Inclusion of Multilingual Deaf Children and Youth in London: Perspectives from Hearing Mothers from Black and Ethnic Minority Backgrounds and Ethnographic Observations from Two Mainstream Schools with Deaf Resource Bases

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ABSTRACT

In this anthropological study of deaf children and youth's relationships with adults that are familiar to them, the multiple identities they agree or refuse to take on as they move between various places and communities are discussed. Centring on an ethnographic sample of hearing mothers of deaf children as well as deaf children and youth attending mainstream schools with deaf provision and their specialist staff, the study highlights the very different ways in which deaf children and youth are included in and excluded from opportunities for participation, and ultimately, learning. Explored through notions such as co-presence, collaboration, community, participation, boundaries, and communicative repertoire, the study captures everyday processes in which deafness is perceived and constructed socially as they are played out within broader ideological contexts such as language planning and deaf education.

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ACRONYMS

BSL   British Sign Language

EAL   English as an Additional Language

LEA   Local Education Authority

LSA   Learning Support Assistant

NHS   National Health Service

SSE   Sign Supported English

TA   Teaching Assistant

TOD   Teacher of the Deaf

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INTRODUCTION

This study is an anthropological enquiry into the social and communicative interactions that take place between deaf children and youth, and the deaf and hearing adults who are familiar to them. As an ethnographically grounded, multi-sited study, it is situated within various specialized places within London spanning across preschool, primary school and secondary school years. In the course of this study, through employing an approach primarily informed by Lave and Wenger (2003) that regards learning and identity as historically and spatially situated, I try to trace the different linguistic and cultural communities these deaf learners enter and participate in. In doing so, I try to highlight the development of their 'communicative repertoire' in relation to the various deaf and hearing adults and peers they encounter in these settings as multilingual members of more than one community.

1. A brief note on my research interests in relation to deaf education and deaf students' relationships with deaf and hearing adults and peers

During my fieldwork, many of my interlocutors asked me why I was doing this sort of research – did I have a family member or a close friend who was deaf? I had had various acquaintances who were deaf growing up in the northern part of Cyprus – a boy just a few years older than me who was profoundly deaf and never went to school; another young man in a similar situation in the neighbouring village; a deaf couple who worked at my middle-school's canteen; an elderly man who accompanied his adult son as he travelled from village to village selling books; and another elderly man who made traditional Cypriot chairs with his two adult sons in his workshop in the capital city.

My interest in deaf people's experiences – particularly in formal education – however, was piqued when I was commuting to work, still in Cyprus, back in 2006. For a while, I used to take the bus along with many other rush hour commuters – mostly employees and students – travelling between two major cities of Cyprus. Among the usual passengers I also came to notice two friends, both male and in their late twenties, who often sat a few rows in front of me. I noticed them because they were signing to each other. One day, I initiated a

conversation with them, and I found out that one of them, I will call him Cemal, was profoundly deaf and had to sit through all his formal education just watching the teacher and what was going around him, unable to hear anything. He had no hearing aids and had not received any form of formal support. He signed using what was (I later learned) probably a mixture of Turkish Sign Language, British Sign Language and Cypriot/home signs[1]. His friend who was hard of hearing and a hearing aid wearer acted as our interpreter.

I later joined the Anthropology of Childhood, Youth and Education (MSc) post-graduate degree programme at Brunel University London, UK (2009-2010), where I further engaged with issues such as informal versus formal education, skill versus knowledge, and discussions around disability, the body, and personhood. I also conducted my fieldwork for my dissertation at a London-based school for young people with special needs. When in 2011, back in Cyprus, I had the opportunity to apply for a doctorate degree through the Commonwealth Scholarship, I once again knew that I wanted to return to Brunel University London, this time with a focus on the social lives of deaf children, youth and adults who were profoundly deaf and primarily used sign language in connection to the educational experiences of deaf children and youth and work experiences of deaf adults. This study is derived from this broader research.

Besides my 'researcher' status linked to my academic background and interests, however, my other statuses (which were probably more relevant for my interlocutors) also shaped my experiences in the field. Some of the more obvious ones were my age and sex. As an adult female, I shared similar characteristics to most people with whom I was learning British Sign Language (BSL)[2] – levels 1, 2 and then 3 between September 2012 and October 2014 – at two separate London-based institutions as well as with the majority of the staff members at the

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[1] Home signs refers to signs deaf children (or deaf families) develop at home to communicate with their families and acquaintances in the absence of opportunities, such as schooling, where they might have otherwise been introduced to conventional sign languages (Lane, 1988, p.10; Deuchar, 1984, p.28).

[2] British Sign Language (BSL) is an indigenous language to England spoken by about an estimated 70,000 people in Britain as their primary or preferred mode of communication (RNID, 2007, p.7). In 2003, BSL was recognized as a language by the Department of Works and Pensions, followed by a one-off funding (BDN, 2013, p.9). But this official recognition – viewed retrospectively as a "token effort to shut us up" by many Deaf community activists – did not guarantee the legal protection for BSL, which is seen as a necessary prerequisite for any language to be truly protected and promoted (BDN, 2013, p.12).

two 'Deaf Resource Bases'[3] discussed in this study. Furthermore, my varying degrees of proficiency in multiple languages also influenced which field sites I could secure access to and with whom I mostly interacted within those various institutional settings. In addition to my ease in communicating in spoken and written English, I am also a native Turkish speaker. My knowledge of the Turkish language and culture, therefore, was seen as a valuable resource by the staff of one of the Deaf Resource Bases who were working with students from a diverse range of backgrounds, including Turkish. It was also this sense of shared culture that accelerated the trust-building process with my adult deaf interlocutors from Turkish-speaking families such as Damla, about whom we'll hear more below. My gradually increasing familiarization with BSL, on the other hand, played a significant role in both allowing and restricting my entry to certain institutional locations that deaf people regularly participated – an issue which I explore further in the methodology section. Finally, as a newcomer to places and relationships that centred on issues related to deafness, I quickly became aware of distinct statuses such as 'deaf' and 'hearing', as well as 'hard of hearing'. I soon started introducing myself with an opening such as "I'm hearing, I'm learning to sign" – a form of identification I had never used before. Prior to getting to know deaf people at an individual and personal level through my fieldwork I had not considered my sense of hearing as part of who I was, and at the most I would consider myself as having 'typical' hearing, or a person without any hearing problems, or not deaf. In London's various locations where I encountered groups of deaf people, however, 'hearing' became part of my identity.

Having established the nature of my research presence and interests, I now turn to the relevant literature, which will help orient this study within the broader social research on deafness, in general, and recent debates on deaf students' access to education, in particular.

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[3] Deaf Resource Bases or Units provide specialist provision for deaf students within mainstream schools and often have dedicated rooms, specialist resources, Teachers of the Deaf and other specialist Teaching Assistants.

2. Placing the study: relevant perspectives on deafness and inclusion in deaf education

2.1 Deafness as disability

Deaf adults and children living in the UK face a social barrier to participating in public life (NDCS, 2008 and 2011; UK Council on Deafness, 2006; BDA, 2013; Women's Resource Centre, 2011). Broader policy issues of 'inclusion' and 'discrimination' regarding access to information, education, health, employment, the third sector and businesses are typically centred on the deaf person's encounter with mainstream hearing people. During these hearing - deaf interactions that take place within institutionalized settings, the prevailing status available to the deaf person is to be 'disabled'. The disabled person, as a 'type of person', is sanctioned by the law. Under the Equality Act 2010, for example, a person is disabled "if [they] have a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on [their] ability to do normal daily activities" (Great Britain, n.d.1). This legal notion of disability includes deaf people under its remit as well. As such, a judicial-medical approach looks at deafness as a strictly physiological phenomenon and thus as a 'lack' in relation to the 'normal' human ability to hear (Obasi, 2008, p.461). This comes at the expense of other possible ways of perceiving deaf people which denote different – and often contested – meanings for various social groups.

Furthermore, the 'deafness as disability' approach has an underlying individualization. Deafness becomes an unfortunate "personal tragedy", which diverts the attention away from the role of socio-economic relations in shaping deaf people's personal and collective lives and focuses instead on the causes and cures for deafness in the name of helping people who are deaf live a 'fuller', more 'normal' life while contributing to the betterment of society by the means of preventing an undesired disability (Oliver, 2009, p.43). Moreover, the earlier psychological literature on deafness which emerged in the 1950s in the United States also depicted deafness as a 'deficit' (Levine, 1958, in Becker, 1980; Myklebust 1964; Furth, 1966). As a result of the then dominant belief that language and thinking were linked and that language was a verbal phenomenon, it was also assumed that since profoundly deaf people could not acquire (spoken) language that they inevitably had cognitive, psychological and learning difficulties (Stewart and Akamatsu, 1988, p.238). In short, embedded in a historical

context that hailed the philosophical belief in the superiority of humankind and its separation from nature represented through its invention of (spoken) language (Durr, 2000), in addition to the Christian doctrine of salvation through the 'word' as well as the evolutionary model of society (Fernandez-Viader and Fuentes, 2004), the historically more recent 'western' focus[4] on deafness has been centred on the medical view of restoring hearing and spoken language abilities back to the deaf person while also preventing its reoccurrence. Until recently, these prevalent representations of deafness which have also made their way into public discourses, have meant that a widespread and current 'western' view of deaf people has been to perceive them as being disabled, deviant, of lower intelligence, and a burden to society (Higgins, 1979).

2.2 The (predominantly US American) 'cultural model' of deafness

The overall inferior meaning associated with deafness found in the English language has been challenged since the 1960s, starting in the United States with an alternative way of defining the term 'deaf'. As a new way of imagining about what it means to be deaf emerged initially within linguistics and then in abundance through the development of the interdisciplinary field of 'Deaf Studies' (Erting, 1996; Lane, 1996; Friedner, 2017a). What began as a linguistic focus on *sign language* (starting with American Sign Language or ASL) soon triggered an interest towards deaf *people* as a collective who used it, with an upsurge in the number of descriptions of the US American 'Deaf community', 'Deaf culture' and 'Deaf identity'. Many 'culturally Deaf' people or scholars in Deaf Studies, for example, have used the auto-ethnographic method as an emancipatory method to voice deaf experiences, of which many are collected within the scholarly journals of *Sign Laguage Studies* and *the Journal of Deaf Studies and Deaf Education* (Carmel and Monaghan, 1990; McIlroy and Storbeck, 2011; Nikolaraizi and Hadjikakou, 2006). Furtheremore, again under Deaf Studies as well as cultural studies and literature, there are other literary work such as biographies, memoirs and narratives by deaf family members that shed light on their lives from a more personal level and act as alternative resources for understanding deafness. Some such examples from the UK include Wright (1969), Coleman (2012), and Corker (1996).

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[4] For around the past two hundred years (Lane, 1992, in Kusters et al., 2015; Ladd, 2011).

The term 'Deaf' has as its backdrop the modern US American history of the Civil Rights Movement (Berbrier, 2002, p.562). James Woodward, a scholar in American Sign Language linguistics, proposed a widely accepted convention to differentiate between the terms 'deaf' and 'Deaf' (the difference being the use of either lower or uppercase 'd'), with the latter representing the 'culturally Deaf' people who see their deafness as a positive attribute as opposed to a lack or abnormality (Woodward, 1972, in Kirsch, 2008). Ladd (2011) takes it a step further and narrows down the terms 'deaf' and 'Deaf' to mean two specific and contextually oppositional positions:

"The lowercase 'deaf' refers to those for whom deafness is primarily an audiological experience. It is mainly used to describe those who lost some or all of their hearing in early or late life, and who do not usually wish to have contact with signing Deaf communities, preferring to try and retain their membership of the majority society in which they were socialized. 'Deaf' refers to those born Deaf or deafened in early (sometimes late) childhood, for whom the sign languages, communities and cultures of the Deaf collective represents their *primary* experience and allegiance, many of whom perceive their experience as essentially akin to other language minorities." (Ladd, 2011, p.xvii, emphasis added).

Put differently, those who are in the 'Deaf community' are 'Deaf' and those who are out of it are 'deaf' (Mclaughlin et al., 2004, p.156). Furthermore, commonly accepted definitions for 'Deaf community' and 'Deaf culture' are also proposed by Baker and Padden (1978): "The deaf community comprises those deaf and hard of hearing individuals who share a common language, common experiences and values, and a common way of interacting with each other, and with hearing people" (Baker and Padden, 1978, in Ladd, 2011, p.41). With Ladd (2011) specifying that 'Deaf culture' is the "belief that Deaf communities contained their own ways of life mediated through their sign languages" (Ladd, 2011, p.xvii). Once defined, a new way of being, a new form of personhood that presented an essentialist connection between 'language and community, culture and identity' that was ultimately singular ('a' Deaf identity/culture/community/language) had emerged within the US American context and rapidly infiltrated the scholarly and native reflections on the 'deaf person' across the globe,

including the United Kingdom (as discussed in Hoffman-Dilloway, 2011, p.286; Ladd, 2011; Lee, 2006, p.204). Amongst the advocates who have all agreed to use this alternative definition of 'Deaf', however, consensus as to what constitutes a 'Deaf community' is still far from being reached (McIaughlin et al. 2004; Higgins 1979; Thoutenhoofd, 2000). Nevertheless, even in its contested, elusive form, the 'Deaf community' is a powerful ideological symbol that universalizes the deaf experience. In opposition to the medical view which emphasizes 'deaf' as being a deficiency, then, the notion of being 'culturally Deaf' has highlighted pride in one's language and history (Ladd, 2011). Historically it has generally been used within the US American discourse and context, advanced mainly by the works of Gallaudet University and adopted by many US Americans and through them other national Deaf organizations (see for example Lane, 1988; Lane, 1992; Padden, 2000; Friedner, 2017a).

2.3 The diversity of the deaf experience

Since the start of the new millennium, however, there has been a new movement in Deaf Studies towards a "critical examination of the theoretical frameworks and concepts that have been used (such as Deaf culture and the d/Deaf distinction)" (Kusters et al., 2017b, p.4). Written by a team of deaf scholars, the issues addressed in *Innovations in Deaf Studies,* for example, are set against the acknowledged backdrop of "deaf worlds [that have] changed considerably since the birth of the discipline in the 1970s", listing significant changes that are also relevant to this study such as mainstreaming, the widespread use of cochlear implants, increased globalisation, and "diversification of intersectional backgrounds" (ibid., pages 3-4). As a result, one such growing criticism[5] highlighted in the Introduction, with reference to the chapter by Murray (2017), is that the 'Deaf culture' versus 'hearing world' dichotomy is monolithic and essentialist (Ibid., p.8). Moreover, instead of using descriptions in the singular, the recognition of multiple deaf cultures, communities and identities is highlighted (Murray, 2017, in Friedner, 2017a, p.131). In fact, a shared (sign) language may not always signify the presence of a 'Deaf community'. As part of her ethnographic work with deaf students in Bangalore, for example, Friedner (2008) concludes that "[d]espite a shared sensory

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[5] Other relevant references to criticism of such traditional concepts of Deaf Studies are listed on page 8 of Kusters et al. (2017b) and in Friedner (2017a).

experience of deafness and a common sign language, deaf students in the computer training programme and those in the welding and electrical programmes rarely interact and I would argue that these students belong to different deaf communities, if they belong to deaf communities at all" (Friedner, 2008, p.19). Similarly, while for hundreds of thousands of deaf people in the United States, 'deaf' marks "an identification with a cultural group that shares a common sign language" (Padden 2000, p.57); within the Bedouin community studied by Kisch (2008), the more appropriate description is to use a 'signing community' instead of 'deaf community' (Kisch, 2008, p.285).

One reason given by Kusters et al. (2017b) for reconsidering the use of 'Deaf' (in its capitalized form) is its ethnocentrism when uncritically taken out of the "Anglo-Saxon western context" (Kusters et al., 2017b, p.14). Additionally, such concepts may not be relevant to and therefore not necessarily used as part of the native terminology of deaf people living around the world[6] (Friedner, 2017a, p.132). Alternative concepts have been discussed by Friedner (2017a, pages 134-135). The increased sensitivity within academia towards the appropriateness of using terminology such as 'Deaf/deaf' was also echoed by some of my British deaf adult interlocutors. As I gradually shifted from a phase of primarily conducting participant observations to a stage where I mainly concentrated on conducting interviews as part of my ethnographic research, I used this time to ask my deaf interlocutors in BSL if they were familiar with the 'Deaf/deaf' dichotomy and what they thought about it. Obviously, uppercase/lowercase 'Deaf/deaf' is an expression used within spoken and written English. Its transformation (and thus transportation) into the visual-spatial domain of BSL is achieved by starting with the letter 'd' in the BSL manual alphabet, which looks like a capitalized 'D', and then moving the index finger to depict the lowercase 'd', as shown in Figure 1 below:
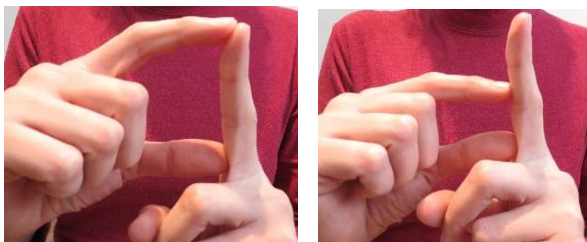
 (Source: Author)

Figure 1: A static representation of 'Deaf/deaf' in BSL which in actuality is signed as a continuous movement starting from 'D' (left) to 'd' (right), while rhythmically mouthing 'deaf' twice.

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[6] For an overview of the most recent work with deaf people from around the world, see Kusters et al. (2017b), pages 11-12, and Friedner (2017a), pages 141-142.

