attainment – Turkish, Portuguese, Lithuanian, Polish and 'Other'. While there are high attainers in this group, there is a 'long tail' of lower attainment. By contrast, Italian, Greek and English speakers in 'white other' have few low attainers and median scores which place them close to the top of the overall 'white other' distribution.

Gillborn and Mirza's(2000) research in the late 1990s found different localized pictures for different ethnic groups. While the national picture told one story of minority ethnic (under) attainment, of the six available ethnic minority categories they analysed (Black Caribbean; Black African, Black Other, Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi), each group was the highest attaining in at least one of the Local Authorities. Thus inequalities in attainment by ethnicity clearly **vary by region**.

There has been much recent publicity about the low educational attainment of white 'working class' boys (see Cassen & Kingdon, 2007 and ensuing media coverage), which to some intents and purposes overshadows or serves to de-legitimize focus on minority ethnic or minority linguistic achievement (for discussion of these debates see Gillborn, 2009). However, not only is there much geographic variation in the actuality of this, the focus on 'race' detracts from the much larger socio-economic gap, where the gap between white British boys eligible for FSM and those who are not, is almost three times the gap between Black African and White British boys who are both eligible for FSM. In other words, the social class gap is the more prominent one. Thus it is important to take into account ethnicity, social class and gender together, as well as language and regional variations.

Whilst we would foreground the complexity of the picture in London, recent research by Wyness (2011), strongly suggests that pupils eligible for free school meals; lower achieving minority ethnic groups; other first language speakers, **all perform significantly better in London schools than elsewhere**. The authors of the report refer to this as the 'London advantage'. This is corroborated by our own examination of the broad figures for GCSE attainment including Maths and English which show that other first language pupils in Inner London outperform English first language speakers and have been doing so for several years. These findings indicate that schools elsewhere have much to learn from London.

## WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT LANGUAGE DIVERSITY AND ATTAINMENT NATIONALLY?

### LANGUAGE DIVERSITY

According to latest DfE (2011) statistics for 2011, 12% of English secondary school and over 17% of primary children already speak another language at home, and many more have one in their family background. The CILT survey found that in Scotland, at least 11,000 children speak at least 104 languages; in Wales, at least 8,000 children speak at least 98 languages and in England, at least 702,000 children speak at least 300 languages (CILT, 2005a). The CILT community languages survey summarized the changing national picture in relation to which languages are dominant and in which region:

Over several decades, the main community languages spoken in Britain have been those of the Indian subcontinent: Punjabi, Urdu, Bengali, Gujarati and Hindi. But, there is evidence of increasing diversification, and also of demographic change, affecting both areas where bilingual communities are well established and those where until recently there were very few bilingual pupils at school. For example, in Wakefield, a local authority where Punjabi and Urdu speakers made up 99% of the bilingual school population five years ago, there are now many more languages in use. The Scottish Borders traditionally had few students who spoke community languages, but recently Portuguese – and Russian – speaking families have moved to the area to work in the fishing industry. Similarly, in Wrexham, a local authority with very few community language speakers five years ago, there are now at least 25 languages spoken in schools, including Portuguese, Polish, Tagalog and Shona'. (CILT, 2005a)

The study also found that around four-fifths (79%) of mainstream secondary schools make provision for community languages, and over two-thirds (70%) of complementary schools, enter students for public examinations. The most widely *taught* community languages they cite are Arabic, Bengali, Chinese, Turkish and Urdu. In 2005, around 26,000 students sat GCSEs in community languages, and 12,250 sat A/S and A levels (CILT, 2005a). The largest foreign nationality resident population are Polish, Indian and Pakistani (as reported by ONS for 2010). However, in terms of the school population, the top fifteen languages in 2008, spoken by pupils in England whose first language is other than English are reported below (from CILT)<sup>8</sup>.

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<sup>8</sup>Source:

[http://www.cilt.org.uk/home/research\\_and\\_statistics/statistics/languages\\_in\\_the\\_population/annual\\_school\\_census.aspx](http://www.cilt.org.uk/home/research_and_statistics/statistics/languages_in_the_population/annual_school_census.aspx)

**Table 2: Top 15 languages spoken by pupils in England**

Language	Number	As a proportion of total maintained-school pupil population in England %
Punjabi	102,570	1.6
Urdu	85,250	1.3
Bengali	70,320	1.1
Gujarati	40,880	0.6
Somali	32,030	0.5
Polish	26,840	0.4
Arabic	25,800	0.4
Portuguese	16,560	0.3
Turkish	16,460	0.3
Tamil	15,460	0.2
French	15,310	0.2
Yoruba	13,920	0.2
Chinese	13,380	0.2
Spanish	10,000	0.2
Persian/Farsi	8,510	0.1