Below are some representative responses from three of my deaf interlocutors – Margaret, David and Greg. Briefly, Margaret, a White female in her fifties, was a deaf BSL user who had deaf parents and was currently a BSL teacher. David, a White male in his early forties, was a deaf BSL user who was the BSL Instructor at the secondary school that was one of my field sites. Greg, on the other hand, was a White male in his fifties and was a professional in the cultural industry. They were all active members of the larger deaf community and had long memberships in their local deaf clubs and other deaf-led associations. Further information regarding the interview process and general characteristics of my key interlocutors is provided in the methodology section. All three were quick to clarify that although they did identify with the meaning of 'Deaf', because of their observations of its use having actual social consequences of creating an atmosphere of a hierarchical 'us' vs 'them' in deaf-deaf relationships, they no longer found it to be useful or valuable as a social category. For example, at one point during my interview with Margaret, she commented on how:

"I don't think it's fair to use 'Deaf/deaf'. When deaf children and adults who are born deaf but only start to sign later in life, it's not their fault. Why label them 'deaf'? I feel it demoralizes them. I like to include them, to be one group and to share with each other. Some make a distinction between being 'deaf' and 'Deaf'; I don't. I know that I am 'strong deaf' myself, but when I meet someone I don't label them as 'deaf' – no. I don't belittle them saying you are 'deaf', and I'm 'Deaf', no." (Interview with Margaret, 25 July 2014)

For Margaret, the notion of 'Deaf' as one side of a binary was more oppressive than empowering. To her it represented a hierarchical positioning of the different social statuses of deaf people and therefore it fostered social inequality and discord within the community rather than solidarity. According to David, the notion was temporarily adopted but then collectively rejected due to its detrimental effect on deaf people's relationships with each other. He made clear to me that the era of using 'Deaf/deaf' is:

"finished. It was used before, but now it's not in use. We've all stopped using it; we've stopped. What was it before? 'Deaf' with an uppercase 'D', meant deaf people like me: I sign fluently, I'm Deaf, I'm proud to sign, proud to be fully/profoundly deaf (and dumb);

and lowercase 'deaf' meant that someone was hard of hearing or a profoundly deaf person who was not a signer, someone who uses their voice … and withdrawn (from the deaf community) … Before it was awful; everyone was labelled either as being 'Deaf' or 'deaf'. Me? I see myself as Deaf, yes, but, looking at it, I realize, why label everyone? So … we don't use those terms anymore, we've abandoned them (Oktar: When did it change?) A few years ago, I think; there was a meeting. There was frustration among deaf people, so they started a discussion and they agreed to spread the word to the rest of the people, to let them know … not to use 'Deaf/deaf' anymore … 'Deaf/deaf' is like racism. You are 'deaf', I am 'Deaf', so I can shove you aside. I am at a higher status – I sign well; you're signing is so-so. This competition lowered their confidence [and it was] like … bullying." (Interview with David, 16 July 2014)

Again, David touched upon the creation of a linguistic hierarchy enabled through the conceptualization of 'Deaf/deaf' dichotomy and the discriminating actions of those who ranked higher towards those supposedly below them. Finally, Greg too acknowledged that his identity as he saw it was distinct in the sense that he used sign language as his primary mode of communication, which the term 'Deaf' has said to capture. He nonetheless did not prefer to use it himself: "I don't like the 'deaf/Deaf' concept but I am Deaf. I rely on sign language to achieve what I want, so I have to be Deaf. I don't like 'deaf/Deaf' distinction but it's there."

Counter to the intentions of empowering deaf signers by offering them a group name to be proud of, the main reason for abandoning the 'Deaf/deaf' binary, as it was expressed by my interlocutors as a reflection of the current British context, was due to the division and exclusions it caused within their circle of deaf acquaintances who had happened to use various forms of communication. This was against their own beliefs on how deaf people should relate to each other regardless of differences in communication preferences and competencies which comprised of a sense of solidarity between equals who respected and welcomed each other.

Instead, such diversity may be captured by paying greater attention to the situatedness of deaf experiences in terms of gender, age, cohort, sexual orientation, religion, race, ethnicity,

nationality, class, dis/ability, education type and level, employment status, marital status, type of family of orientation and procreation, geographic location, community size, degree of civic engagement, level of health and wellbeing, hearing status, communication practices, use of hearing technologies, as well as their relationships with other deaf and hearing people, some of which are highlighted in this study (Kusters et al., 2017b; Washabaugh, 1981; Cockayne, 2003). The edited book *Many Ways to be Deaf* by Monaghan et al. (2003) was a crucial step towards this objective. Subsequently, a move away from such "overarching concepts" towards "more specific terms" that consider the context when describing deaf people's lives is increasingly preferred within recent contributions to Deaf Studies (Kusters et al., 2017b, p.8b). As such, deaf scholars have begun to make a clear distinction between a period of 'early Deaf Studies' with a focus on tackling issues related to oppression and the current era of also looking at the 'positive experiences' (Ibid., pages 7 and 9). With this said, it is important to note that there have been (in this case anthropological) studies of deaf communities that have employed such practices of specificity when describing its members which coincides to this earlier period. To illustrate, the deaf community that anthropologist Becker (1980) studied was made up of around two-hundred White working-class deaf people aged sixty and over, living in the San Francisco Bay Area as members of an organization for the aging deaf. As Becker (1980) highlights, besides being deaf and using American Sign Language, other shared identities and characteristics of those deaf community members that were the focus of her study are indicative of a certain type of deaf community and deaf identity as well as localised and historical deaf-deaf and deaf-hearing relationships. For example, they belonged to a certain cohort (born 1920s), had similar family backgrounds (White, middle-class, hearing), and were institutionalized – which carried a stigma – at an early age at segregated residential schools where they were oriented toward manual work, membership in social organizations such as deaf clubs.

2.4 How deafness was approached within the scope of this study

As a researcher, I am aware that the dominant academic and public discourses on deafness are important, and I acknowledge that these have influenced all stages of the research. I have, however, tried not to let these overarching ideologies dictate what I would encounter as I

entered the field. Although I did in a sense anticipate to find 'Deaf' people who were proud of their language and community as it manifested itself in the British context, I was also sensitive to many other potential ways that deaf people – both adults and especially children and youth – would express their own native theories on what it meant to be deaf in multicultural London in the twenty-first century. After all, it would be naive and over simplistic to assume that the conditions shaping those experiences of being deaf (either personally or collectively) were in any way universal. In other words, I was engaged with the anthropological practice of developing a 'grounded theory' where in "addition to the a priori categories in which [I was] interested as a result of [my] particular theoretical approach and the design of the project, [I was] also looking for understandings and interpretations that arose from the materials as a result of the interaction of the ideas and concerns of [my research] participants and" myself as the 'researcher' (DeWalt and DeWalt, 2002, p.172). As a result, and as Friedner (2017a) had suggested, I tried to "attend to the language used to categorize, signify, and represent deaf people [...which] can reveal significant detail about what deafness means in specific places and how it relates to other categories of being in the world" (Friedner, 2017a, p.135).

Therefore, as I describe the lives and experiences of my deaf interlocutors throughout the ethnography, I will refrain from describing them as being either 'Deaf' or 'deaf'. I will, instead, continue to talk about my interlocutors using contextually appropriate descriptive terms such as 'deaf child/ren', 'deaf youth', deaf student(s)', 'deaf adult(s)', 'deaf signer' or 'oral deaf', etc., as ways to begin to talk about their distinct sensorial, bodily, and social experiences, along with their situated meanings and degrees of significance, as they are lived differently from 'hearing people' – a term which I again use in a broad and descriptive sense. By choosing not to adopt any of the pre-defined, generalized and top-down notions of being deaf as they have been highlighted above, it is my intention to allow for the surfacing of potentially multiple ways of being deaf through the ethnographic descriptions and anthropological analysis of my field data, with a primary focus on deaf children and youth.

2.5 Recent debates on inclusion of deaf students in (western) education

The current British educational policy prioritizes 'integration' and 'inclusion' which favours educational placements where students can receive their formal education (with or without specialist support) near their place of residency which they can commute daily to while continuing to live with their families. As such, this specific form of inclusion in relation to deaf education is broadly about "how deaf students are included in schools, classrooms, curricula, and mainstream activities in general", also known as mainstreaming (Powers, 2002, p.235). Historically it coincides with the post-Warnock Report of 1978 which catalyzed the integration of children with special educational needs in mainstream schools with resources to support them (Nikolaraizi and De Reybekiel, 2001). Previously, the more common practice was for deaf children to mostly attend (residential) special schools for the deaf scattered around the country. By the turn of the twentieth century, "about 20% of children with moderate, severe, and profound hearing loss were educated in special schools for deaf children" (Eatough, 2000, in Powers, 2002). In terms of language policies used as part of current deaf education across the UK, 'oral' and 'total communication' have been the prevailing approaches (Doherty, 2012a and 2012b). Similar 'de-segregation' policies have also been implemented in other parts of the world with different results. In Cyprus, for example, parents' demands to have their children attend mainstream schools have been enabled by integration policies which in practice meant that deaf and hard of hearing students were in mainstream classrooms where there were no special training requirements for their teachers who, as a result, delivered lessons without any differentiation (Angelides and Aravi, 2007). Based on the obvious marginalization and disadvantaging of Cypriot deaf and hard of hearing students in mainstream school, therefore, the authors suggest a move away from integration practices towards inclusive ones (Ibid.).

Powers (2002) argues that in the UK the dominant policy approach towards inclusion as a 'state' of education to be achieved, specifically for "all children [to be] educated in mainstream schools", is too narrow and ineffective when applied to the education of deaf children (Powers, 2002, p.230). Once contextualized, this aspiration implies a desire for deaf and hearing children to attend the same schools and thus to be educated together (Powers, 2002; Doherty, 2012a). According to the UK government, for example, even separate units

within mainstream schools are seen as 'isolating' (DfE, 1997, in Powers, 2002, p.233). Being 'full members' in mainstream classrooms (rather than 'visitors' from the units) is stated as an individual right (Antia et al. 2000, in Powers, 2002, p.236). In practice, however, the limits to mainstream classrooms enabling the full participation of their deaf students is well known amongst practitioners in deaf education and deaf students themselves, which will also be highlighted by this study. This ideological notion of inclusion at the level of formal schooling is at times linked to wider issues, such as social inclusion in British society, where educational practices such as non-segregation is equated to valuing diversity and accepting of difference (Thomas, 1997, in Powers, 2002, p.231). This, however, is challenged by practitioners in the field of deaf education such as teachers as accepting an uncritical approach to inclusion as being 'right by definition' simply because of its implied political correctness (Powers, 2002, p.232). In contrast, in Sweden, for example, as an approach agreed both by the government and other stakeholders such as parents and deaf organizations, special schools for the deaf where sign language is used and deaf culture is promoted is considered to be "the most inclusive approach" (Doherty, 2012a, p.794).

The current British approach to educational inclusion raises issues of provision of special educational resources including environmental adjustments and the established supply of quality of materials and human resources. For individual schools that do not admit deaf and hard of hearing students on a regular basis, therefore, to quickly and effectively plan, deliver and monitor such provisions can be challenging. Reasons for this are linked to financial cost and the related diminished obligation placed on an individual school to only make 'reasonable' adjustments with an emphasis on 'progress' of such services (Powers, 2002, p.234). There is, therefore, the real risk of schools not being able to deliver high quality resources from the start and therefore deaf students not receiving uninterrupted and appropriate quality education during their school careers otherwise enjoyed by their hearing peers.

Instead Powers (2002) suggests an approach to inclusion that conceptualizes it as a 'process' of "increasing participation for children with special needs" without necessarily being concerned with the actual physical locale of such an education as well as a 'system of values' that "responds to student diversity base on principles of equity and acceptance" as part of

the school ethos (Powers, 2002, pages 230 and 237, respectively). This, therefore, requires a "a transformation of schools" (Doherty, 2012a, p.793). In Sweden, for example, where sign bilingualism has been the approach to deaf education, this was achieved by "measures taken at home and at school […] such as [deaf children] being educated about their difference from the start and then prepared for it in an appropriate way […] which consisted of assertiveness skills, confidence building", as well as perceiving sign language as a "unique skill", all of which when combined, created the feelings of self-worth, self-esteem and equality (Doherty, 2012a, p.798 and p.800, respectively). In contrast, attending a special school in Northern Ireland which stands as an example where 'acceptance' was not part of the school's values, deaf respondents felt that their teachers had demonstrated negative attitudes towards them, had low expectations of them and generally did not feel like they belonged at the school (Doherty, 2012a).

Furthermore, and going back to deaf students' inclusion in mainstream settings, within this whole-school approach, the responsibility is placed on the 'system' such as a when mainstream and specialist staff collaborate through regular meetings in the educational progress of deaf children to plan, for example, withdrawal or tutorial sessions (Powers, 2002; Doherty, 2012a). Moreover, within the 'system of values' approach, there is also an effort to highlight other equally important issues regarding inclusion of deaf students which are "levels of academic and non-academic [physical and social-emotional] achievement" as well as "maximizing opportunity, independence, […] and ultimately, adult quality of life" (Powers, 2002, p.237). In the case of Cyprus, for example, a cohort of deaf adults emphasized the split nature of the availability of better opportunities for academic progress (found in mainstream schools) as compared to better opportunities for social interaction linked to ease and depth of communication and self-esteem (felt to have existed in special schools) (Angelides and Aravi, 2007). Research on good practice regarding inclusion lists the importance of an 'effective communication environment' that is relevant to the students, mainstream teachers applying flexible strategies to teaching, and both mainstream and specialist teachers and teaching assistants (TAs) having "necessary knowledge, skills, and attitudes to effectively teach and support deaf students" through regular in-service training (Powers, 2002, p.238-239). Deaf students having regular and successful interaction with hearing and deaf peers is also stated as a priority of which the latter is linked to high self-esteem and positive self-image

(Powers, 2002; Atkin et al. 2002). There is also an emphasis on deaf students having access to deaf role models – including more deaf adults in education facilitated by removing current career barriers faced by deaf people – and to deaf culture as a contributor to self-belief and motivation (Powers, 2002, p.240). All of these issues, as they have been observed as being practiced at two mainstream school with deaf provision, will be critically examined as a part of this study.

Powers (2002), in line with his working definition of inclusion as a 'process' as "intended to have relevance across both mainstream and special school contexts", does not conclude as being for or against a given type of schooling (Powers, 2002, p.237). Others, however, who draw on Powers (2002), make a more general stance against mainstreaming and for special schools with a sign bilingual approach as the best arrangement that can deliver consistent quality inclusion for deaf students. Firstly, Doherty (2012a), for example, concludes that quality educational inclusion in terms of social and academic progress would mean the provision of sign language, deaf peers and role models, which are not available (at least consistently) at mainstream schools and that special schools are 'the best place' instead (Doherty, 2012a, p.805). Although her conclusion appears to be suggested for all deaf students, whom she presents as a homogenous group for which "speech is not naturally learnt" without emphasizing differences in hearing status, it is important to state that the evidence she has used to support this statement has been derived from interviews with deaf students from Northern Ireland who are all implied to be profoundly deaf as they were attending a special school (Ibid., p.793). Therefore, there is a need to further explore the current educational practices and the experiences of other deaf children and youth who are placed in mainstream settings in order to better understand the current British context of inclusive education as it relates to deaf education. This study intends to contribute towards this goal by looking at two mainstream educational settings with two different deaf provisions.

Secondly, although I agree that an interpretation of Powers' (2002, p.16) notion of inclusion certainly indicates that deaf people having their own spaces is part of an inclusive society, I disagree with Powers' (2002) argument that his conceptualisation of educational and social inclusion, as the World Federation of the Deaf suggest, is only "reached through sign bilingual

education", but rather is one of potentially many ways (Kusters et al., 2015, p.18). Moreover, the notion of 'sign bilingualism' – national sign language and national spoken/written language – is further complicated by the multicultural and multilingual backgrounds of a growing number of deaf students in the British education system such as those addressed in this study. On the other hand, I believe equating Powers' (2002) notion of inclusion as a 'system of values' that approaches diversity with the notion of 'acceptance' with a view on diversity that "focus[es] on *deficiencies* rather than on added *value*" is incorrect, as Powers (2002) outlines, for example, that such 'acceptance' should be linked to "*positive* attitudes to deafness and deaf people, ensuring that deaf students feel *valued* members of the community" (Kusters et al., 2015, p.20, original emphasis; Powers, 2002, p.238, emphasis added, respectively).

When discussing current ideologies and practices of inclusion relevant to deaf education in the UK, besides looking at the more well-known practices of mainstreaming (including withdrawal sessions for deaf students) and special schools for the deaf, Powers (2002) also mentions practices such as 'reverse integration' where hearing peers accompany deaf students for instruction in a specially resourced classroom by a Teacher of the Deaf (TOD), and 'co-locating' where a deaf school shares premises with a mainstream school which enables deaf students to socially interact with hearing peers (Powers, 2002). Similarly, as a demonstration of the whole-school approach towards inclusion, sign language lessons for hearing students are mentioned (Powers, 2002, p.238). Furthermore, in the case of Sweden, inclusion as a 'system' approach that goes beyond the individual school is exemplified as we find out that parents not only ensured that their deaf child was learning sign language at an early years setting, but they were also learning sign language and subsequently teaching their child (Doherty, 2012a, p.796).

Finally, discussions on the inclusion of deaf students in education highlight a tension between the various stakeholders operating at the level of groups (rather than as individuals). Broadly, the main ones are parents, the Deaf community, practitioners of deaf education, and society at large. Parents' views and decisions regarding their deaf child's education, for example, may or may not be associated to that of their child's wishes which may in turn be prioritised, refused, criticised or ignored (Powers, 2002; Doherty, 2012a; Kusters et al., 2015).

Furthermore, while, on the one hand, special schools or withdrawal sessions of deaf students from mainstream classes may be regarded as 'isolating' (by their hearing family, local community, and/or hearing teachers and peers) with demands for greater inclusion, mainstreaming deaf students can be equally regarded as 'isolating' (by other deaf students and deaf adults) and lead to criticism of inclusion as a threat to the survival of deaf communities (Powers, 2002; Doherty, 2012a; Kusters et al., 2015). Finally, Powers (2002) notes how such debates on deaf education "sometimes appear to be primarily concerned with the *social good*" (Powers, 2002, p.232, original emphasis). What is shared between all such examples of connections or separations made between a given group and deaf children is their relative and relational quality. As such, within the current British educational climate on the inclusion of deaf students, issues such as 'full participation' and 'quality inclusion' as directly relevant factors in deaf students' academic and social-emotional development become highly contentious as they are followed by the question of 'full participation and inclusion in which groups?' as it becomes apparent that each group has an actual or potentially positive influence on deaf children and youth's individual educational journeys and beyond.