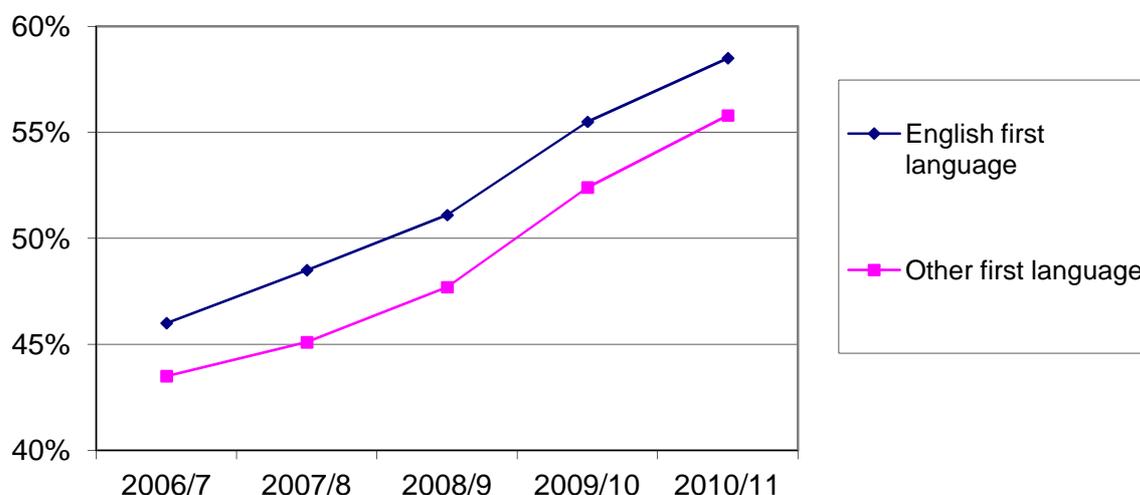
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#### LANGUAGE DIVERSITY AND ATTAINMENT

In this section, we discuss broad attainment gaps between pupils categorised as English first language and other first language speakers. As already mentioned these categorisations are imprecise and mask significant complexities and variation. Nonetheless, we believe that they are useful and point to issues which clearly need further exploration.

In terms of English as a first language, overall, at the national level, GCSE (including English and maths) attainment gaps in England are **relatively small** in comparison with ethnicity gaps. However, they are **persistent**. A recent article in the Times Education Supplement (Stewart, 2012) celebrated that this year, a higher proportion of students who speak English as an additional language achieved five GCSE grades A\*-C, than their native English speaking counterparts. But the latest figures for A\*-C (**including** English and Maths) in England 2010/11 indicate a 2.7 percentage point difference between EAL students and English first language speakers. The data indicates that attainment for both groups has risen, and the gap appears to be narrowing slightly over time, but it is persistent. This is shown below:

**Figure 1: English first language versus other first language secondary school pupils GCSE attainment (inc. English and maths) 2008-2011**



Indeed, at the **regional** level the gaps are much larger and variable. The table below illustrates the extent of the regional gaps. Key descriptive findings indicate:

- There are language group attainment **gaps in all regions except Inner London**, where other first language children actually perform on average **better** than children whose first Language is English. The same was true of Outer London until 2010/11, where there was a 1 percentage point gap.
- The **Yorkshire and Humber** region has the **largest** and most **persistent** attainment gap, followed by the **South West**, and East of England.

**Table 3: Regional percentage point gaps in GCSE (inc. English & Maths) attainment 2007-2011**

	2007/8	2008/9	2009/2010	2010/11
North East	-1	-5	-4	-2
North West	-5	-5	-3	-3
Yorkshire and the Humber	-10	-10	-10	-10
East Midlands	1	1	-2	-4
West Midlands	-2	-2	-2	-1
East of England	-5	-6	-5	-5
Inner London	1	2	5	4
Outer London	1	1	0	-1
South East	0	-3	-4	-3
South West	-10	-8	-6	-8

At the level of local authority areas, attainments gaps for 2010/11 are wider and more variable still. At this level, data should be read with caution. Some of the authorities with the largest gaps, such as Cornwall, have very few known bilingual/multilingual pupils (1.2% of the secondary school population) and actual numbers are likely to be very small, whereas 22% of secondary pupils in Peterborough for example, speak a language other than English.

**Table 4: Local authority areas with widest first language gaps 2010/11 in rank order**

	Attainment gap (percentage points)	Proportion of other first language pupils in secondary school as stated on census 2011
Cornwall	-20	1.2
Peterborough	-18	22
North Somerset	-17	2.8
North Yorkshire	-16	2.1
Lincolnshire	-15	3.7
Halton	-15	0.9
Worcestershire	-15	3.6
West Berkshire	-14	3.4
Oldham	-14	22.8
Doncaster	-14	4
Wakefield	-14	2.9
North Lincolnshire	-14	4.8
Bedford	-13	18.7
Bury	-13	12.1
Buckinghamshire	-13	11.8
Norfolk	-13	3.9
Derby	-12	17.2
Sheffield	-12	13.7
Ealing	-12	49.2
Southend-on-Sea	-11	9.7

Whilst the above data is interesting, it is more useful if we only consider local authorities where there are sizeable populations of other first language pupils. So, if we remove all the local authorities with **less than** 10% bilingual / multilingual speakers in their secondary schools, the **twenty** with the widest gaps are show below. Unsurprising some of the **local authorities** with the widest gaps are clustered in the **regions** with the widest gaps: for example, Leeds, Sheffield, Calderdale in Yorkshire and the Humber. Equally there are several local authorities, **Oldham, Bury, and Rochdale** in the North West with pronounced disparities.

**Table 5: Local authority areas with widest language group gaps 2010/11 in rank order and main lower attaining ethnic groups relative to the white group**

	Attainment gap(percentage points)	Proportion of other first language pupils in secondary school as stated on census 2011%	Lower attaining ethnic group relative to white group (excluding mixed group)
Peterborough	-18	22.0	Asian
Oldham	-14	22.8	Black/Asian
Bedford	-13	18.7	Black/Asian
Bury	-13	12.1	Black/Asian
Buckinghamshire	-13	11.8	Black/Asian
Derby	-12	17.2	Black/Asian
Sheffield	-12	13.7	Black/Asian
Ealing	-12	49.2	Black
Windsor and Maidenhead	-11	14.5	Asian (no information on black group)
Calderdale	-10	12.5	Black/Asian

Slough	-10	40.8	Black
Leeds	-9	10.0	Black/Asian
Enfield	-8	38.6	Black
Brent	-8	50.7	Black
Haringey	-7	47.0	Black
Rochdale	-7	20.5	Black/Asian
Bristol, City of	-7	13.5	Black
Kirklees	-6	17.3	Black
Harrow	-6	51.0	Black
Waltham Forest	-6	41.5	Black

We have also indicated, in the last column in the table above, information on ethnicity and attainment mapped onto region and language status attainment gaps, showing which ethnic groups are attaining less well in those local authorities relative to the white group as found in published statistical tables. However, we can see that mapping ethnicity and attainment onto language status and attainment tells us very little about which language groups they might be. One reason for this is because the publicly available ethnicity data collapses ethnicity into White; Mixed; Asian; Black and Chinese. As discussions detailed above should illuminate, the ethnic, national and linguistic (and social class) variety within these categories makes them almost useless. Further the collapsing of all 'White' categories into the 'White' group makes a problematic comparison group, as this group contains

- not only White British but a range of other ethnic or national groups known to be classified as a white (such as Eastern European, e.g. Polish, Czech , Western European e.g. Portuguese, Spanish), and in some cases Middle Eastern such as Turkish, Albanian and so on)
- a range of social class, which we know has an impact on attainment

Additionally, from what we know of variation in Black African and Black Caribbean attainment experiences, and indeed Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, the conflation of these categories into Black and Asian is not helpful and tells us little about the role of language. It is however useful as a starting point which requires supplementing with in-depth local authority expertise and information. So in order to complete this exercise, to assess which linguistic groups are achieving less well and where they are located, we have to rely on data provided at the local level, and inferences from what is known about London.

Taking a range of factors into account, the following table shows the Local Authorities selected for Arvon's purposes. This selection is rationalized on the following basis:

- Focusing on the regions of interest to Arvon (North East, North West, East Midlands, West Midlands)
- To include Yorkshire and Humber and the East of England also because of the large and persistent attainment gaps
- To include the Local Authority in each of these regions with the largest proportions of bilingual/ multilingual pupils (Newcastle upon Tyne; Manchester; Bradford; Leicester; Birmingham; Luton)<sup>9</sup>
- To include one or two other local authorities of interest in each region based high proportions of bilingual/ multilingual pupils and either large attainment gaps; or noticeably low attainment for bilingual/ multilingual pupils (including Nottingham of interest to Arvon).