So far, I have described some recent academic debates on how 'deafness' has been approached as a research subject as well as the relevant context on the inclusion of deaf students in British education. I would now like to turn to the key theoretical ideas that I have found useful in analysing my ethnographic material, to then outline the various anthropological methodologies I employed while planning and when engaged in my fieldwork placement as ways of accessing and collecting qualitative data.

3. Theoretical framework and anthropological research questions

3.1 Theoretical framework

The two main theoretical pillars from which I analyse my field data are drawn from Lave and Wenger's (2003) notion of 'situated learning', taken as the fundamental connection between learning and participation, on the one hand, and the 'ethnography of communication' which

encompasses related notions of 'communicative repertoire', 'translanguaging' and 'multimodality', on the other. By reconceptualising all learning – formal and informal – as an activity that is ultimately relational and contextual, Lave and Wenger (2003) aim to move away from the 'conventional' idea of learning as a predominantly individual, cognitive process of 'internalization' of knowledge transmitted mainly through didactic methods (Lave and Wenger, 2003, pages 42-44 and p.62). Instead, other aspects of learning such as "access to the learning potential of given settings, [and] the uses of language in learning-in-practice" – two central areas of concern for this study – become more important issues to investigate (Ibid., p.42). Furthermore, learners cease to be passive 'receivers' of knowledge and become engaged participants negotiating meaning and usefulness of knowledge (Ibid., p.33). Situated learning also allows a reimagination of all knowledge, even the most 'general' and thus most likely to be taken-for-granted type of knowledge, as produced and "gained only in specific circumstances", thus highlighting the link between accessing knowledge and accessing 'communities of practice' in which any type of knowledge is located (Ibid., p.34). I use the term 'community of practice' in the sense that Lave and Wenger (2003) have described it, which is "a set of relations among persons, activity, and world, over time and in relation to other tangential and overlapping communities of practice" (Ibid., p.98).

As such, although Lave and Wenger (2003) steer away from "the problem of school learning" as they try to establish their alternative theory of learning, I find it timely to return to the site of the 'school' in order to rethink it as one of many 'specific' sites where communities of practice are found to operate (Ibid., p.39). In doing so, 'schooling' also ceases to be solely about "intentional instruction" of a 'subject knowledge' taking place between the 'teacher-student' dyad, and expands to capture other, less visible types of teaching-learning involving alternative, less valued types of knowledge, realized within less 'central' social interactions (Ibid., p.41 and pages 56-57). As such, I make it the purpose of this study to take upon their proposal to analyse "school learning as situated" by employing a "multilayered view of how knowing and learning are part of social practice" (Ibid., p.41). As such, by tracking the role of the familiar adults in the learning trajectories of deaf children and youth from early childhood where they mainly socialize at home, but also explore their local community and enter other specialized institutions that form part of their mother's idiosyncratic networks, to when they begin formal mainstream schooling with dedicated resources, I both examine the "place of

schooling in the community at large in terms of possibilities for developing identit*ies* of mastery" at a more meso-level, as well as "the social organization of schools themselves into communit*ies* of practice, both official and interstitial" at a more micro-level (Ibid., emphasis added).

Furthermore, Lave and Wenger's (2003) notion of 'legitimate peripheral participation' is critical in better understanding the social processes, including relations of power, by which 'newcomers' become 'old-timers' as they expand their learning and thus increase their participation in each community of practice. What's missing from the current theoretical framework, however, is how an 'old-timer' in one community may become a 'newcomer' in another and vice versa, and how and why the processes of increased participation may differ for each participant and how it may even be significantly slowed or halted for long periods of time. Highlighting what I observe to be a 'role reversal' between participants as a dynamic part of learning that takes place in multiple settings is one of the aims of this study. Moreover, because they develop their argument from the premise that the learner is readily located within a given community of practice as a legitimate participant, however, Lave and Wenger (2003) pay less attention to issues related to entry into such communities in the first place and the form and consequences of exclusion thereafter. I intend to further investigate these crucial elements that will expand our understanding of the link between learning and participation.

Furthermore, I expand on the notion of 'communicative collaborators' in reference to an interlocutor's willingness to share their communicative repertoire (of a perceived higher status) with someone who has a different repertoire (perceived to be of lower status) as a fundamental part of learning and increased participation – in particular deaf children and youth and deaf and hearing adults familiar to them – as adapted from Hoffmann-Dilloway's (2011) work on deaf participation and develop the notion of a 'collaborative place'. What Hoffmann-Dilloway (2011) highlights is that while the 'Nepali Deaf community' does use Nepali Sign Language (NSL) as a collective, 'competence' is not a requirement to be part of this community (Hoffmann-Dilloway, 2011). Membership is acquired through "social collaboration" as opposed to the expectations for "individual cognitive ability" (Hoffmann-Dilloway, 2011, p.287). To illustrate, in the context of the Nepali deaf community, a deaf

person who had been using 'home signs' and had not been able to learn NSL had nevertheless been included in the deaf community through the collaboration of competent NSL users' willingness and efforts to include him (Hoffmann-Dilloway, 2011).

Additionally, in response to the need to further develop the notion of 'legitimate peripheral participation' in light of ethnographic data discussed in this study (discussed mainly in Chapter Two and Chapter Five), and with an emphasis on unmediated face-to-face interactions between deaf children and youth and mainly the deaf and hearing adult co-participants that are mutually known to them, I have found the notions of 'co-presence' – as described by Chua (2015) – and Goffman's (1981) 'participation framework' to be useful analytical tools to examine the various degrees of participation and their duration within a given physical space of, for example, the home or the classroom. As participation is also influenced by the spatial organization of a community of practice, I also refer to the study of proxemics (Hall, 1963) in understanding how the physicality of a setting orients bodies in certain directions and in relation to each other as well as surrounding objects with direct effects on the quality of participation. I likewise look at how a chosen mode or modality of communication in turn produces different 'places' such as the 'closed' and 'open' stages as put forth by Eidheim (1969).

Although Lave and Wenger (2003) acknowledge that different communities of practice in which an individual participates may have conflictual relations, I make use of other theories to highlight specific features of such conflicts and their effects on the individual and collective identities of their members. For example, in terms of why various communities may be at a discord or removed from each other, I use Barth's theories on 'boundary maintenance' (1969) and 'assimilative capacity' (1972) as observed as taking place between linguistic groups, as well as the role of language as social action and thus a contributor to the creation of 'us' and 'them'. As for the manifestations of such discontinuities in self-identity, I draw on Goffman's (1963) notion of 'spoiled identity'[7] which briefly is the 'split' one senses between what they know they are associated with (a stigma symbol) and how they are demanded to behave as a

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[7] These experiences of mixed feelings of identity are similarly described as an 'identity dichotomy' or 'personal dilemmas of identity' (Eidheim, 1969, p.40, p.44); a 'continual identity conflict' (Becker, 1980, p.40); and 'a habitus divided against itself' or a 'fractured habitus' (Bourdieu, 1999, p.511; Sayer, 2005, pages 22-26).

non-stigmatized person in the presence of people who are 'normal' (Goffman, 1963, p.18). According to Goffman, 'normals' are "those who do not depart negatively from the particular expectations at issue" while stigma is "an undesired differentness from what we had anticipated" (Goffman, 1963, p.15). In a 'hearing world', then, the expectation is that everyone can hear and deafness, as a devalued deviation from this norm, is stigmatized.

Borrowing from Goffman (2007), I use the term 'career' here in its "broadened sense to refer to any social strand of any person's course through life ... with the *moral* aspect of career ... [being] the regular sequence of changes that career entails in the person's self and in [their] framework of imagery of judging himself and others" (Goffman, 2007, pages 127-128, original emphasis). According to Goffman, to have a 'similar moral career', then, means to have "similar learning experiences regarding their plight, and similar changes in conception of self", such as, for example, the issues experienced by deaf children and youth or their hearing mothers (Goffman, 1963, p.45). These shared moral careers of similarly stigmatized individuals, argues Goffman, begin with the two initial phases. The first phase includes the time where "the stigmatized person learns and incorporates the stand-point of the normal, acquiring thereby the identity beliefs of the wider society" (Ibid.). The second phase is experienced when they learn that they possess a particular (courtesy) stigma (Ibid.) This is also a time when the potential arises where they get to build new relationships with others like them. For deaf children, this could mean attending specialized events for families with a deaf pre-schooler or beginning a nursery or school with specialist provision for deaf children. For hearing mothers, this might include seeking out other mothers of deaf children. Goffman then describes that the "later phases" of one's moral career consists of "shifts of participation" or "affiliation cycles" and oscillations in identification with their "own", such as identifying with being 'deaf' or a 'hearing mother of a deaf child', or otherwise denying it (Goffman, 1963, pages 51-52).

In other words, it is important to draw attention to how a mother's "own response to deafness affect[s] the young persons' views about being deaf" (Atkin et al. 2002, p.26). Although the mothers and deaf school children discussed in this study are not related, in following a progression of chapters from initially looking at the perspectives and experiences of mothers of deaf children to then that of deaf students themselves, I aim to highlight the

impact of a parent's own moral career on their deaf child's prospective group affiliation preferences and, interrelatedly, their language choices. I encountered most of these deaf students at a time in their moral careers where they were willingly associating with other deaf peers around them. There were also instances, however, such as those observed with Nimali and Tuncay, who I introduce below and discuss throughout the study, where their group affiliation within their deaf bases appeared to be weak and in conflict with their stronger sense of attachment to their family. In terms of identification with their (often hearing) family members, this can at times lead to "competing identity claims" especially when the deaf youth, for example, are from minority ethnic backgrounds (Ibid., p.21). Emphasizing the possibility of 'multiple identifications' along with their situatedness is yet another aspect of deaf children and youth's learning trajectories consisting of various relations cultivated in different places with varying degrees of participation (ibid.). Cultural expectations of South Asian deaf youth to learn and maintain the family and ethnic values including the home language, for example, can be threatened by the involvement of the 'Deaf community' perceived to be 'largely white' and with links to 'Christian groups' by such families (Ibid., pages 23 and 37). However, contact with other deaf people made during deaf events also "helped them to legitimate their sense of deafness" (Ibid., p.35). These youths' preferences to attend South Asian Deaf clubs, therefore, seemed to be an effective conciliation strategy of their otherwise two potentially conflicting identities of being deaf and being South Asian (Ibid., p.37). Similarly, when discussing the case studies of two Asian Deaf adults' literacy and language acquisition success strategies, Wang et al. (2016) examine how these individuals manage to navigate their multicultural identity journeys as they become members of the deaf and hearing communities of their countries of origin and then the United States. Amongst other factors, both participants are noted to have been raised in supportive (middle-class) households as sites of "preservation of the home language heritage" and 'receptiveness' of deaf child's decision to relocate to the United States (Wang et al., 2016, p.78).

Finally, returning to the second main conceptual framework that I will engage with when looking at deaf children and youth's relationships and participation in various settings, I consider the ethnography of communication as a way to engage how language choice as social action communicates social information that in turn creates a sense of belonging,

intimacy and a sense of levelling among co-communicators, or distances them as being strangers or inexperienced others with different hierarchical statuses.

Within more recent studies of communication that are reflective of multilingual contexts, a growing emphasis is being placed on the multimodality of the communicative act (Kusters et al., 2017b. There has been an expansion, therefore, of the conceptualisation of interactions of meaning-making from narrower and more bounded notions such as 'language' or 'linguistic repertoire' (and associated terms such as 'competence', 'fluency' and 'proficiency') to include a wider spectrum of practices under 'semiotic repertoire' or 'communicative repertoire'— of which I will use the latter – along with descriptors such as 'development', 'multidimensional', 'decision-making', and 'creativity' (Kusters et al., 2017b Swanwick et al., 2016). To illustrate, in a study on deaf children's diverse language use, Swanwick et al. (2016) talk about how while some interlocutors may understand and use "some English" or may be "beginning to vocalise some English words and sounds", others use a mixture of two European sign languages (Swanwick et al., 2016). They then demonstrate how these deaf children make use of their individual communicative repertoires where various modalities are drawn on at different degrees of intensity and complexity to interact with those familiar to them such as their mothers or deaf friends (Ibid.)

As such, 'translanguaging' has been presented as a relevant analytical tool to capture these dynamic (and multimodal) uses and transformations of people's communicative repertoires, along with their limitations, in changing contexts and relationship sets (Busch, 2017; Kusters et al. 2017b. Some common examples of communicative resources in various modalities used simultaneously within communicative acts of translanguaging at both the productive and receptive levels have included various combinations of speaking, signing, sign systems, writing, drawing, reading, listening (technologies), watching, print, pictures, signage, screens, eye contact, gaze, pointing, gesturing, mouthing, fingerspelling, producing lip patters, lipreading, facial expressions, nodding, body movements, emotions, body orientation, posture, proxemics, objects, cultural resources, the environment, audience size, touching, smelling, tasting, and prelingual articulation (Swanwick et al., 2016; Kusters et al., 2017b; Busch, 2017; Holmström et al., 2015). Furthermore, depending on the function of the conversation, further relevant adjustments can be made to the pace, tone, rhythm, and the

register of, for example, speech, signing or fingerspelling as well as the degree of repetition and imitation involved. As another example, the form (handwritten or typed), legibility, and style of writing may vary depending on the decisions of interlocutors – an issue that I will further elaborate on when comparing my observations of different aspects of deaf students' schooling.

Furthermore, although translanguaging is a useful tool in better understanding how individuals are actively engaged in learning how to communicate with different people during various situations and how their communicative actions can be seen as reflections of their diverse experiences, it also highlights existing hierarchies of repertoires within certain contexts which are linked to controls over access (Kusters et al., 2017b). It is at this point that the two main theoretical strands of this study – participation in communities of practice and translanguaging – overlap. They both place importance on how (language) learning is accessed, especially between those who, positioned within a relation of power, may not share a common communicative repertoire. Due to the shared emphasis on the relational nature of learning, mutual engagement, familiarity, and 'communicative sensitivity' are crucial elements of increased participation and expanding knowledge (Lave and Wenger, 2003; Kusters et al., 2017b; Swanwick et al. 2016). As this study will highlight, therefore, during moments of interactions of deaf children and youth with hearing and deaf adults, only one interlocutor's efforts in translanguaging inevitably fall short in co-constructing meaning when the other presents a lack of collaboration, resulting in the impediment of understanding, expression, and participation.

I also draw from theories on 'code-switching' (Gumperz, 1972; Blom and Gumperz, 1972; Pride, 1971), and 'the restricted and elaborated codes' (Bernstein, 1972). Briefly, 'code-switching' is a "nonlexical communicative device" by which co-communicators selectively employ to provide and receive social information based on the demands of any given situation (Gumperz, 1972, pages 14-15; Blom and Gumperz, 1972, p.411). The 'restricted' and 'elaborate' codes developed by Bernstein (1972), on the other hand, are different ways of communicating depending on the relationship between the interlocutors where the restricted code is often used in ingroup situations and the elaborate code at times of inter-

group interaction. I also highlight the importance of 'funds of knowledge'[8] in the communicative process (Ernst-Slavit and Wenger, 2006; Moll et al., 1992) – which ties in with Lave and Wenger's (2003) discussions on "active knowledge" and how all knowledge is personal – and how it mediates intra- and inter-community relations such as in their differentiated evaluations of 'literacy' and (Street, 1993; Rockhill, 1993; Collins, 1995) and 'communication competence' (Duranti, 2001; Hymes, 2001).

3.2 Research questions

Located within this theoretical context, the anthropological questions that this study intends to investigate include:

➢ How do deaf children and youth navigate the various communities they come in to contact with and to what extent do their communicative preferences reflect their group affiliations?

➢ How do experiences of inclusion and exclusion influence deaf children and youth's language learning trajectories?

➢ What preconditions must be in place to enable access to a community prior to participation?

Guided by these central questions and informed by the relevant scholarly work and theoretical foundation pertinent to the analysis, this study examines how the role of language as a social factor in producing communities, such as forming boundaries between them, impact deaf children and youth's language learning experiences in terms of the communicative repertoires they develop.

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[8] Gumperz's (1981) notion of 'background knowledge' is a similar concept.

4. Methodology

4.1 My multi-sited fieldwork and participant observation

As an extension of my above-mentioned personal and academic interests, my initial anthropological research scope – including my time in the field – included the social, educational and work experiences of primarily deaf children, youth and adults who used BSL. As such, I conducted a multi-sited fieldwork, volunteering at various institutional locations across London where I knew I would be in contact with a group of deaf people and could carry out extended participant observation as part of the ethnographic method used to collect my primary field data. For the most part of my fieldwork year, I regularly visited these sites at least once or twice a week, which included two mainstream schools with Deaf Resource Bases, one primary and the other secondary (both of which I provide further descriptions below as the main two field sites of this study), a charity that supported deaf and hard of hearing adults (back) into employment by providing free 'employability', English literacy and IT skills, and a youth club for London's deaf youth who primarily communicated through BSL run by a national charity by and for deaf people. I also attended various events across London, typically in the evenings or over the weekends, targeting deaf BSL users such as tours and exhibitions at major national museums and galleries, regular social gatherings at local deaf clubs and more centrally-located pubs, as well as religious assemblies held at different faith-based institutions. For the purposes of this study, however, the focus has been the two schools with deaf provision.