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<sup>9</sup> The rationale for this was speculation that the largest conurbation of bilingual/multilingual learners in a region might likely attract advanced local authority attention to this asset and hence yield accessible data. This has not necessarily been the case.

**Table 6: Summary of local authorities chosen for scoping exercise**

		Proportion of other first language pupils in secondary school as stated on census 2011 (%)	Attainment gap (percentage points)	5+ A*-C grades inc. English & mathematics for other first language students (%)	Under-performing ethnic group relative to white group <sup>10</sup>
1	Newcastle upon Tyne	14.1	+4 <sup>11</sup>	56.0	Black
2	Middlesbrough	10.1	-5	36.8	None
3	Manchester	30.0	+7	51.8	Black/Asian
4	Rochdale	22.8	-7	48.0	Black/Asian
5	Oldham	20.5	-14	45.5	Black/Asian
6	Bradford	29.7	-5	44.1	Black/Asian
7	Leicester <sup>12</sup>	42.4	-		None
8	Nottingham	18.5	+5	50.8	Black/Asian
9	Birmingham	35.7	-1	57.3	Black/Asian
10	Luton	40.1	+2	57.9	None
11	Peterborough	22.0	-18	35.0	Asian
12	Bedford	18.7	-13	45.2	Black/Asian
13	Derby	17.2	-12	46.6	Black/Asian
14	Sheffield	13.7	-12	38.9	Black/Asian
15	Leeds	10.0	-9	44.7	Black/Asian

Data from Table 6 suggests particularly large proportions of other first language pupils in Manchester, Leicester, Birmingham and Luton but perhaps unsurprisingly, smaller attainment gaps in these regions (unfortunately data is not available for Leicester). In fact in Newcastle, Manchester, Nottingham and Luton this year, other first language speakers attained higher than English first language speakers. We see particularly large negative attainment gaps in Oldham, Peterborough, Bedford, Derby and Leeds. Further, the proportion of other first language speakers attaining the threshold grades appears to be particularly low in Middlesbrough, Peterborough and Sheffield.

<sup>10</sup> Excluding Chinese and Mixed groups due to small numbers.

<sup>11</sup> Whilst other first language speakers are doing better than English first language speakers in the most recent results, the previous year highlighted a negative gap of -7.

<sup>12</sup> Information withheld by the DfE.

## A FOCUS ON KEY LOCAL AUTHORITIES

The following sections detail any available information collected from our triangulation process for each of the regions we have been able to collect information<sup>13</sup>. We detail the available picture for the North East (Newcastle and Middlesbrough); the North West (Manchester, Oldham and Rochdale); Yorkshire and Humber (Leeds, Sheffield and Bradford); and the East of England (Peterborough, Bedford and Luton).

### NORTH EAST

The North East was selected as an area of interest for Arvon. In the North East, the most common foreign nationality resident population is Polish, then Indian. Within the North East, Newcastle upon Tyne had the highest percentage of bilingual or multilingual students (14.2%) in the region (in the secondary school population). Middlesbrough was also selected as it has over 10% bilingual or multilingual students in the secondary school population and also has growing numbers in the primary school population.

#### NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE

In Newcastle, analysis of attainment by ethnic group shows Black students attaining the least well relative to other ethnic groups. While this year bilingual or multilingual students achieved better than English first language students, this was not the case the year before, where there was large negative gap. Conversations with the EMA team in Newcastle provide more detail. The main minority ethnic categories in Newcastle school populations are listed below, providing impressionistic detail where possible, of ethnic origin and languages spoken.

**Table 7: Newcastle upon Tyne indicative language groups**

DfE (extended) ethnic category	Ethnic origin / country of origin	Languages spoken
Asian	Bangladeshi	Bengali, Silheti
	Pakistani	Urdu, Mirpuri, Punjabi
	Indian	Hindi, Urdu
Chinese	Chinese	(not given)
Black African	Angolan	Portuguese
	Congolese	Lingala, French
	Zahire	(not given)
	Nigerian	Yoruba
White Other	Czech (including Roma)	Czech
	Slovak (including Roma)	Slovak
	Romanian	Romanian
	Bulgarian	Bulgarian

The EMA team report that they believe Chinese and Indian students are currently attaining higher than the Newcastle average, and recently so are Pakistani and Bangladeshi students. Students in the **Black African** category are believed to be achieving less well. Some of these students are/were Asylum Seekers or refugees. Von Ahn and colleagues' (2010) research in London suggests that **Lingala** speaking Black African students are attaining lower than the lowest attaining ethnic group over all (Black Caribbean) while Yoruba speaking students attain as well as the White British group in London, at least. It is possible there are similar patterns in the North East, but more research is needed. The **Eastern European** groups are also believed to be achieving lower than the Newcastle average (but this is likely to be masked in the DfE statistics in the conflation of the

<sup>13</sup> See appendix for detail on this scoping exercise and data collection process.