During this time, I was also learning BSL, which I had started as soon as I began my doctoral programme in the Fall of 2012 and continued until the end of my fieldwork in the Fall of 2014 during which I progressed up to Level 3 which is roughly equivalent to an intermediary degree of proficiency. The courses – which also acted as field sites – were linked to a national accreditation programme which encouraged a somewhat standardized curriculum. Taught by native BSL users, the three different classes that I joined each averaged twelve learners and were mostly attended by working-aged hearing women. As for their motivation to learn, some of them came into regular contact with deaf BSL users as part of their role in the public sector, while others aspired to take upon such job positions. There were also a small number of

mothers of deaf children or children with communication difficulties. These mothers were self-funded and were driven to improve their communication with their child who was either already signing or the mother wished to teach what signing they learned to their child as well. It was as part of these BSL courses that I met some of my main interlocutors, mainly featuring in chapters One and Two, Irena and Gloria, who were mothers of deaf children from a minority ethnic background, as well as Aisha and through her Melika, her mother, also from a minority ethnic background. Further details regarding the interview process are provided below in the dedicated section.

As I already mentioned, my interest in how deaf children and youth navigate their different language choices inevitably led me to question when and in what way, if ever, deaf children and youth encountered deaf adult signers. In this respect, I realized it was important that I did not limit my research sites to institutions that catered to a single generation of deaf people. As I knew I would find deaf children and youth in schools and deaf adults in deaf clubs, with locations that catered to both being rare, I knew I needed to embark on a multi-sited research in order to identify points of contact, if any.

By doing multi-sited fieldwork between schools with deaf children and youth, and other institutions and settings that catered to deaf adults, I have been in effect using "[s]trategies of quite literally following connections, associations, and putative relationships [which] are thus at the very heart of designing multi-sited ethnographic research" (Marcus, 1995, p.97). Although this study is more about deaf children and youth and the places they frequent, it is nonetheless strongly informed by the field data I have gathered from working with deaf adults most of whom were BSL users. In this sense, I am in agreement with Marcus (1995) who added that "[t]o bring these sites into the same frame of study and to posit their relationships on the basis of first-hand ethnographic research in both is the important contribution of this kind of ethnography, regardless of the variability of the quality and accessibility of that research at different sites" (Ibid., p.100)

4.2 Selection of schools as field sites

As I was preparing to enter the field during the summer of 2013, I identified the primary and secondary schools across London that provided specialist deaf provision, either as a specialist school or as a mainstream school with a dedicated Deaf Resource Base. As I wanted to enter a "hierarchically organized community" I called each school to further identify the most senior designated person for this provision (Bernard, 2006, p.357). I then addressed my letter of intent to them personally to increase my chances of getting a response. I followed this formal procedure with emails to the school as well as, when seen necessary, phone calls – both of which had to go through the main reception to then directed to the relevant persons. As such, I found that having a good rapport with the school reception team by addressing them by name and using them as my main information source instead of repeating myself each time I made contact with the school was a professional and effective way of securing their cooperation and ultimately getting them to encourage the designated staff to reply to my inquiries.

The responses were varied. In my letter to the schools, I had mentioned my BSL training. This might have been interpreted by some schools' designated staff as my chosen 'orientation' in deaf education towards 'total communication' or bi-lingual/bi-cultural education (both of which used BSL albeit differently), as opposed to oral provision. Some schools, especially special schools – all of which had a philosophy of English/BSL bilingualism – recommended that I further improve my BSL skills and reapply. At the time, I had only completed my Level 1 course and was getting ready to continue with Level 2, which was the minimum entry requirement for staff and volunteers for some schools and higher for others. They were also accustomed to accepting volunteers to work with their deaf students as these educational sites were in high demand by, for example, further or higher education students who needed to complete their work placements as part of their courses. Some other schools known for their oral provision, on the other hand, recommended that I approach schools that did make use of BSL which was not a priority for them. By taking an interest in BSL but not being sufficiently proficient in it, it seemed, I had limited my entry into the field to a particular type of 'deaf provision' and I was, in a sense, "asked to side with that faction" (Ibid.). In fact, I was welcomed by several mainstream schools with Deaf Resource Bases. These schools had a

'total communication' approach with their deaf students, which in theory could incorporate multiple communication methods that worked for each deaf student such as English (through amplification), BSL, fingerspelling, lipreading, and sign systems such as Sign Supported English (SSE)[9], Signed English[10] and cued speech[11] (Hayashi and Tobin, 2015; Doherty, 2012b; Deuchar, 1984). Furthermore, as to the use of the national sign language as part of the total communication approach, what Stewart (1992) reported for American Sign Language in the US – that it is promoted but not necessarily used by teachers proficiently and in significant numbers – is also reflective of the use of BSL within the total communication ethos as it applies to the British educational context. Stewart's (1992) statement from over twenty-five years ago that since its introduction in the US in the 1960s, there has been a "lack of clarity in the implementation of total communication" and "lack of linguistic consistency" could be said to be also applicable to the UK context today (Stewart, 1992, pages 68 and 69, respectively). In the end, my final two field locations, described below, reflected the 'in-between' status ascribed to me by the various schools with deaf provision – away from English monolingualism and not quite an English/BSL bilingual – as they too, at least in practice and at varying extents, catered to specialist staff and deaf students with similar actual or potential communicative repertoires. In the end I began volunteering at Appletree Primary School (one day a week) and Hallsbury Secondary School (two regular days and sometimes more) because their gatekeepers were the quickest to respond to my request to join their team. As the school year had already started and I had limited time in the field, I was satisfied with my options. Furthermore, with their obvious differences in terms of type of provision and age cohorts of their deaf students, these two schools allowed me to conduct my multi-sited research intentions described above.

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[9] Other similar terms used are 'sign-supported speech' as noted by Marshall & Hobsbaum (2015) or 'SimCom' – short for Simultaneous Communication – as it is more widely used in the US (Swanwick, 2010).

[10] Further explanations on SSE and Sign English are provided in Chapter Two.

[11] "Cued Speech has been viewed as a compromise between the oral and manual approaches, though it does not use sings to represent ideas, but rather a system of hand positions and configurations which are designed to disambiguate sounds which appear similar on the lips" (Deuchar, 1984, p.37)

4.3 Appletree Primary School[12] and Hallsbury Secondary School – two mainstream schools with Deaf Resource Bases

Located in one of the many multicultural boroughs of London, Appletree Primary School and Hallsbury Secondary school were mainstream schools with student populations of around 500 and 1,000, respectively, that reflected the areas they were located in. Most of the students – including deaf students – were from a minority ethnic background where the heritage language was used at home on its own or along with English. All of the Deaf Resource Base students (or the 'base' as my interlocutors referred to it) had a 'Statement' of Special Educational Needs[13] for their disability ('hearing impairment') which meant that they were assessed by a team of specialists appointed by the Local Education Authority (LEA) and qualified for a legally binding special education provision with individual funding. This provision included an individual annual budget and a written statement that detailed the type of individualized support to be provided to meet their needs (Child Law Advice, 2016). The main difference between the bases at Appletree and Hallsbury, apart from one being a primary school and the other secondary, was that each had a different communication policy. Appletree's base was described by its staff as being a 'total communication' provision, while Hallsbury's communication ethos was termed as being 'oral' by its base staff. A more dedicated explanation of these different communication policies and practices is provided in Chapter Three.

Each school's own base was well established and had dedicated soundproof rooms with resources such as interactive whiteboards in some rooms. Both bases also had regular whiteboards with the dry-erase markers that staff and students made frequent use of as part of a lesson. At Hallsbury Secondary School's base, moreover, these markers were also readily available for the deaf students during their break periods which they used to draw and (bubble) write with. In addition, Appletree Primary School's base rooms included an abundance of age-appropriate colourful visual aids covering the walls, as well as relevant objects to be used as communication aids, such as stuffed animals. Hallsbury Secondary School's base rooms, on the other hand, had plenty of English dictionaries, a daily copy of the

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[12] All people and place names as well as any other numerical information that could be used as their identifiers have been changed in order to protect my interlocutors' right to confidentiality.
[13] An Education, Health Care Plan (EHCP) since September 2014.

free city newspaper used as a conversation tool, a world map on the wall of one of the base rooms and laptops for the exclusive use of base students to carry out supplementary work or play educational games to improve their literacy and maths skills. More detailed spatial descriptions of the two bases are provided in Chapter Three.

The bases catered for around twenty deaf students each studying across the different school years: a non-compulsory nursery school (ages 3 to 4) and the following compulsory Years Reception[14] - Year 6 (ages 4 to 11) at Appletree and Years 7-12 (ages 12 to 17) at Hallsbury. They were all 'mainstreamed', i.e. they joined their hearing peers in regular classrooms, however, for varying durations during the school day they had supplementary tutorials or all or part of their actual lessons in the base, also described as the 'mixed approach' (Powers, 2002). As such, the deaf students at both schools were supported by a substantial specialized staff that worked with them in their mainstream classes as well as in the base. At Hallsbury, for example, while some went to their mainstream classes for most of their lessons and only returned to the base to complete their assignments or receive preparatory or follow-up support on their English literacy skills related to a current lesson or to spend their break times there, others only left the base for a single, often more practical, mainstream lesson such as cooking or Art and Design, while carrying out most of their other core subject such as English, Maths and Science at the base under the instruction of either one of their Teachers of the Deaf (TODs) or Learning Support Assistants (LSAs). Although I also participated in mainstream classes along with some deaf students, I spent most of my time at Hallsbury in the base with three Year 11 students – Nimali, Tuncay and Taahir – who attended a majority of their lessons in the base. The base team consisted of an all-hearing core team of two TODs – Miss Collins and Mr. Sodhi – and nine LSAs of whom eight were females. For the most part I worked with Saiqa and Kimberly. Saiqa was Asian[15] and Kimberly was Black. As for the rest of the LSAs, two were White, one was Black and the others were Asian. Additionally, as a deaf BSL Instructor Mr. David (whom I introduced earlier), visited the school once a week to teach a group of

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[14] Reception is the first year of formal schooling attended by children aged four and five.
[15] The term 'Asian' is used as it is applied by the Office for National Statistics as an aggregated category to include "Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Chinese and Other", 'Black' "includes Black African, Caribbean, and Other", and 'White' "includes White British, Irish, Gypsy or Irish Traveller, and Other" (ONS, 2011). Furthermore, in agreement with Atkin et al. (2002), I note that these terms "are largely a British construction" (Atkin et al., 2002, p.42, notes #1).

base students BSL. He self-identified as being a BSL user and had chosen not to use any hearing technologies. Similarly, a Speech and Language Therapist, Susan, appointed by the LEA also visited the base once a week to carry out one-to-one sessions with some of the deaf students. As far as I could observe, she did use some signing with a particular student, but I did not inquire about the actual level of her signing skills. None of Hallsbury's core base staff except one had any qualification in BSL. Maya, who was soon to be qualified at the advanced Level 6, had done so while working with deaf adults and not as a requirement of her current role as an LSA. As for the two TODs, both had completed only the beginner's Level 1 in BSL as part of their TOD trainings more than a decade ago. Furthermore, neither of them felt the need to improve their BSL skills with further training, since they both reported that their role as TODs in an oral setting meant that the students could access speech, although differently from their hearing peers.

At Appletree, on the other hand, all the Reception base students were again mostly mainstreamed and were removed from their classrooms to receive supplementary literacy and maths sessions before and after a new topic was introduced, either as one-on-one or as part of a small group in one of the Reception base rooms. The older deaf students at Appletree had their own dedicated base rooms and staff, which I rarely visited. The base team of Appletree was made up of four TODs and eight specialist TAs. Three of the TODs – all White females – were hearing whom I've observed signing in BSL, SSE and Signed English in different contexts and one TOD was deaf (also White female) who used her voice and signed. Because I was placed to work mainly with the Reception deaf students, ages four and five, I mostly interacted with one TOD – Miss Ann – and four of the specialist TAs – Hussam, Shazia, Mary, and Nesima. Mary was White while Hussam, Shazia and Nesima were Asian. Hussam said that he had completed Level 3 in his BSL learning, while Mary was trying to enrol on a BSL Level 1 course and Nesima was learning BSL from the visiting deaf BSL Instructor to the school as part of the staff training. Although I saw Shazia sign in BSL, I could not verify her level of signing. They specifically worked solely with the six Reception deaf students split between two mainstream classrooms as well as Padma who was attending the school's nursery for ages three and four, jointly called the Foundation Stage. Hakan, Mahmoud and Jamal were in one classroom while Zubeyde, Zeyneb and Bilal were in the other. Similar to Hallsbury, the base also had a visiting deaf BSL Instructor and a Speech and Language Therapist, neither of whom

I met due to the different days we attended the school. Further background information is provided below on the two school's deaf student population in general followed by profiles of those deaf students that feature the most in this study.

Ethical approval for this research was granted by the Brunel University Research Ethics Committee prior to entering the field sites. I also referenced the Ethical Guidelines set by the Association of Social Anthropologists to guide my conduct while doing field work. Permission to enter the schools as sites of research was obtained from the Head TOD at each school who had also consulted with the school principals. When at the schools (and other field locations), I prioritised ethnographic methods of participant observation and informal interviews. The latter was in the form of conversations with those that I came into contact with as part of the school day, as and when I saw appropriate. I took my initial field notes in the form of brief notes during suitable momentary withdrawals from the social scene, when transitioning between field sites, or when it was appropriate for me to make use of my mobile phone while in public. I then typed all my notes in detail at the end of each day. During the analysis phase following the exit from the field sites, I read all my extensive fieldnotes and identified patterns and themes. These then formed the core of the writing and were supported by the incorporation of relevant theories afterwards.

Next, I will discuss the general characteristics of the deaf students of these two schools, followed by more detailed profiles for those who appear the most throughout the study.

4.4 Background information on deaf students and profiles of key interlocutors

As described above, research into deaf people's lives around the world has become increasingly more reflective of the very different ways of being deaf, both today and in the past. As such, it is crucial that I outline the general characteristics and differences among the deaf students whose relationships with deaf and hearing adults familiar to them are discussed at length in this study, especially through Chapters Three to Five.

a) Degree, onset and duration of hearing loss and additional disabilities

As part of my overall interest in the implications of deafness on communication preference and its subsequent effects on group membership, I was more oriented towards working with deaf children and youth who – due to their shared 'special education needs' – could not be placed at their local mainstream school and instead often attended designated mainstream schools in groups further away from their place of residency which they often commuted to using a taxi service funded by the LEA (BATOD, 2004). As my fieldwork observations further indicated, however, each deaf child's circumstances are different and thus their communicative repertoires are by no means predetermined by the type of their deafness. Specifically, at both Appletree's Reception class as well as Hallsbury, all deaf students had severe or profound deafness. Nonetheless, most of those in Hallsbury had more developed speech reception and production skills than the Reception students at Appletree, of whom most displayed a strong tendency to express themselves using BSL or SSE rather than through speech when interacting among themselves or with their hearing peers as well as the base staff. Apart from the obvious age difference, other circumstance such as age of onset and degree of deafness (including it being single or two-sided) and the individual results of using hearing technologies could have been influential factors. Moreover, as far as I was informed, none of the deaf students had been formally diagnosed with additional disabilities, although the specialist staff had suspected that some of their deaf students had other 'special educational needs' linked to the possible presence of a Global Developmental Delay, which is a diagnosis "applied when the child does not meet the developmental milestones expected in the different areas of human development" such as motor skills, communication, and social interaction (Williams, 2010, cited in Dornelas et. al. 2016, p.1041). However, unless they were formally given this general term, any official specialist support in this regard was not made available.

Furthermore, by choosing to focus my attention on the collective deaf student experiences within designated mainstream schools with provision for deaf students with special educational needs, I consequently had less contact with deaf students who for various reasons were fully mainstreamed at their local schools dispersed across London, as well as deaf students who attended special schools. Both the Appletree and Hallsbury cohorts were

born during a period where most local authorities have been favouring mainstreaming students with special educational needs. As we shall see, the fact that all deaf students in this study went to day schools and thus returned to their home at the end of the school day is significant in terms of their sense of belonging and identification.

b) Family of origin and socioeconomic status

All of the deaf students at Appletree Primary School and Hallsbury Secondary School had hearing families. Furthermore, for the majority of them, they were the only deaf child in their families with one or more siblings. Two sets of deaf siblings at Hallsbury were the exception. It is widely reported that 90% of all deaf children are born to hearing families with no prior experience with deafness (Flaherty, 2015; NDCS, 2017a). As such, and as we shall see later in the study, in relation to group membership and language choices, having a hearing family presents different dynamics, as opposed to deaf children with (a) deaf parent(s) or deaf adult relatives and thus some familiarity as to how to relate to a deaf person. Furthermore, that these deaf students continued to live with their families is indicative of the existence of at least some basic level of domestic accommodation of their various needs as children, since it is known that some deaf children are currently living in care homes under the responsibility of their local authorities (NDCS, 2011).

As for the socioeconomic status of the parents of the deaf students attending Appletree Primary School and Hallsbury Secondary School, while I didn't carry out systematic research on this subject, a high proportion of both schools' student population qualified for free school meals indicating that the deaf students I worked with were most likely also among this group of students from socio-economically disadvantaged families. Students who are eligible for free school meals are known to be among the poorest, often from families with unemployed parent(s), and since "the 1980 Education Act … it became a statutory duty for local authorities to provide free school meals for all children whose parents were in receipt of State supplementary benefit or income support" (Taylor, 2017, p.3). As Paul (2016) has stated, "the condition of poverty might also contribute to the impoverished language and literacy environment of the home" (Paul, 2016, p.4). As such, their family's socio-economic status

plays an important role in deaf students' experiences of learning. As Cockayne (2003), who researched deaf people in British history, reminds us during the early modern period "the opportunities for the aristocratic prelingually deaf seemed to be little hampered by their disability", giving examples of some becoming 'fine painters' and known to be 'civil', indicating the long existing "class differences in the experience of prelingual deafness" (Cockayne, 2003, pages 509 and 510, respectively).

c) Ethnicity, home language, religion and gender

All Appletree's Foundation stage students were from minority ethnic families with Asian or Turkish heritage and were all born in the UK. The older deaf students at Appletree had Asian and Black heritage. All except one of the students at Hallsbury were from minority ethnic families (Asian or Turkish). While some of them were born in the UK, others had moved to the UK within the last two to five years. Because the focus of this study is to look at the various linguistic communities that deaf children and youth belong to as a result of being deaf, the ethnic group membership of my deaf interlocutors have not been prioritized. Instead I regard it as being one of such potential communities which indeed contributed to the complexity of the subject matter without diverting from it. It is, nonetheless, important to briefly discuss the implication of working with a 'double-minority' group.