White category). This group is also diverse, featuring fairly new EU migrant arrivals but also **Gypsy/Roma** who sought Asylum prior to the **Czech Republic** and **Slovakia** joining the EU. Further, it is noted that many Gypsy/Roma do not officially ascribe their ethnicity in this way and so do not feature in this category in the statistics, and may appear in White Other, or Any Other Ethnic Group.

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## MIDDLESBROUGH

The DfE data shows that bilingual/multilingual students are attaining particularly low in relation to English first language speakers in Middlesbrough, but that there are no pronounced *ethnic* gaps. The EMA team report that Middlesbrough has seen a sharp increase in migration to the area in recent years, and this is confirmed by ONS Flag 4 data. For example, since September 2011, there have been almost 200 new arrivals to schools, representing some 27 different languages, many with no English spoken. Significant to education services is the increasing numbers of **Czech, Slovak and Romanian** students with an important proportion of those being **Roma**, a group that currently attains less well. Some pupils in this group are not fully literate in either their previous country of origin language, or English. Again, the collapsing of the 'White' category as reported by the DfE is likely to be obscuring the lower attainment of other 'White' groups in this category. Further, it is noted that many Gypsy/Roma do not officially ascribe their ethnicity in this way and so do not feature in this category in the statistics, and may appear in White Other, or Any Other Ethnic Group. The EMA team also report **boys** in the '**Black African**', and '**Asian**' category also achieving less well, with **Urdu** and **Punjabi** speakers most significant.

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## NORTH WEST

The North West was selected as an area of interest for Arvon. The largest foreign nationality resident populations are Polish, Irish, Pakistani, Indian and then Nigerian. Within the region Manchester had the highest percentage of bilingual or multilingual students (30%) in the region (in its secondary school population), and Flag 4 data suggest Manchester has particularly high rates of in-migration. Oldham and Rochdale were also selected as they have over 20% bilingual or multilingual students (22.8 and 20.5 % respectively). In Manchester bilingual or multilingual students are attaining better than English first language students at GCSE by over 7% but in Oldham and Rochdale they do worse (nearly 15% lower in Oldham and over 6% in Rochdale). DfE data reports that **Black** and **Asian** groups are attaining less well relative to the white group in all three locales.

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## MANCHESTER

A report by Edden and colleagues at Manchester University (2010), based on data from ten secondary schools, shows that the most commonly spoken community languages in Manchester secondary schools are Urdu, followed by Punjabi and Arabic. The EMA team at Manchester have identified the ethnic categories **Gypsy, Roma, Traveller (GRT), Afghanistani, Black Caribbean, Somali, Mirpuri Pakistani, Other White and Any Other Mixed**, to be attaining below the Manchester average (which is in itself below the national average) at KS4 in 2011. GRT are by far the lowest attaining group in Manchester, but it is not possible to say whether English is an additional language for this group, however one school in Edden and colleagues' research does cite **Romany** as one language group. Those ethnic groups achieving below the average in Manchester for whom English may be an additional language, are outlined in the following table with possible language combinations spoken.

**Table 8: Manchester indicative language groups**

LA ascribed ethnic category	Possible languages spoken
Mirpuri Pakistani	Punjabi <sup>14</sup> , Urdu, Arabic Pahari <sup>15</sup> , Pashto or Gujurati
Afghan	Pashto and/or Arabic
Somali	Somali or Arabic
White Other	Diverse

Drawing on Edden and colleagues' report, the White Other category is likely to contain a substantial proportion of **Eastern European** young people such as **Polish, Czech, Romanian** speaking. However, it may also include **Albanian, Kurdish, Portuguese** speaking, or even **Arabic** or **Persian** speaking students depending on how they, or schools, define their ethnicity.

**Afghan** pupils had the largest deviation from the Manchester average in 2011, but followed closely by the White Other category. While **Urdu** is likely to be spoken by some **Mirpuri Pakistanis** it is the most spoken community language in Manchester schools (according to Edden and colleagues) and 8/10 schools surveyed offered Urdu qualifications. In addition, Von Ahn and colleagues' research (2010) suggests **Somalis** are more likely to be affected by poverty than some other minority groups.

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#### OLDHAM AND ROCHDALE

No data has been accessed from Oldham Local Authority but the *Oldham Equal Opportunities (Race) Advisory Committee* Report (2011) cites that in Oldham 'almost 30% of the school population speak a language other than English and are from a minority ethnic background'. It also cites that there are over 113 languages spoken in Oldham schools, naming the dominant community languages **Bengali, Punjabi and Urdu**.

On attainment the report cites that over the past 5 years, **White British** pupils have 'consistently outperformed the other main minority ethnic groups in the borough, in English, Maths and science at every Key Stage'. And that pupils for whom English is a second language consistently underperform in relation to their peers for whom English is a first language. The report claims that a greater proportion of ethnic minority pupils are eligible for free school meals (FSM) in Oldham, and many live in the more deprived areas in Oldham and experience significant socio-economic disadvantage.

No data has been accessed from the Local Authority for Rochdale, but the local authority website indicates that the main languages spoken by residents, other than English, are: **Urdu, Bengali, Punjabi and Mirpuri**, reflecting the large South Asian population in the area.

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#### YORKSHIRE AND HUMBER

Yorkshire and Humber has been selected as it is the region with the largest attainment gaps between those for whom English is a first language and others: persistently at 10%. In **Leeds** and **Sheffield** that is fairly large at (9% and 12%) but smaller in **Bradford** (5%), despite Bradford having larger proportions of bilingual and multilingual learners (29.7%). In all three cities the statistics show Black and Asian groups achieving below that of the White group. In Yorkshire and Humber the largest foreign nationality resident population is Polish, Indian then Pakistani. In Bradford, the biggest minority ethnic group are believed to be Pakistani and it is estimated that roughly three quarters of the population are **Mirpuri Pakistani**<sup>16</sup>. Analysis from 2005 by the

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<sup>14</sup> Punjabi has two languages Eastern and Western (CILT, 2011)

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.merampur.com/pahari-langua-e-and-its-implications-for-britain.html> accessed 20th Feb2012

<sup>16</sup> <http://www.30-days.net/muslims/muslims-in/europe/mirpuris-britain/> accessed 20th Feb2012

locality authority in Sheffield, indicated an attainment gap between white British pupils and the city's **Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Caribbean and Somali pupils** at Key Stage 4<sup>17</sup>. According to research cited by the multilingual and complementary schools alliance<sup>18</sup>, the most prevalent first languages other than English in 2009 were:

Mandarin/Cantonese	Hausa
Arabic	Spanish
Hindi	Portuguese
Urdu	Greek
Sindhi	French
Somali	Igbo
Polish	Shona
Slovak	Ndebele
Malay	

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## EAST OF ENGLAND

The East of England was selected as it has a persistent 5% gap between English as a first language speakers and other students. This gap is the largest in **Peterborough** (18%) and large in **Bedford** (13%). Despite this issue, Bedford no longer has a dedicated EMA team, and we are yet to find the equivalent in Peterborough either. The largest foreign nationality resident in the East is Polish and Indian and Flag 4 data suggest particularly high in-migration in Peterborough and Luton.

In **Luton**, despite having a percentage of bilingual and multilingual learners approaching that of a London Borough (40.1%), other first language speakers do relatively well in Luton, attaining 2% higher than English first language speakers in 2011, and Luton still has a small dedicated EMA team.

The *Peterborough Strategy for New Arrivals* (Peterborough City Council, no date) accessed via the council website contains some information on Minority Ethnic New Arrivals (MENA).<sup>19</sup> This cites that the main community languages spoken as **Polish, Lithuanian, Czech, Slovak and Portuguese**.

The document cites some history in that migrant workers from Italy, Pakistan and the Caribbean came to the city in the 1950s and 1960s; refugees from East Africa in the 1970s, and recently with the expansion of the European Union, many workers have come from Poland, Lithuania, Czech Republic and Slovakia.