One of the most obvious implications is the potential discrepancy between the spoken language used at home and that of the school. I tackle this issue in relevant parts of the chapters that follow, as they directly link with one of the focuses of this study, namely the ethnography of communication. It is worth noting that due to the location of my research – the multicultural metropolis of London – ethnic diversity stands more as the norm than the exception, both among the deaf and hearing student populations as well as the staff of both schools. As such, as my analysis is about the interrelationship between language choice and group membership in general, my interlocutors' home language forms one such 'language community', adding an additional layer of complexity to their communicative experiences. These collective experiences of belonging to non-English speaking or bilingual families and as an extension of it to minority ethnic groups, therefore, contrast with the school-based social

interaction of, for example, deaf students raised in an English monolingual family – a category which some of my adult deaf interlocutors belonged to.

Furthermore, for those deaf students who started school in London as a result of moving to the UK it means that especially for those deaf students who entered the British educational system at an older age, like their hearing peers with similar circumstances, they also had to adjust to the new ways of being a 'student' in general, all the while learning both the colloquial and Standard English simultaneously as 'English as an Additional Language' (EAL) students. I will further examine this additional status in relation to deaf students' learning and participation in school life in Chapter Three.

Overall, it is apparent that the experiences of the middle-class White British-English deaf person, for example, are expected to be significantly different from a low-income immigrant deaf person from an ethnic minority, who may or may not have British citizenship, regardless of their similarity in, for instance, identifying with being 'Deaf' and having a shared preferred communication method such as BSL. Although this study is not a comparative study of deaf people's experiences from different socio-economic and ethnic backgrounds, highlighting my own interlocutors' multiple identities beyond that which is centred around being 'deaf' and thus contextualizing the 'deaf experience' is critical in drawing attention to the many ways deaf identities are socially constructed.

In addition, based on my observations, some deaf students, especially a group of youth at Hallsbury, had adopted the religious faith (Islam or Christianity) of their parents and were somewhat active participants in their respective religious communities. As my research focus was on identifying deaf people's various affiliations along communication preferences, however, I have not expanded on this issue in this study. Furthermore, although I had equal access to both male and female students in the sense that both Appletree and Hallsbury were mixed schools with their base having both male and female students, I interacted more with male students at Appletree and mostly with the female students at Hallsbury. At Appletree, I spent most of my time with three deaf boys who were together in one of the two Reception classes. These boys therefore became more comfortable around me a lot more quickly compared to the two deaf girls in the other class who I saw a lot less of. At Hallsbury, on the

other hand, a group of female students who liked socializing in the base were also eager to talk to members of staff including myself and did not mind if I was around when they were chatting amongst themselves. They were, for example, more vigilant when Mr. Sodhi entered the room, most likely both because he was male and also more of an authority figure than the rest of the base staff. As for the male students, some were willing to engage with me both in class and during break times while others who did not come to the base as often because they mainly had mainstream lessons did not initiate contact with me and instead carried on doing their school work or hang out with their hearing friends while at the base. I also observed the influence of gender roles among deaf students' socialization patterns, as deaf girls tended to be best friends with other deaf girls, while deaf boys hung out more with other deaf boys. For similar reasons as to my lack of analytical attention on ethnicity, however, I have not structured this study's analysis around the issue of gender or religion specifically and instead prioritized the everyday communication practices deaf children and young people made use of as they interacted with people around them including those at their respective schools.

d) Cohort group and hearing technologies

Nakamura (2006), who studied "three generations of deaf people in Japan and how the shifting political, social, and educational environment of the last century shaped their lives", shows how a certain age cohort can affect every aspect of deaf people's lives (Nakamura, 2006, p.2). Among such 'cohort' experiences she lists birth year (i.e. pre- or post-war), type of school available in a given era (special school for the deaf or mainstreaming), and size of the cohort (Nakamura, 2006).

Similarly, there are some differences between the deaf students at Appletree's Reception class and Hallsbury in terms of how their cohort group shapes their collective experiences. At the ages between three and five, all the Foundation Stage deaf students at Appletree Primary School, for example, had been among those babies whose deafness was identified very early on. Babies born in the UK since 2001 have been assessed for hearing loss at around four to five weeks of age as part of the NHS Newborn Hearing Screening Programme (NHS, 2013).

Since 2001, it has screened more than five million babies of which almost nine thousand have been identified with some degree of hearing loss (Ibid.). On a yearly basis, it is estimated that around nine hundred babies are born in the UK with a permanent hearing loss (NHS, 2013). The experiences of these deaf babies growing up in twenty-first century England are historically unprecedented. During no other time in British history, then, has a cohort of deaf individuals been identified and thus defined as being deaf from birth as it is for those born post-2001. Furthermore, in terms of the hearing technologies concerned, all the Reception deaf students had started school with cochlear implants[16], and the Head TOD had informed me that more and more of their older deaf students were also going through the surgery to get implanted. According to the NHS, "There are currently around 11,000 people in the UK with cochlear implants and the number is increasing each year" (Patient, 2017).

The deaf youth of Hallsbury Secondary School, on the other hand, shared a more common experience of being diagnosed 'late' – which means anything from age two to early teens – either in the UK or in their country of origin. They were more likely to be hearing aid wearers, using the most current hearing aids available on the NHS which are 'BTE' (behind-the-ear) hearing aids[17], although some also had cochlear implants. For example, their different shapes and location on the body made them more or less visible with associated social and bodily implications as they can be seen, for example, as a social marker of difference or felt as a source of discomfort. In addition, each hearing technology produces different sensations for their users, not only in terms of how much they could hear through them as well as the quality of the sound and thus each cohort's relation to sound and most importantly spoken language, but also as everyday objects that are worn and thus felt on their bodies.

Following this description of broader characteristics of deaf students at the two school sites, below is a brief summary of three deaf students whose use of individual communicative repertoires and related community memberships are key to this study. It is important to note,

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[16] A "cochlear implant is an electronic device that is surgically implanted in the inner ear (where the cochlea is located) to help the individual regain hearing by directly stimulating the hearing nerve" (Fjord, 1996, p.66).

[17] According to NHS Choices website "Behind the ear (BTE) hearing aids are the most common type. They're made up of a small plastic device that sits behind your ear. This is attached with a tube to a piece of plastic that fits in your ear (an ear mould) or a soft tip that goes into the opening of your ear (an open fitting). BTE hearing aids are one of the easiest types to use and are suitable for most people with hearing loss. They're available in a range of colours." NHS (2017b)

however, that in addition to these three students, numerous other deaf children and youth, and their perspectives and experiences, are also discussed in this study. While they will be introduced in due course, it is important to note that all of them were at varying ages and at a different stage in their learning trajectories and membership journeys.

4.5 Profiles of key deaf students

<u>Nimali</u>

Nimali, aged 14, was a Year 10 student and when I met her in 2014, she was in her second year at Hallsbury Secondary School. She had moved to the UK with her mother and older brother in 2012 from South India and was not given a school placement straightaway. Although the reasons for this were not verified, it may be related to Nimali's deafness and that often the LEA's search for an appropriate school place follows a lengthy assessment period. At the time of the research, BSL or spoken English were not yet part of Nimali's communication repertoires. She did not use Indian Sign Language either, although earlier exposure to it was not verified. She reported that she often watched Indian movies with Tamil subtitles, although her proficiency level was not verified. She voluntarily wore hearing aids, although her level of access to spoken language was unclear. She often communicated in written English, which she had learned at school, as reported by the base staff and confirmed by Nimali. She frequently sought reassurance about what she had written though, which she often copied from a text after skimming for the answer. In India, Tamil and English were spoken at her home and community. There, Nimali attended a regular mainstream school, however the level of deaf provision provided, if any, was not verified. Nimali often talked about how she missed her friends back in India, which she expressed through gesturing, facial expressions and some BSL. She began to quickly develop her BSL skills from a deaf BSL Instructor who visited the school base once a week for this purpose. Her use of BSL was mainly limited to the base, and a reluctance to engage in BSL out of the base during the school day was observed. The base staff had reported that Nimali's mother did not want her to sign, which was not verified. Nimali also used drawing as part of her communication repertoire, was skilled at computing, and relied on observations when in social situations that were less engaging.

Tuncay

Tuncay, aged 15, was in Year 10 at Hallsbury Secondary school. He lived in London with his parents, brothers and sister. They had moved to the UK four years ago from Turkey. His deafness was diagnosed in the UK, so he was given hearing aids at the end of primary school. When he was transferred to Hallsbury as part of his special educational needs provision, he had refused to wear them. Neither his family (mainly father) nor himself wanted him to be part of the Deaf Support Base and were trying to push for him to be mainstreamed again. As a result, Tuncay was not accepting of being a base student and left the base whenever he could, such as during break times, which was also when he socialized with other (hearing) Turkish boys. Before Hallsbury, he had attended a local mainstream school which, as Tuncay reported, had a big Turkish student population and where he had a lot of friends. The base staff, however, had stated that he was bullied there for his deafness. Tuncay preferred to speak Turkish and for that reason he had often asked for me to work with him. As far as I could observe, he had clear and complex speech as well as understanding in Turkish. He had begun using English since he had arrived in the UK.

Hakan

Hakan, aged five, had been attending Appletree Primary School since the age of three where he first started at the school's nursery. Prior to that, he had also attended a specialist nursery with part-time deaf provision where he was introduced to BSL. He had two cochlear implants and was attentive to sounds such as music. At school, he was exposed to spoken and written English, BSL, and sign systems such as SSE and Signed English. He had Turkish heritage and Turkish was spoken at home. He often used a combination of signing and speech (in the combined form of English and Turkish words) to communicate. He enjoyed playing on the computers at school, which required him to copy printed passwords onto the screen which he did independently.

4.6 Interviewing as a crucial ethnographic method and insights from deaf adults and hearing mothers

In line with the multi-sited approach, I have engaged the ethnographic method of interviewing as a crucial phase in this anthropological study as it presented an effective means to include those key actors within the specialized "educational context" which formed the "central focus" of this educational ethnography – albeit not necessarily physically present in it – such as mothers of deaf children (both school-aged and in adulthood at the time this study was conducted) and deaf adults with prior experiences and an interest in deaf education from a parental or ex-student perspective, respectively (Bernier, 1981, p.291). Regarding the place of mothers within this 'context', Bernier (1981) "identifies individuals-in-relationship" whose transactions "reflect predispositions which individuals have brought to the face-to-face interaction" (Ibid., p.293 and 292, respectively). These predispositions, or 'ideologies', or 'belief systems', are "socially learned complex systems" which are "internalized in early childhood and developed throughout their lifetime" (Ibid., p.293). While analysing the student-teaching staff interaction taking place at school (discussed mostly in Chapters Three to Five), for example, through the data gained from participant observation, I was mindful that the deaf students' early socialization primarily within the family preceded this new type of personal relationship. To gain a more holistic understanding of how deaf students' communicative repertoires formed, therefore, I was mindful of what was "absent, operating or resonating in the background, and therefore also intentionally or unintentionally present: relevant others" (Busch, 2017, p.355). Therefore, in order to better account for the "predeveloped systems of meanings which may effect new meanings created in new contexts" that deaf students brought with them to these interactions, I also wove in data gathered from interviews with mothers of mostly school-aged deaf children (presented mainly in Chapters One and Two) as methodological insights to then "be analysed as part of the [teaching staff-student] transaction" (Bernier, 1981, p.292).

Regarding conducting interviews with deaf adults, the purpose was to have comparative data on two different cohorts' (one's past and one's present) childhood experiences of home and school life. I had also hoped to learn more about the overarching past and present institutional processes and ideologies that shaped everyday practices involving deaf

participants and that were not necessarily talked about as part of the day-to-day conversations at the places I volunteered or visited and where deaf adults frequented. For example, unlike the current nation-wide programme's comprehensiveness in diagnosing deafness from birth, previously – as my adult deaf interlocutors commented – diagnosing deafness by chance was more the norm than an exception. An article from the late 1960s describing a nurse's role (as the health representative acting as the contact point for the public) in diagnosing deafness, for example, lists several clues to look out for, as well as the decoding skills necessary to become aware of a variety of cases of concerned parents that may then lead to such a diagnosis (Moore, 1969). I share some personal stories told by some deaf adults regarding their own diagnosis in Chapter One. Religious identity was also a cause of sociality among many of my adult deaf interlocutors. In addition, most of my adult deaf interlocutors either continued to use hearing aids throughout their lives, although selectively, or did not use any hearing technologies at all, abandoning them after finishing school as a result of not benefitting from them during schooling. Historically cochlear implants were not available to them when they were younger, with only some being eligible to have the implant under the NHS in adult age. There are, nonetheless, a growing number of deaf adults with cochlear implants (Dr. Annelies Kusters, personal communication, 15 February 2018). In terms of experiences of schooling, my deaf adult interlocutors' experiences were predominantly based at one of the many residential schools for the deaf located in the English countryside or cities other than London which have since been gradually closing down. Across the centuries, these schools made up a distinct form of deaf education that many of my adult deaf interlocutors shared in common as places where they first learned sign language from their peers and formed lifelong friendships.

As part of the research, which had a broader scope when initially planned to look at the educational, work and social experiences of deaf children and adults, I conducted 52 semi-structured interviews with 53 interlocutors (of which one was a joint interview with a deaf adult and her hearing mother). I dedicated the end of my one-year field work mainly to these interviews to coincide with the summer holidays for the schools. Out of these, 23 interviews were with deaf adults – 8 females and 18 males – who self-identified as being 'deaf' and preferred to use BSL with me except for one interviewee who preferred to use his voice and therefore we conducted the interview in English. Half of the interviewees were White while

the other half were from a Black or minority ethnic background. I also conducted one interview with a deafened male and two adult males who self-identified as being hard of hearing, all in English. All interviews in BSL were video recorded and those in English were voice recorded. The average duration for an interview was 90 minutes. I had already met seven of them during my field work as part of my participation in various deaf social or cultural events taking place across London, through my BSL courses, or as part of my volunteering at a charity supporting deaf adults back into employment. I therefore had the opportunity to build a cordial relationship with each of them prior to the interviews. I contacted the rest of the interviewees as part of my outreaching to deaf adults currently in employment again either through meeting them at a deaf event or in the field or through the various contacts I made or social media groups I joined during my fieldwork. All my interlocutors were in employment (one of whom was the deaf BSL Instructor at Hallsbury), except for one who was a recent college graduate, and the other a university graduate who was unemployed. Half of the interviewees – who were all in their fifties – had been to residential schools for the deaf, while the other half (ages ranging from early twenties to forties) had attended a mainstream school with deaf provision near their home.

Additionally, I also conducted a group interview at Hallsbury with three female deaf students in English in a quiet base room under the TOD's supervision. I obtained permission for this interview from the Head TOD as well as individually from each student after explaining the purpose of the interview and my role as a researcher. As any recordings of the students were not permitted, I took brief notes during the group interview and then elaborated on them afterwards. I acknowledge that due to issues related to TODs, acting as my gatekeepers, not allowing any formal interviews with their deaf students due to the busy school days has influenced the type of data collected. Furthermore, the Head TOD at Appletree Primary School was very restrictive in terms of the type of access I had to the Reception deaf students. She only allowed me to be with them during the school day and refused my request to make contact with their parents or to attend any meetings with the parents at the school.

Furthermore, I also conducted 26 interviews with hearing adults, four of which I took notes during the interview and the rest of which were voice recorded. Most (20) of the interviewees were females and they were either stakeholders in matters related to deaf people accessing

services and opportunities such as education, employment, welfare, community services and broader access issues, or they were learning BSL. Briefly, their backgrounds were: three mothers of deaf children, three TODs (of whom two were based at Hallsbury), a youth worker at a deaf youth club who also had deaf parents, six BSL learners of various levels who were either providing services to deaf individuals as part of their current employment or intended to work with deaf people in the future, a qualified interpreter, two church interpreters, a manager at a nursery with provision for deaf children, two managers responsible for supporting groups of deaf students at further education institutions, an ESOL (English as a Second Language) teacher who was teaching deaf adults seeking to go back into employment, two union representative that had deaf colleagues, a local deaf club co-organiser, a coordinator of an access to the arts project targeting BSL users, an academic working with the deaf community, and a representative of an institution providing accreditation to BSL courses. The average duration of the interviews were 60 minutes, while the interviews with the mothers were all 2-hours long.

I obtained consent from all interviewees by briefing them about my overall research scope in their preferred language both when inviting them for an interview and before starting the interview. I also offered to email them a copy of my research description which I had prepared for distribution, and I shared with those who requested it. Prior to starting the interview, I also checked if they had any further questions regarding the purpose of the interview. I also ensured that they had my contact details if they had any queries or concerns in the future. All names are pseudonyms to protect the interviewees' confidentiality. Additionally, for the video recordings, I ensured the interviewees that they were for research purposes only, that they would not be distributed in any way, and that only myself would be watching them again to obtain transcripts. Although my BSL receptive and productive skills were at an intermediary level (Level 3) at the time of the interviews where BSL was used, I am aware that my interlocutors had most likely adjusted their BSL use to accommodate me such as by signing slower or mouthing more. Furthermore, although the English translations of interviews in BSL used in this study have been carefully transcribed, using a second independent transcriber to assess reliability would have been beneficial. General themes were drawn from the interviews as part of the analysis process and incorporated into the study to provide historical background and a comparative perspective.

As the second significant interview group, background information of the four mothers of deaf children with whom I became acquainted through my fieldwork, three of whom I also formally interviewed, is provided below.

<u>Black and Minority Ethnic hearing mothers of deaf children</u>

When I envisioned reaching out to hearing families of deaf children during the preparation phase of this study, I did not expect to engage predominantly with mothers. They seemed to be present, though, at my various field sites to a much greater extent than fathers. Irena and Gloria were learning BSL[18] with me, and we had also all attended several other training sessions together. Hatice and Melika were introduced to me during casual visits to two of my adult deaf friends' homes, Damla and Aisha, respectively. Aisha lived alone with her mother, since her father had passed away several years ago. As for Damla, although she often talked about her father, because he was away at work at the time of my day visits, I became acquainted only with her mother and siblings. Furthermore, during my interviews with Irena and Gloria, they too both mentioned how a greater responsibility to provide for their families fell onto their husbands alone since the birth of their deaf son. They reported how this was because as mothers of young deaf children, they had to go to many hospital and speech and language therapy appointments, which meant that they could not easily commit to being in employment. Moreover, in comparison to their subsequent hearing child, Gloria and Irena also emphasized how they felt they had to invest more one-on-one time with their deaf son in order to support their overall development including language acquisition. The work of Gregory (1995), which is a result of interviews with 122 hearing mothers of young deaf children, also presents similar findings where "[o]verall, parents of these deaf children were continually stressing the importance of play for the children's general development. Many mothers spent a great deal of time playing with their deaf child" (Gregory, 1995, p.28).

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[18] Atkin et al. (2002) also noted how in their study "mothers […] were more likely to learn BSL than fathers" (Atkin et al., 2002, p.30).

As a result of the frequency of my encounters with these mothers, I was able to learn more about their experiences raising a deaf child (or children) as well as build trust with them. This would enable me to later on more formally interview Irena, Gloria and Melika (in a joint interview with Aisha) and to talk to Hatice about her experiences of being a mother of deaf children during several casual conversations. Furthermore, I had also observed mothers to be the main contacts with the two schools I volunteered at, either when they arrived to pick up their child or when they wrote in the home-school communication books designated for Appletree Primary School's deaf students in Reception, and also during one instance at Hallsbury Secondary School when a phone call had to be made to home. More significantly, all the mothers that I came across as part of this study were from minority ethnic backgrounds most of whom, including the four mothers discussed in Chapters One and Two, had moved to London as adults and used English as an additional language with varying degrees of proficiency.

These interviews were crucial in establishing a context for understanding a sample group of minority ethnic hearing mothers' perspectives. They were especially useful with respect to understanding the mothers' relationships with their deaf child (or children) during the pre-school years. The events narrated by both Hatice and Melika, and their adult daughters, Damla and Aisha, were told in an intertwined fashion, with both the mother and daughter contributing to the shared discussion. With the mother-child dyads of Irena and her son Aron (aged seven), and Gloria and her son Matthew (aged 10), however, only the mothers' narratives have been documented[19]. However, in line with my multi-sited fieldwork approach, learning about some of the core issues related to being a mother of a deaf child contributed to the overall understanding of the 'situatedness' of the 'deaf student' experience in general, and processes of inclusion and exclusion as it forms the focus of this study, in particular. As such, an understanding of what form of influence a sample group of hearing mothers had on the communicative experiences of their deaf children in the early years period provided insights that informed the analysis of the ethnographic observations of the communicative interactions another group of deaf children and youth had established in their school environments. Afterall, parents generally play a key role in determining which

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[19] Consequently, the omission of Aron's and Matthew's views is a limitation of this study.

school their deaf child attends. While the ideal outreach from the two schools as my field sites would have been to contact the parents of the deaf children I was directly working with, in light of the difficulties related to accessing this particular group as outlined above, I opted for interviewing other mothers with deaf children whom I was able to establish contact with through other means, as also explained above.

5. Chapter summaries

The presentation of this study is structured in a way as to analyse two key relationships that deaf children and youth form with familiar adults – either their hearing mothers or the deaf and hearing specialised staff at their mainstream schools. As we shall see in the chapters that follow, at first, the processes by which inexperienced hearing mothers make important decisions for their deaf child, largely during their child's pre-school years and then initial years of primary school regarding language exposure, school selection and the use of hearing technologies will be discussed. In other words, the mother-child relationship is examined as a part of the "dominant structural position" of the 'nuclear family' which typically forms the first location of a series of significant relationships formed throughout deaf children's lives (Turner, 1969, p.8). This is a necessary analytical move because, as I intend to demonstrate, these pre-school years – as they are experienced from the perspective of inexperienced mothers of deaf children – have a significant influence on which subsequent educational environments their deaf child will most likely enter and therefore on the new types of social relationships particular to these settings they will be introduced to. Once the role of hearing mother is established as an important part of the wider context for the schools which form the main field sites of this study, the analytical focus will shift to the 'ethnographic present' of the two mainstream schools and particularly to the interaction between deaf students and the deaf and hearing specialised staff.

In terms of how the following chapters are organized, I begin with the hearing families of deaf children and, in particular, look at the moral careers of some mothers of deaf babies discussed largely in **chapters One and Two**. The early experiences of mothers with their deaf babies and the resulting dilemma of trying to rehabilitate their child into being 'hearing', on the one side,

and acceptance of their child's deafness and the subsequent adjustment they make, on the other, are considered. The concept of a 'collaborative place' is introduced in **Chapter One** as a way of capturing how the home changes mainly through the mother's adaptive strategies as a way of responding to and engaging her deaf child. The search on behalf of these mothers for more 'collaborative places' in their communities is the focus of **Chapter Two**. These two chapters set the scene which establishes the significance of parental experiences during their deaf child's pre-school years in launching distinct learning trajectories and communicative resources for deaf children and youth. I then move on to demonstrate how deaf students at Appletree Primary School and Hallsbury Secondary School continue along or divert from these trajectories partly influenced by their own parents as they gain novel experience in their school's mainstream settings as well as with their specialist deaf and hearing staff and deaf peers. In **Chapter Three**, I begin to describe some differences in the structuring of a mainstream school as opposed to base classrooms in terms of their distinctive perspective on what constitutes the appropriate spatial arrangements of bodies and which forms of communication are favoured. In **Chapter Four**, the collaborative places which emerge in these educational settings are described. They are realized in the designated school space of deaf educational provision, namely the 'base'. The base staff's distinct approaches to teaching and learning and their appreciation of multilingualism are highlighted. Lastly, in **Chapter Five**, with a focus on deaf students' visual competencies and peer relations, there is a discussion on how the base becomes the place of exclusion, while an invitation to change is extended.

CHAPTER ONE – Deaf children and youth and their hearing mothers

Damla, a young woman aged 22, and Nimali, a student aged 15, both live in London. I met Damla during my volunteer placement at an employment centre specializing in supporting deaf adults into employment. Nimali, on the other hand, as I already introduced above, was a student at Hallsbury. They are both profoundly deaf, Damla from birth and Nimali since infancy. They were also both born outside the UK to hearing parents. Damla's family arrived in the UK from Turkey when she was a preschooler, while Nimali and her family moved over from India over a year ago. Damla had a cochlear implant as a child, but recently decided not to wear it as it gave her a headache. She is contemplating going back to hearing aids, but currently makes no use of hearing technologies. Nimali wore her hearing aids every day to school and made use of radio aids during lessons, which meant that the speaker's (typically the teacher's) voice went directly to her hearing aids, cutting out the background noise. Neither of them made use of their voice to communicate with me or others. When responding to me, Damla used BSL and Nimali used a combination of gesturing, writing in English, drawing and some BSL for reasons I will discuss later in the first section (Section 1) of this chapter. I mainly used BSL when communicating with both. At the point that I had met them, I had just begun my Level 2 (intermediary) training in BSL. As a result, when conversing with Damla who had signed since a young age and thus was a 'native signer', I recall how I intuitively designated her as my role model from whom I could pick up more BSL vocabulary and improve my signing in general. Even as an intermediate signer, however, whenever I signed to Nimali I was conscious that I was also demonstrating to her how to sign. It wasn't infrequent that we would stop mid-conversation for me to explain the meaning of a sign and then for her to have a few attempts at reproducing it correctly by manipulating her fingers, concentrating on her facial expressions and readjusting the position of her hands.

Whenever I was with Damla, I knew she would have plenty to talk about, from her current job search attempts, to her family and love life. Damla was a fluent and confident signer and was very comfortable signing in public spaces. One day in April 2014, for example, when I met her at her local train station, she told me all about the local area and shops as we walked towards the shopping mall where I would meet her mother for the first time. She also mentioned that

her sister, who is hearing, "shouts at people who stare at us when we sign to each other. But I don't mind. I tell my sister, 'Don't worry, they are interested. They are hearing".

Nimali, on the other hand, was very apprehensive about being seen signing in mainstream spaces. One day in the winter of 2014, for example, it was time for lunch at Hallsbury. As usual I wanted to spend this informal time with deaf students in order to learn more about how they socialized with their peers away from structured lessons. I once again spotted Nimali sitting alone having her lunch, so I decided to sit across from her. I had already been accustomed to preferably position myself so as to make my face and upper body directly visible when initiating a conversation with a deaf person, so I avoided sitting next to her although there was a space available there too. She didn't refuse to converse with me, but I could see she was less willing to engage through signing than a few minutes ago when we were in the base. I let her lead the conversation, and she occasionally gestured to me. As she was still a novice in expressing herself in BSL, but also possibly because she was not comfortable with moving her body in certain ways in which it is required when signing, at times when she did sign, she was still (intentionally or otherwise) mixing up the handshapes. For example, she ended up signing 'pig' instead of 'age' when she made a fist in front of her nose instead of wriggling her fingers. In the busy cafeteria that was packed with hearing students, she was a lot more reserved about talking to me, compared to during lessons and short breaks in the secluded space of the base when we chatted until the sound of the bell forced us to move on to the next lesson.

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The brief excerpt above is an example as to how two people who share the attributes of being born into hearing families, as having profound deafness from a young age, and currently not using their voice may have very different ways of presenting themselves in public places they routinely use. While Damla and Nimali would have both gone unnoticed among the crowd walking down the high street on her own or quietly eating lunch alone at the school lunch room, respectively, the change in their bodily response necessitated by my presence as they began to converse with me in the visual-gestural modality created the potential of drawing attention to oneself. This "breach of conventionalized anonymity among strangers" could

potentially be perceived by the deaf person being stared at as an act of stigmatization (Garland-Thompson, 2006, p.175). This visual attention could also potentially cause feelings of "displeasure in being exposed" (Goffman, 1963, p.28). Deaf people are often stared at by hearing people in public spaces when deafness is made visible through wearing hearing technologies or using sign language (O'Connell, 2016). These potential points of 'mixed contact' – defined by Goffman (1963) as proximal encounters between 'stigmatized' and unacquainted 'normals[20]' in a shared physical space – nonetheless are managed differently by deaf individuals, as seen by the reactions of Damla and Nimali to hearing people staring at them (Goffman, 1963, p.23). The reason that I begin with these examples is because, as I will later argue, their differentiated interpretations and reactions to a stranger's gaze – Nimali's embarrassment and Damla's buoyancy – act as public statements of current group memberships linked to their individual learning trajectories on how 'deaf' and 'hearing' people behave and who to identify with. This learning process, I further argue, is shaped substantially during their relevant socialization within the more private spheres – which are at the centre of this study – of home life and specialized schooling. Based on my extensive ethnographic work with deaf children and youth living in London, I demonstrate how their childhood relations with members of their family of origin, for instance with their mother, and other familiar adults and peers they encounter as part of their 'special education' – both sets of relationships having the potential to become host to 'communicative collaborators' – shape deaf children's development of strategies for self-presentation in and out of these settings including the choice of maintaining or changing communication preferences as indicators of multiple group alliances. In other words, the concern here is with language's "intersubjective, social nature and its bodily and emotional dimension" to better understand why a given language may be desired, rejected or seen as irrelevant (Busch, 2017, p.350).

As the focus of this chapter, I will demonstrate how these communication preferences evolve at home and shift as deaf children establish collaborative ways of interacting with their mothers who may also face what Goffman terms as 'courtesy stigma' as part of their new role as a parent of a deaf child (Goffman, 1963, pages 43-44). I begin the chapter by looking at

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[20] Throughout the rest of the study, unless otherwise specified, all references to 'normal' or 'normals' will be made in relation to this definition of a 'normal' as opposed to a 'stigmatised' characteristic or person as used by Goffman (1963).

Nimali's relation to her mother, and then broaden the focus to include how mothers may react to their child's deafness either by denial or acceptance. Such issues are well discussed in the literature (Humphries et al., 2016). Furthermore, I will emphasize how the mother-child relationship, as an important unit of the family group for reasons I noted in the Introduction to the study, can transform as it moves through stages to potentially become the first experience of a communicative collaboration known to a deaf child where they learn to be a particular kind of deaf person. In the course of examining the role of early childhood experiences in shaping deaf person's self-image, I will draw on Goffman's (1963) notion of stigma as 'spoiled identity'. His description of stigma as a mismatch between 'virtual' and 'actual' social identity which I describe below, I suggest, is a useful tool in understanding mothers' possible reactions to their child being deaf (Goffman 1963).

Before I proceed, however, I would like to elaborate on the contextual aspect of the stigmatizing experiences of deaf individuals as well as their close associates by drawing on some recent literature on stigma and deafness, in particular, and stigma and disability, in general. Staples (2011b), to begin with, discusses the link between stigma and leprosy within the context of India and likens stigma to "negative social responses to leprosy – sometimes summarised as the 'leprosy stigma'" (Staples, 2011b, p.109). He also warns that an overemphasis of the role of stigma in the lived experiences of those living with leprosy does a disservice to attempts to capture a holistic understanding of people who have a disability (Staples, 2011b).

In order to avoid stigma theory from being "a barrier to understanding the social experience of" deafness, therefore, I have contextualised these selected experiences by means of placing them in ethnographic descriptions of specificity so as not to indicate any generalizable link between being deaf or having a deaf child and being stigmatized (Staples, 2011a, p.91). Furthermore, when looked at the current study holistically, the lesser weight placed upon discussing stigma as compared to other social aspects of being deaf was a strategic move so as not to assert in any way that being stigmatised is "the most significant identifying factor of people affected by" deafness (Ibid., p.93). It is therefore crucial to note in advance that the examples below are either a fraction of the actual or potentially similar past experiences of stigma that are presented to support the generation of an overall understanding of the lived

experiences of deaf children and their hearing collaborators discussed throughout the chapters. Put differently, it is important to note that experiences of stigma are merely segments of lives that involve deafness and not necessarily the most dominant experiences nor most significant makers of identity amongst their "other intersecting identities" which are also touched upon at varying degrees throughout this study, such as the achieved status of being 'students' within their school communities (Staples, 2011b, p.110). Nevertheless, the ethnographic presence and frequency captured through expressed or observed moments of exclusion, shame, and rejection demanded analytical attention (Staples, 2011b). Although not all experiences of self-consciousness for a deaf person, for example, are necessarily derived from "deafness-related stigmatized labels", as O'Connell (2016) has stated, being noticed for being deaf has been noted to have the effect of compelling a deaf individual "to withdraw almost completely from social contact with hearing people" (O'Connell, 2016, p.658). As such, the examples below, as segments of past experiences, serve as important reminders for some of my key interlocutors (such as Nimali) as well as having potential similarities for other deaf students in terms of their own familial experiences with actual or imagined 'negative social responses' to deafness. In the ethnographic present, as a result, they may appear, for example, to be more reluctant to belong in the deaf base compared to their other deaf peers despite the lack of any observable stigmatising attitudes in their daily social interactions within the school setting.

Section 1: The Incongruous Couple: 'Virtual' and 'Actual' Social Identities

According to Goffman (1963, pages 11-13), when we first encounter a stranger, before we get to know them, we make assumptions as to their attributes and the social categories they belong to. These expectations of what people ought to be are informed by the social settings in which the encounter takes place. Certain types of people are found in certain types of places. Our anticipations as to the type of person they are, therefore, are in fact a 'virtual social identity' (an imagined one, such as a stereotype) we have created about them. Once we get to know them, we might then confirm their category or might need to reclassify them. In the former situation, there is an agreement that their anticipated 'virtual' social identity is in fact their perceived 'actual social identity' and thus we do not pay any special attention to

it. When, however, there is a disagreement between 'virtual' and 'actual' social identities, this catches our attention. Stigma can be the result of such a disagreement, and it can occur when we react to our encounter with a person who has an attribute or attributes that do not belong to the categories of persons socially possible for them with an attitude (by the other, by oneself, or both) that what they possess is of a less desirable kind. As such, I use the term 'stigma' as a lowering of status from what one could have been in a given setting that is expressed by actual or perceived (self-)exclusion. Its relevance, therefore, is its contribution to the overall discussion in this study on factors that relate to practices and beliefs that have effects of inclusion or exclusion of deaf children and youth from public and private places. Furthermore, once the information about the person's 'less desirable' attribute is known, which also entails self-acceptance, they risk becoming a 'discredited person' and they – along with their close affiliates such as their parents – therefore may have to manage the tension created as part of such potential social intercourse. As long as such information is yet to be known, including periods of self-denial, however, the person remains a 'discreditable person', which means that they would be preoccupied with managing such social information during the course of their social contacts (Ibid., p.57).

Goffman's description of the possible outcomes of once strangers managing the exchange information about each other as a process of familiarization with the intentions of determining whether they belong to a given social setting is useful in understanding the tension between Nimali's mother and the specialist staff at Nimali's new mainstream school which offers special educational provision only to a certain type of deaf student.

1.1 Specialized staff's search for their deaf student's 'actual social identity'

Nimali was one of the base students at Hallsbury Secondary School. I was assigned to work with her by Miss Collins, the Head of the base and a qualified TOD, when in October 2013 I began to volunteer at Hallsbury's 'base' as my interlocutors referred to it. I had explained to Miss Collins that I was learning BSL and was a native Turkish speaker. I believe she took these into consideration when creating a schedule for me where for most of the time I was working with Nimali, who was not an oral deaf student, nor did she used signing much yet, followed

by Tuncay, who was originally from Turkey. When with Nimali, I was acting as a one-on-one intermediary even for her base lessons, trying to relay what was being said in English into a more visual – and thus more accessible – domain by turning to, mostly experimentally, whatever might work from my still rudimentary knowledge of BSL to gesturing, imitating, writing and drawing. As I looked back at my notes from my first visit to the school during the previous month of September and my discussion with Miss Collins about the potential of volunteering there, I realized that she was talking about Nimali when she said "We have a girl with no speech and no sign. She is learning but she is an exception at this school".