They claim that 30% of children in Peterborough schools are from minority ethnic families and that number has risen from 20% in 2003. A local newspaper report (2012)<sup>20</sup> claimed 31 per cent of primary school pupils in Peterborough speak English as a second language and 22 per cent at secondary schools. They also estimate that around 10% have arrived in the last 3 years, and most of these are from the 'new EU countries'. The council strategy claims that Peterborough has about 28,000 children and young people in schools, so 2,800 must be MENA. They go on to produce further detail claiming in 2006/7, 421 new arrivals were admitted into Peterborough's primary schools. Of these, 111 were Polish, 53 were from Lithuania, 47 were Slovakian and 45 were Portuguese. 198 new arrivals were admitted to secondary schools, and of these, 48 were Czech/Slovakian, 45 were Polish, 44 were Lithuanian and 31 were Portuguese. The report contains detailed

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<sup>17</sup><https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/education/about-us/performance/education-audits/ethnicity--education.html> accessed 20th Feb2012

<sup>18</sup><http://www.languages-sheffield.org.uk/id9.html> accessed 20th Feb2012

<sup>19</sup><http://www.peterborough.gov.uk/pdf/childfam-cypp-ea-pboromenastrat.pdf> accessed 20th Feb2012

<sup>20</sup>[http://www.peterboroughtoday.co.uk/news/education/government\\_funding\\_migrant\\_cash\\_hint\\_for\\_peterborough\\_schools\\_1\\_3431852](http://www.peterboroughtoday.co.uk/news/education/government_funding_migrant_cash_hint_for_peterborough_schools_1_3431852) Report date 18th January<sup>2012</sup>. Accessed 23rd February 2012.

figures broken down by school and language in an Appendix. A recent local newspaper report<sup>21</sup> claimed that 581 school-age children arrived in Peterborough between January and October last year, with the majority of arrivals from overseas. The newspaper report claims that it is estimated that there are currently 98 different languages spoken across the city's schools.

DfE data shows other first language students are attaining very poorly in Peterborough in particular (35% A-C GCSE (E+M)). However, DfE data cites **Asian** students as attaining lower than their white counterparts in Peterborough *despite* the probable conflation of Eastern European new arrivals into the White category.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

What is clear from this research is that there is a real dearth of information on which specific linguistic groups are attaining less well at school, and where they are located in the country. Indeed, this data is generally not systematically collected, and where it is collected, attainment is often not analysed by linguistic group, only ethnicity.

This report has highlighted, that, given the growing “super-diversity” of England and the rest of the UK, crude ethnic categories (of Black, White, Asian) mask a great deal of ethnic, national, linguistic, religious and social diversity which may be getting in the way of how we ‘make sense’ of minority communities’ relative achievement, and how we understand who is at a disadvantage. If we are to get any closer to understanding the role of language / bilingualism and multilingualism in children’s relative attainment we need better data and more fine grained analysis. Even the categories of Black Caribbean, Black African, White British, White Other, Indian, Bangladeshi, Pakistani, as we have illustrated, mask a great deal of diversity within. We recommend a re-assessment of these categories in ethnic monitoring data, and advocate greater consideration of how they are reported on alongside recommendations to promote and encourage the collection and analysis of extended linguistic code data.

Nevertheless, we have the following key findings:

- There are large attainment gaps in the Yorkshire and the Humber and the North West regions, which need further exploration;
- Overall, many of the widest attainment gaps are present in local authorities with substantial Pakistani ethnic minority groups – for example, Peterborough, Oldham, Bedford, Bury, Derby, Sheffield, and Calderdale – who tend to speak Urdu, Punjabi or Mirpuri and experience economic disadvantage. This association clearly needs further examination and research, but strongly suggests, in light of other evidence which points to the disadvantage experienced by these groups, that resources should be directed to support these groups in those areas.
- There is clearly a need for further research into new ethnic communities from Eastern Europe, whose educational and language profile, and needs, tends to be obscured.
- Similarly, Black African ethnic groups need to be specified in relation to language to gain a fuller picture of their educational achievements (Mitton 2011). In particular, more recent migratory flows from Central and East Africa (e.g. Congo, Angola, and Zimbabwe).

Based on what data we have been able to collect and analyse for Arvon, we can make the following suggestions for which areas of the country to focus on, and tentatively, which linguistic groups:

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<sup>21</sup>[http://www.peterboroughtoday.co.uk/news/education/government\\_funding\\_migrant\\_cash\\_hint\\_for\\_peterborough\\_schools\\_1\\_3431852](http://www.peterboroughtoday.co.uk/news/education/government_funding_migrant_cash_hint_for_peterborough_schools_1_3431852) Report date 18th January 2012. Accessed 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2012.

- North East (Newcastle/Middlesbrough): **Lingala, Czech, Slovak, Romanian, Bulgarian**
- Yorkshire and Humber (Bradford/ Leeds/ Sheffield): **Mirpuri Pakistani languages, Somali, other Black African students' languages (more data needed)**
- North West (Manchester/Oldham/Rochdale): **Mirpuri Pakistani languages, Afghan languages, Somali (more data needed on the 'White other' category)**
- East of England (Peterborough/ Bedford/ Luton): **Polish, Lithuanian, Czech, Slovak and Portuguese; Asian languages (more information needed).**

On selection of which linguistic groups to focus on for the *(M)other Tongues* project, in addition to linguistic groups' lower school attainment, it is worth also taking into account the following factors:

- **Socio-economic factors:**

Which linguistic groups are likely to be facing poverty? Von Ahn and colleagues (2010) carried out an analysis of socio-economic factors within the language groups in Newham and found complicated patterns. They cross referenced language with free school meal eligibility, but also local administrative data on council tax benefit, number of children and single parent status, and also suggest exploring postcode data. Further, as we have highlighted in this report, in some locales white British students are attaining less well relative to other ethnic groups, or indeed *overall* attainment is low compared to the regional or national average, some sensitivity in selecting particular ethnic/ language groups may be expedient.

- **Gender:**

The national figures show girls consistently attaining higher than boys for some time now. However, as with the case for ethnicity and attainment, there are regional differences with some localities, some schools, or even specific year groups in which the reverse is the case, and boys are out-performing girls. Further, attainment at GCSE is only one crude measure of 'success' and while girls on the whole tend to attain higher than boys in this measure, the pattern does not straight forwardly follow into further and higher education attainment, nor into the labour market, where significant gender segregation occurs, and a persistent gender pay gap disadvantages women still.

- **The relative status of languages:**

The status of some community languages is rising and 23 modern languages are available for study at GCSE - such as Arabic, Mandarin and Urdu. *Which* community languages get taught at GCSE promotes this hierarchy. For example, Sneddon and Martin (2012) claims the Albanian organisation The Shpresa Programme are concerned that, as more community languages make it to GCSE, others that don't (such as Albanian) will fall in status. Perhaps this criteria might inform selection of language groups - i.e. those at a disadvantage might be those currently not represented at GCSE.

- **Trade and employment opportunities:**

Eversley and colleagues (Eversley et al., 2010) provide an analysis of community languages in terms of trade, and employment. This might be useful to consider in terms of which languages to pursue (particularly if those language communities are at a disadvantage in the labour market). UK Trade high growth markets identified are China, Taiwan (Chinese languages); Brazil (Portuguese); Mexico (Spanish); UAE/Saudi Arabia/ Qatar (Arabic); South Korean (Korean); Vietnam (Vietnamese); India (English; Punjabi; Gujurati; Hindi; Malayalam); Russia (Russian). Also identified growth markets are France (French) and Argentina (Spanish). Eversley and colleagues also identify public services; health services, education and policing as key employment areas where community languages are in high demand. In London for example they identify that 'new' community

languages such as Polish are needed in the Metropolitan Police force (as opposed to more established languages such as Urdu), and that different languages are needed in relation to different types of crime (e.g. counter terrorism vs. Organised crime). Of course, there is vast regional variability of jobs in these growth sectors, nevertheless, consideration of languages in demand in the UK economy may aid selection of languages to focus on for the *(M)other Tongues* Project.

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## APPENDIX: SCOPING EXERCISE

For this research we have consulted, via email and telephone conversations, the following expertise in the field of bilingual or multilingual education, ethnicity and attainment:

Dr. Raymonde Sneddon (UEL); Dr. Charmian Kenner (Goldsmiths); Dr. Uvanney Maylor (Bedfordshire); Dr. Tozun Issa (London Metropolitan University); Robin Richardson (INSTED); Tim Spafford/Bill Bolloton (Refugee Ed); Dina Mehmedbegovic (IoE); The National Centre for Community Language (CILT).

We consulted the following expertise in official data on language in schools: Dr. John Eversely (London Metropolitan University); Michelle Von-Ahn (Newham Borough); Antony Sanderson (Surrey Council) all involved in the **Language Capital** project.

We consulted the **Multiverse** professional resource network of both ITE specialists in minority ethnic achievement and regional contacts in relation to Ethnic Minority Achievement Services; and consulted the EAL-bilingual Google group.

We located and contacted the following EMA teams: Newcastle; Middlesbrough; Luton; Manchester; Birmingham, Nottingham, Sheffield and we received direct information from the following local authority EMA teams: Newcastle; Middlesbrough; Luton; Manchester, Nottingham and received no reply from the others. Unfortunately we were not able to obtain formal approval for the Nottingham information to be included in this report.

We could find no relevant professional contacts in Oldham, Rochdale, Bradford, Leeds Derby, Bedford or Peterborough.