The base at Hallsbury, as one of the key sites for the presence of 'communicative collaborators' discussed in this research, was an oral provision for deaf students within a mainstream school. All the current twenty students and those before them could or had the potential to hear and speak, typically with the aid of either hearing aids or cochlear implants, albeit not in the same way as those people who can hear and speak without such hearing technologies[21]. As such, all of the base staff had built rapport with the deaf students they supported in an English language environment. Their use of English, however, was distinct from the English generally used across the school as its official dominant language. While the base staff still utilized the relevant mediums of speech and writing, their emphasis on producing a more visually heightened version of English resulted in a variation of it which I've termed 'base English' and explain in Chapter Three. As it has been already explained in the Introduction, concomitant to having a language orientation that remained within the scope of the English language, none of Hallsbury's base staff – except one – had any qualification in BSL. This oral emphasis on deaf education at Hallsbury, however, created a predicament when Nimali joined the base. The difficulty faced by the base staff in even carrying out everyday conversations with Nimali was immediate. It called into question the belief about Nimali's deafness presented to Miss Collins by her mother during the mother's initial school visit prior to admission, which will be sketched out in detail below, followed by her adamant conviction that Hallsbury was the best option for her daughter. Even several months after Nimali joined the base, the staff was still unsure of her level of hearing and related communication strengths and needs. Because she had recently arrived in the UK, she had yet to be assessed

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[21] Cochlear implants "do not replace normal hearing" and they "may not guarantee […] language acquisition" (Humphries et al., 2016).

to determine her special educational needs. During one of our conversations regarding Nimali, Miss Collins explained the circumstances that led to the decision to admit Nimali: "We took her because her mom pleaded with us. The mom liked the school. But we were not aware of the level of her needs". At the time that she was making the decision to admit Nimali, Miss Collins' only access to information regarding Nimali's past was that recounted by her mother. For example, it was known that until recently Nimali grew up in South India where Tamil and English were widely spoken at home and outside, and that the medium of her formal education was oral and written English. Nimali's mother also made it known to Miss Collins that she did not want Nimali to sign. The more 'official' narrative, of which its culmination became her 'statement', was not known to Miss Collins at the time of her assessment of whether the Deaf Resource Base at Hallsbury was suited to meet Nimali's special educational needs. Each deaf student's statement, managed and passed on from school to school by their LEA, includes the student's actual levels of hearing loss among many other things. In Nimali's case, this was not yet available. Therefore, Nimali's mother's strong preference to continue to place her daughter in an oral and mainstream educational setting, coupled with the fact that Nimali had already missed out on a year of formal schooling, resulted in Miss Collins taking the decision to admit Nimali.

Two different narratives as to how Nimali should manage her encounters with hearing members of the public (i.e. 'mixed social contacts' as explained above) are emerging here. According to Goffman (1963), while a discredited person (i.e. someone whose deafness is known to those they are in a social contact with) is preoccupied with "managing tension generated during [mixed] social contacts", a discreditable person (whose deafness is yet to be known by those they are interacting with) may as well be working on "managing information about [their] failing" (Goffman, 1963, p.57). Nimali's mother, then, was in favour of such information management strategies that had the effect of concealing her daughter's deafness by getting her to 'pass' as 'hearing' or 'normal'. Similarly, O'Connell (2016), who himself is deaf and reflects at his school years and his experiences of coping with the stigma of deafness, recounts how he himself used such information or impression management strategies, also known as 'passing'. He, for example, states how the feeling of shame "motivated a desire to appear like a hearing person. This was particularly strong in the context of my face-to-face encounters with hearing people" (O'Connell, 2016, p.656). He then

continues to list some strategies he used for this, such as those of 'concealment' – i.e. when he grew his hair to hide his hearing aid – and 'selective disclosure' when presenting himself as 'normal' (Ibid., p.656-658). The specialized school staff, on the other hand, having accepted Nimali's extent of deafness, were concerned with equipping her with conflict management strategies during her daily encounters with the hearing public. They contemplated how she could access knowledge shared in the classroom and focussed on equipping her to tackle everyday situations such as when shopping and ordering food at a restaurant that may have required communicating with hearing members of the wider society who themselves may not have past experiences of meaningfully communicating with their customers through means other than a shared spoken language. Again, O'Connell (2016) provides instances of 'conflict' from his own personal life when he read signs of impatience and 'blank looks' after he asks for a hearing person to repeat themselves and when he is confronted with stares from people while walking down the street (Ibid., p.657-658).

As the days went by, however, and while waiting for a formal assessment of Nimali's hearing by the LEA, the base staff tried to gain more insight as to how much Nimali could hear. To illustrate, let's consider an excerpt from my fieldnotes:

"Today I joined Nimali, Tuncay and Jawad for their Functional Skills English lesson at the base. I sat near Nimali, ready to support her with her learning. The lesson was jointly delivered by Kimberly and Saiqa. They are both experienced LSAs with many years at Hallsbury. Before starting the lesson, Kimberly and Saiqa were trying to identify Nimali's degree of hearing by assessing her themselves with some simple tests. For example, Kimberly talked to Nimali facing her directly. Nimali acknowledged it with a nod. Kimberly then covered her mouth with a notebook and said something else. Nimali was more hesitant to respond. During class Nimali makes use of the radio aids and the base rooms are soundproofed which means interferences of background noises are greatly reduced. So the LSAs' assumption was that if Nimali can indeed hear given these suitable conditions, she should do so without the need to lipread." (Fieldnote extract, 6 November 2013).

In the context of the above excerpt, although Nimali was insistent on communicating through her nods as an indication of 'I can hear you talking to me', the base staff shared a growing conviction that she did not have meaningful access to spoken language. She might have heard sounds but not speech. In terms of how she expressed herself, the staff discussed amongst themselves how she did not (and probably could not) speak, wondering if an oral provision was the right place for her. It was also noted, however, that she did not sign either, which was interpreted by the base staff as evidence both for a history of and preference (albeit parental) for spoken and written English that required respect[22]. The speculations as to the severity of her hearing loss were confirmed several months into the first term of the school year when an audiologist from the LEA visited and did some tests to determine Nimali's hearing levels on both ears. It was concluded that without the hearing aids, she couldn't hear anything; with the hearing aids, she could hear some unclear sounds. Although she wore hearing aids, therefore, because she didn't respond to spoken stimuli, it became apparent to the base staff that they were not beneficial to Nimali in terms of accessing spoken language. As a result the base staff, through their own social interactions with her which including informal assessments of her levels of hearing and speech (in English), coupled with the more official hearing test results, established Nimali's 'actual social identity' – going back to Goffman (1963) – as not being an 'oral deaf' student. Instead, although as far as the base staff knew she did not sign before either, in light of the confirmed diagnosis she was perceived as being more of a potential 'signer', a distancing had also emerged between them and Nimali. Throughout my participation in lessons at the base that included Nimali, I observed a consistent pattern among the base staff of overwhelmingly focusing their attention on the other more 'oral deaf' students who were present, at times not engaging with Nimali at all. These issues will be covered in depth in chapters Four and Five.

As the base staff soon realized that there was no prospect of Nimali using or understanding speech any time soon and since the base was furnished with specialized resources with 'oral

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[22] The base staff's ambiguity as to what was the best way to communicate with Nimali is indicative of a discontinuity between 'actual' biological realities known by measured levels of hearing which are then transferred into the 'statement of special educational needs' subsequently placing a legal duty on the Local Authority to provide suitable education for deaf children, on the one hand, and the social realities of needing to respect parental preferences as the expression of parental responsibility, which according to UK laws, includes a parent's legal right to choose the type of education to be received by their deaf child, on the other hand.

deaf' students in mind, I felt as if I was perceived as the main available alternative to fill in the gap and mediate the existing formal and even informal communication as much as I could on a very ad hoc basis. Nimali's first encounter with BSL, however, was not through me. As part of the LEA's mandate, all primary and secondary schools within the borough offering specialist educational provision for deaf students through a Deaf Resource Base regardless of communication orientation, incorporated basic BSL courses into their curriculum for the majority of their base students. As such, Mr. David, the deaf BSL Instructor who worked at the LEA and visited each school on a weekly basis, delivered up to three separate introductory lessons on and in BSL. The aim was for the base students to achieve up to Level 2 formal qualification in BSL. He also delivered classes for the school staff. Therefore, when Nimali started at Hallsbury in September, she had already joined some of her base peers on the BSL level 1 course taught by Mr. David. Because of Nimali's frequent encounters with a handful of people who signed to her within the base, she began picking up signs relatively quickly and could soon understand most of the basic questions signed to her about her everyday life activities. Through the medium of BSL, as well as the frequent use of a pen and paper to write an English word or draw a concept, Nimali and I established a means of communication that stood out, as its realization through our interaction did not resemble 'base English' which was the normative communication method used between the base staff and students.

Our exchanges were not limited to formal learning, however. They extended into, and were enriched by the informal breaks in between classes, always within one of the base rooms, where we chatted about our lives, our likes and dislikes and our future plans. I often chose to spend my break time with the base students of whom the majority remained in the base. After I fetched myself a cup of coffee, I would walk into the base room where a crowd had gathered and would just look around. I often saw Nimali on her own. She was socially and therefore physically distanced from the group of girls chatting in English. As I started a conversation with her, I also encouraged others to join in by acting as an intermediary, conveying to Nimali in BSL what was being said and also relaying her responses to the group. Nimali's responses, however, which were mainly in gestures and facial expressions, were more accessible to the rest of the girls. Furthermore, since most of them had already became familiar with BSL during their primary school years or through Mr. David's BSL lessons at

Hallsbury, they were comfortable seeing it being used and at times signed directly to Nimali themselves.

What puzzled me at first, however, was Nimali's rejection of BSL in favour of English. I noticed that Nimali preferred it when people around her to used 'base English' which she insisted that she could access by lipreading and the use of her hearing aids. When replying, she preferred to use written English in the form of words or sentences, or at times drawings. She also did not like some signs which seemed funny or odd to her, like when fingers were moved in front of the nose to ask someone's age. Her strongest rejection of BSL, however, came when I tried to continue signing to her as what I thought was one of our more effective communication methods during one of her classes that was located outside of the base and was mainly for students with a variety of special educational needs. Consider the extract below:

> "Today for the first time I accompanied Nimali to […] a cooking class and we were going to bake cupcakes. All the students had special educational needs, and Nimali was the only deaf student. As the teacher gave out instructions, I began to sign what was said to Nimali. There was nothing discreet about the way I positioned myself in the classroom and how I moved my body, as this is how I was taught how to sign. But I had to question what I was doing when Nimali, seeing my body movements that could not go unnoticed by others around us, immediately froze and gestured with a fearful face that she did not want me to continue to sign. Her body language read as 'Can't you see? Everyone is looking at us! I'm embarrassed'". (Fieldnote extract, 15 January 2014).

Up until then I thought that my conviction that by signing I was striving to provide Nimali as much as possible with meaningful access to what was being taught in class was also shared by her. As for the attention Nimali said I drew, firstly, I did not judge it to be at the magnitude that she thought it was. Secondly, I was inclined to treat such incidents as non-threatening acts of curiosity that I could utilize to raise awareness about sign language similar to the way Damla, whom I talked about in the introductory anecdote, didn't mind the gazes of passers-by. Once I witnessed Nimali's reaction, however, I realized how signing could have meanings to some deaf people other than being a 'natural language' and a source of pride described in detail in the Introduction. Beyond the confines of the base stood the 'hearing world' with its

mixed and mainstream classrooms and lunch hall[23]. When in the 'hearing world', I suggest, Nimali feared to be a discredited person by being seen as associating with sign language which for her stood as a 'stigma symbol' implied by the act of staring (Goffman, 1963, p.59; Friedner, 2017b, p.365). Up until the day I joined her, Nimali had been attending the same cooking lessons with other LSAs from the base regularly being there to support her. However, as I mentioned earlier, none of those base staff were trained in BSL and thus their presence would have not drawn as much attention as my apparently flamboyant bodily movements. They might have been somewhere near Nimali and cooked along with her, blending in as just another participant. I, on the other hand, had to position myself to face Nimali. As her informal interpreter, I stood out more as someone with a different role from everyone else in the room altogether. This, as a result, drew attention to both of us.

In line with the focus of this chapter which is the mother-child relationship, and in light of Nimali's personal journey of developing her communicative repertoire discussed in the Introduction, I suggest that Nimali had partially adopted this negative attitude towards the use of sign languages from her mother. In support of this argument, I draw upon the existing literature that, on the one hand, similarly points to the crucial link between the need for parental approval and self-image among deaf children and youth (van Gent et. al., 2012; Mejstad et. al., 2009) and, on the other hand, the hearing parents' fear of losing one's deaf child once they learn to sign instead of the spoken family language (Friedner, 2017b). On the first point, Mejstad et. al. (2009) who compared the mental health and self-image of deaf and hard of hearing children – aged 11 to 18 – in a variety of school settings in Sweden, also looked at the influence of family relations on self-image. As such, one example of the statements presented to deaf children to rate included 'Most of the time, my parents are pleased with me' (Mejstad et. al., 2009, p.509). They subsequently offered one explanation for their findings – also supported by other researchers studying the same topic – that high self-esteem amongst mainstreamed hard of hearing students (which was at the lower end for deaf children in deaf schools) was a *cumulative* result of positive relations established within the *family* as well as among peers and during formal schooling that was supportive of their self-

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[23] My analysis which follows is based on the socially constructed binary between the 'deaf world' and the 'normal world' as described by Friedner (2017b), where the proximity of these two worlds creates tension and where these "worlds can only be seen in relation to each other" (Friedner, 2017b, p.360)

esteem (Ibid., pages 513-514). In regards to the latter dynamic of parental fear, Friedner (2017b), in relation to her research based in India, makes a crucial observation that "families often feel that learning ISL [Indian Sign Language] results in increased distance between deaf children and their hearing family members [...] thus fracturing domestic spaces" because deaf children value deaf sociality more (Friedner, 2017b, p.369 note #13). Also, as for Asian families living in the UK, "many parents prefer the child not to learn BSL [...] when parents have no skills in this language" as this "sometimes created the fear [...] of potentially losing their child to the (white) Deaf culture" (Atkin et al., 2002, pages 35 and 36, respectively). It is against this theoretical framework that I put forth the argument that Nimali's persistent rejection to sign despite it being a meaningful and effective means of communication with a growing number of people in the base was, amongst other things, her way of reinforcing her close and important relationship with her mother. In other words, Nimali's move away from signing and towards oralist practices had the likely effect of ensuring the continuation of parental approval. To sign, on the other hand, and to sign in an expanding range of situations, would potentially cause a friction in the relationship as it would confirm to them both the severity and permanency of Nimali's inability to hear and speak and therefore bond through a shared spoken language.

Furthermore, in the base, which for her was the only potential place to be with other people her mother perceived to be like her, namely oral deaf youth, Nimali struggled to fit in. This was not related to her starting to use BSL, as many base students were learning it too and, as I conclude from my daily participation in the space interacting with the staff and students that used it on a daily basis, signing was not considered a stigma symbol among the majority of base members[24]. Nimali's difficulty in coping with the everyday rhythms of the base was because Nimali could not speak. In other words, although the base, I suggest, was a cooperative and safe place that they choose to socialise in and shaped as a place to be

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[24] Based on my observations and discussions with deaf students and the staff using the base, signing was considered to have 'value' to its users. I therefore locate the manifestations of the concept of 'value' as used by Friedner (2014) in the deaf students' privileged status within the school as knowers of BSL. For example, only they were offered access to learn it and were given public opportunities to show off their knowledge as a source of pride. Furthermore, several deaf students described the economic value of signing as a means to potentially securing employment in the future.

themselves for most other deaf students[25], for those like Nimali it was yet another rendition of the 'hearing world'. Not all deaf people, it seemed, experienced the same degree of belonging in places that deaf people congregated. As such, while for the rest of her base peers BSL was an optional and additional language they learned with Mr. David but rarely used, preferring to instead converse in English which was their primary language, for Nimali BSL was subtly and gradually being presented to her as her main communication tool. Based on her own lived experiences as reported by Nimali herself, however, up until coming to Hallsbury Nimali had consistently found herself to be among hearing and deaf people who could all hear and speak. I therefore argue that in Nimali's lived experience sign language had no social value. After spending most of my day with Nimali in and out of class, including our shared BSL class taught by Mr. David, I remember excitedly asking Nimali how she felt about BSL, and if she liked it. Nimali responded by saying "No, I don't like signing". Retrospectively, I know that I had asked the question assuming that Nimali too would be celebratory about her new found 'freedom of expression' through sign language I'd previously read and learned about from many adult deaf BSL users who as children were forbidden to use sign language. Nimali's response, of course, was embedded in her own personal history of never identifying with anyone or any group that used sign language before. Those people she most cared about, such as her family, her hearing friends back in India, and even her potential new friends at Hallsbury's base, all used speech. When Nimali started her schooling at Hallsbury, she entered a place that predominantly, but not exclusively, used an oral method. Depending on the circumstance however, for example in the case of Nimali, the base staff were quick to acknowledge that sign language could be the most accessible and thus the most appropriate way of communication with a deaf student. Nonetheless, as reported by the base staff, for this to be fully realized Nimali had to change schools and attend one that fully incorporated BSL in its ethos of specialized education for deaf students. For the time being, Nimali was still a newcomer in the UK and thus with limited exposure to other places with different types of communicative collaborators offering different ways of being deaf. As such, I argue, the

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[25] I make this statement based on my observations of and discussions with the base staff and students. For example, a group of girls enjoyed staying in the base during most of their breaks and chat and laugh with each other. This was in contrast to several of these girls' quiet and reserved demeanour in their mainstream lesson as I observed on a few occasions when I went along with them. Most base students were also eager to approach and chat with the base staff during breaks and lesson times. I also share the student view later on when the discussion is more focussed on the base.

impact of her past experiences of belonging in groups where speech was valued and signing was not still persisted, contributing to her determinedly rejecting sign language, which I further discuss below. I later found out that this reaction was partly instilled and reinforced by Nimali's mother, which is the focus of the following sub-section.

1.2 The mother and the pursuance of the 'virtual social identity'

During a break period I learned more about Nimali's mother from the base staff. Usually during these short 10-minute breaks most of the ten base LSAs gathered into what was the smallest of the three rooms allocated to the base, queueing for the kettle. It was during these short breaks that this room, otherwise used as a third classroom, was temporarily transformed into an adult space with a 'staff only' sign on the shut door accompanied by a verbal warning given to curious or novice students that they must not enter. These brief moments were when everyone expressed their frustration, confusion, pride, disappointment, and so on with the base students and shared other school gossip without fearing any repercussions. It was during one such break that I learned that Nimali's mother reportedly had not accepted her daughter's deafness and that she had very high expectations of her in terms of learning to speak and achieve academically[26]. I also learned that Nimali became deaf at around 18-months of age after an illness and that her mother did not want her to sign. Nimali's mother's influence was pointed out by Kimberly when she interpreted Nimali's major insecurity about her own written answers and her schoolwork in general as being linked to the dependency caused by her mother. Nimali constantly asked for reassurance for every single word she wrote down. Her paused posture and questioning looks were demanding an answer to 'Is it right?' before she could continue onto the next task at hand. Furthermore, unlike most of the other students who walked or took the bus to school themselves, Nimali came to school in a taxi and I often saw her mother in one waiting to pick her up as I left the

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[26] As I did not want to dominate such informal staff discussions with questions of interest to me and because I did not get to meet or interview any of the deaf students' parents in my restricted role as a volunteer, I do not know the reasons potentially provided by Nimali's mother about her stand towards Nimali's school life. I also touch upon some explanations shared by other mothers of deaf children in Chapter Two presented as individual samples to help construct the diverse and complex social contexts within which deaf children socialize differently.

school. Although the taxi service was provided to all deaf students who lived out of the borough, Nimali's lack of independence to travel alone became apparent during one of our informal conversations. At break time, Nimali mentioned that after school she often stayed at home and either read a book or watched Indian movies with Tamil subtitles. When I asked her if she went out at all, she said she did not and that only, presented here as my translation of her signing and gesturing, "I sometimes go with my mom to the shop".

I find the conceptualization of stigma, provided by Goffman (1963) as the lowering of one's social standing from what they could potentially belong to useful in understanding Nimali's and her mother's strategies that they put in place in relation to her schooling. Nimali's mother, by managing the information regarding her daughter's actual ability to hear and speak during her meeting with the school's deaf base's gatekeeper Miss Collins, succeeded in sustaining the virtual social identity of her daughter as someone who still has the potential to hear and speak. On the other hand, Nimali's anxiety to be seen using sign language in places full of hearing strangers was another strategy, similar to her mother's, to control the social information about her as a way to remain a 'discreditable' but not a 'discredited person' (Goffman 1963, p.57). By unfailingly coming to school every day with her hearing aids and following all the school procedures on how to use them, she was in fact trying to pass as a deaf student that can hear. She did not mind being known to be deaf, as long as it was that of an 'oral deaf' and not a 'signer deaf'. In the end, however, the base staff's reclassification of Nimali's actual social identity as a 'signer' followed a subtle shift in attitudes towards her, described in detail in Chapter Five, where efforts to include her in class and other social activities by the base staff and students were gradually reduced. In other words, the confirmation that she did not have access to spoken language within a deaf base with an oral philosophy lowered her status as a deaf student, in other words situating her at the fringes of social and educational life of the base by stigmatizing her as being unlike the rest of the 'normal' oral deaf students. Nimali and her mother's persistence, however, that Nimali did indeed belonged among oral deaf students because she too was one of them exasperated the situation.

As I aim to explain below in Section 2 by looking at the 'moral careers' (Goffman, 2007 and 1963; as explained in the Introduction) of mothers of other deaf children, this persistence on

behalf of Nimali and her mother to remain in an oral deaf setting is especially linked to, I suggest, to the continued denial of Nimali's degree of deafness and the associated lack of parental contributions made towards the construction of relationships with communicative collaborators for Nimali both at home and school. Both Nimali's mother and, through the close bond with her, Nimali reject acts that would imply an affiliation with being fully deaf such as the use of sign language, although we see a gradual acceptance of signing by Nimali. Throughout the narratives I introduce below, similarly, issues of denial and acceptance resurface. These accounts, obtained through direct interviews, are of two mothers of young deaf children and a mother and her adult deaf daughter who were living in London during the course of my research . I also share some supportive anecdotal stories of being the only deaf child in their family told by deaf adults from hearing families.

Section 2 – Two interlinked moral careers: hearing parents and their deaf child

2.1 Ambiguity: the initial stages of parents first doubting and then confirming their child's deafness

The mothers I formally interviewed as well as those I informally talked to all initially had entered a temporal stage of ambiguity during the pre-diagnosis period when they become unclear as to their role as parents due to the uncertain status of their child. For most parents living in London and who have had their children post-2000, this can be experienced early on when they are informed of a possibility of hearing loss following the less conclusive initial hearing tests conducted at the hospital immediately after childbirth. This was the case, for example, for Irena, whose experiences are detailed shortly. For parents living in times or places without routinized newborn hearing tests, however, it is more likely that they themselves or a family member may come to suspect the child's ability to hear due to the child's unresponsiveness to loud environmental noises. Jacob, a deaf adult born in the 1960s to hearing parents, recounts his parents' narrative of uncertainty as:

"I don't know exactly but when I was around the age of one or 18 months, my father went off to work and my mother took me out to the park in the stroller. When the train

passed by, I didn't turn around to look and my mother got suspicious. We went back home, she put me on the carpet and shouted my name from behind my back and when I did not respond, she knew there was something wrong. She thought maybe I was ill. She was not sure. Then she dropped a big tray on the ground. When once again I did not look, she panicked and called my father." (Interview with Jacob, 6 June 2014)

Similarly, Alex, a man in his fifties who was born deaf, was initially misdiagnosed as having learning difficulties, described by the GP as a 'retard'. When he was 20 months old, he was cared for by his grandparents while his mother was in hospital to give birth to his sister. Alex retells the narrative passed on to him by his grandparents:

"My grandmother noticed that I was deaf, […] My family is all hearing, I'm the only deaf. […] One day, my grandmother was cleaning and she was wondering why I was inattentive. That's how she realized … She told her husband: 'I think he's deaf'. So they said 'let's see' and, as they explained it to me, they got a piece of wood and made louder and louder noises, but I gave no reaction. They moved around things but I didn't look, so they knew. Because the GP initially said to my mom about me that I was a slow learner but used the old-fashioned word 'retard'. And my mother was shocked, she was really upset. […] So, when my sister was born, my nan … went to the hospital, [… and] she hesitantly said 'I think Alex is deaf'. My mom was shocked [...] At first they panicked a bit, but both knew how to carry on." (Interview with Alex, 20 August 2014)

With 90% of all deaf children being born to hearing parents with little to no prior experience with deafness (Flaherty, 2015), resolving this ambiguity by finding out its cause, degree and permanency was a reoccurring theme among parental narratives shared with me. Commonly, the uncertainty replaced their previously felt sense of ease as to how to communicate with their child (Matthijs et al., 2012). As Jacob recounted his parents' narrative, his parents expressed this loss of competence as "the doctor checked all over my body and I was fine, so it was confirmed that I was deaf. My mother was very upset. … They went back home. My mother and father were worried. They were thinking 'How will we communicate as he grows up?"

Obtaining a full medical diagnosis verifying their child's hearing loss, I suggest, threatens the parents' anticipated 'virtual social identities' – as discussed in detail previously – for themselves as well as their baby in terms of what it means to them to be a 'parent' and a 'child'. One such threat is to the shared family language which "signifies a shared identity" and thus "[h]aving a deaf child in a hearing family can seem for some, to threaten all these imagined certainties" (Atkin et al., 2002, p.40). Several mothers I interviewed, for example, wanted to know if their child was a 'healthy' child with 'normal' hearing which would have reinstated for them, I argue, their own status as 'normal' parents as they imagined it to be. A medical and thus often, from the perspective of the parents I talked to, a legitimate confirmation of deafness, especially in the early post-diagnosis period, therefore, may leave parents with a feeling of loss of competence (Meadow-Orlans and Moore, 1990 cited in Fjord, 2001, p.112). For all my interlocutors who were either deaf adults themselves or were the parent of a deaf child, diagnosis of deafness was recounted as a moment with critical importance. It was a turning point mainly in the adult family members' moral careers, recounted and later inherited by the adult deaf child, which involved strong feelings of disbelief, worry and a need to reconsider their status as a parent of a deaf child. As it can be seen in Alex's and Jacob's narratives above, for example, the deaf adults I interviewed who were from hearing families appeared to have inherited their parents' or grandparents' interpretation of this life event taking place in their early life as an expression of belonging to a family group that contributed to their identification with their parents. The narrative including the period of suspicion and diagnosis was part of their family history passed on from older members of the family and was retold by the deaf member as the beginning of their own personal narrative. For the hearing parents, on the other hand, the moment of diagnosis was experienced as a moment of significant change to their 'family' space. Having always been 'normal' up until the moment of suspicion of their child's deafness, I suggest, they had anticipated their home with a baby to continue to be the same 'normal' place where speech was the main means of household communication. As such, it is originally in "the house [as] the closed space of the [family] group withdrawn into itself" where hearing parents and their deaf child are presented with the opportunity to rebuild their domestic relationship, each as a 'communicative collaborator' (Augé, 1995, p.47).

In order to explore the significance of this turning point in the family narrative, in the next sub-section I outline mothers' accounts of their reaction to their child's diagnosis of deafness. I will then illustrate how they cope with what is called 'courtesy stigma' as a mother of a deaf child as the final sub-section (2.3) on denial. Finally, in Section 3, I will demonstrate how with time mothers perform their newfound role more confidently in their own homes as they move towards 'acceptance' and gain more experiences mothering a deaf child.

2.2 Mother's reclassification of their child and themselves post-diagnosis of deafness

Within the same month that I moved to London in 2012, I enrolled on a BSL level 1 course. It was there that I met Irena. I soon found out that she was one of the two mothers with a primary school-aged deaf son on the course of ten people. The other mother was Gloria, whom I will introduce subsequently. After several months into the course, both mothers dropped out[27], but I got to see them at other events catering to minority communities wanting to support families with deaf children. Both Irena and Gloria shared their own life stories with me on separate occasions over a cup of coffee, starting from their experience of first taking up the role of motherhood which coincided with becoming the mother of a deaf child.

Irena

Irena was a young mother of a deaf son, Aron, aged seven, and a hearing daughter, Melissa, aged three. She had moved to London with her husband ten years ago from Poland. Although they did not plan to move back to Poland, for Irena being part of London's Polish community was important. Many of her friends were Polish whom she spoke Polish to, and she was an active churchgoer as a practising Roman Catholic. After getting married, Irena and her husband both wanted to have at least three children, modelling the type of family they desired based on their shared experiences of growing up in big families. Irena's first pregnancy

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[27] They both dropped out due to childcare obligations as they both had pre-school aged children for whom they were the primary caregivers.

went smoothly, and they were looking forward to having a 'healthy' baby. On the day Aron was born, however, something unexpected happened. Irena explained to me how her son,

> "didn't pass the test, hearing test in the hospital like straightaway after birth[28]. So when he was two weeks we just go to the hospital and would like just check if it was like the mistake in the hospitals because in the hospital was quite noisy so some of the doctors said to me that maybe he can hear but because it was noisy and … after the [birth] sometimes it happen –the kids that didn't pass the hearing test but after that it was everything okay. But in our situation … we find out that he's got the moderate hearing loss"[29] (Interview with Irena, 5 June 2014)

The discord between Irena's past expectations and the 'present' as the moment her son was diagnosed with a hearing impairment caused, at first, ambiguity and disbelief. Initially, Irena did not easily accept this change which, I argue, caused a misalignment between her baby's imagined 'virtual social identity' to be of 'normal' hearing and his 'actual social identity' of being 'disabled'. Instead she was inclined to see it as an inaccuracy of the medical technology due to environmental interferences such as a 'noisy hospital' and thus external to her newly formed family. When asked as to how she felt after the first diagnosis, Irena said:

> "Honestly it was very hard, I couldn't believe in it because nobody in … my family and my husband's family, we never had the problem of the hearing loss. So we couldn't believe at first with it. So that's why straightaway we asked for the second opinion about it and so when he was the four weeks we got another appointment in the hospital and they said to us like 'Yes, he's got the moderate hearing loss and it's like permanent'. So that's means that probably he will not be able to hear better." (Interview with Irena, 5 June 2014)

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[28] Even if congenital hearing loss exists at the point of pregnancy, as when it is hereditary or acquired through a prenatal infection such as rubella, it cannot be detected until birth. The NHS Newborn Hearing Screening Programme (NHSP), for example, offered to all parents living in England, "aims to screen babies within four to five weeks of birth" (Great Britain, n.d.2)

[29] I intentionally kept the quote in verbatim without correcting the grammar unless absolutely necessary as I wanted to show the mothers' own English use as it is relevant to my overall discussion.

The authority with which the hospital and doctors confirmed her son's 'hearing problem' and Irena's recognition of this discourse as legitimate and thus meaningful, meant that Irena gradually began to accept that her son was born and would always be deaf. She then turned her focus on the types of adjustments that had to be made to best support her son, primarily in language acquisition.

It is critical to point out, however, that at these early stages of transition from being a 'normal mother' (however Irena anticipated it to be) to a 'mother of a deaf child', the focus is on the adjustments and investments that can be made primarily on her child. When making decisions as to how to support their deaf baby, Irena and her husband were not alone. Following the diagnosis at the hospital, Irena remained a service user within the NHS and soon received her son's first hearing aids. These strategies, however, as creative adaptations were still demonstrative of denial of how there has occurred a disagreement between her own 'virtual' and 'actual' social identities as a mother in the sense that she was not yet making major changes to her own communicative performances. In other words, at this stage of her own 'affiliation cycle' – a concept borrowed from Goffman (1963) and explained in the Introduction, as part of her moral career as a mother of a deaf child, Irena continues to reject that due to her relationship to her deaf son she too might have to readjust her own concept of self. She instead remained committed to being 'normal' herself and concentrated on making her son 'normal' as well. She did this by trying to modify her newborn son's body in the form of medical interventions that would improve his hearing and subsequently spoken communication. Within the context of childhood deafness, between the aid of clinical options such as hearing aids that emphasize oral communication, on the one hand, and the socialization processes centring on manual, facial and bodily movements where visual communication take precedence, on the other, there exists a range of communication tools and a continuum of communication styles. At the moment of discovering her child's deafness, as a hearing parent Irena chose for her son to wear hearing aids starting right away as a baby and then undertake the surgical procedure of cochlear implantation. At this stage, learning a visual communication method herself to then use it with her son and therefore adjusting herself to the 'natural' state of her son's sense of hearing was not yet introduced to Irena as an option. While analysing the information given to parents following a newborn hearing test as an expanding global practice, Kluwin and Stewart (2000 have also stated that "parents who

receive first information within a medical setting are inclined to consider only this kind of information in further actions" (Kluwin and Stewart, 2000, in Matthijs et al., 2012, p.388). Because, I suggest, Irena was still embracing, as Goffman put it, 'the stand-point of the normal' and thus valued speech, and the medical authority had recognized and supported this, she continued to invest in the development of her son's hearing capabilities (Goffman, 1963, p.45).

Irena carries on explaining that soon after Aron's diagnosis, "We get the hearing aids and we start using the hearing aids, when he was like yeah six weeks … All of my friends who just find out that their kids are the hearing loss they get the hearing aids, basically within like … 1-2 months. So it's quite quickly. So it's quite good because basically when the kids they starting learning the speech earlier speaks quicker and better". Since Irena's experiences of pregnancy, childbirth and the subsequent diagnosis of her son's deafness all took place at NHS hospitals in London where she was already living with her husband for the past decade, the distinctive ease in which one could hold onto being 'normal' made possible by accessing public healthcare services may not be so apparent. Gloria, the other mother of a young deaf son whom I also met during my BSL Level 1 course, gives her own account of her son's diagnosis of deafness, illustrating more explicitly how accessing medical services is seized as an opportunity to state and maintain one's family's social status as a 'normal' hearing family.

Gloria

Although Gloria was living with her husband and two children in London for the past six years, her personal history of being a mother of a deaf child begins somewhere else. When asked about when it was that she suspected or knew that her son Matthew, aged ten, was deaf, Gloria explained that Matthew

"was not born here, he was born in Kenya. And then I was here [in London] with my husband, and I had left him with my mom. And at the time my mom saw that something was not right. So, when I went home, she told me about it and from there we took him to hospitals back in Kenya. They did tests … The first doctor that I was referred to, … he

did the tests and all that, and he said 'Okay, you need to get him a hearing aid', and he decided it [deafness] was one side [one ear only] … I was not really happy about it, … so I ended up going private anyway, because there was no way public. So, he referred me to a doctor who got [financial] support from South Africa and is setting up some diagnostic equipment. So, he [Matthew] was amongst the first children to be tested with those equipment … And … they did diagnose him as having bilateral profound deafness … From there he got the hearing aids. So, we purchased the hearing aids, and then I got introduced to speech therapy." (Interview with Gloria, 29 May 2014)

In Gloria's narrative, there are several themes that are also shared by other hearing mothers from immigrant communities who were living in London at the time of their interview but were still living in their home country at the early stages of their child's diagnosis, as well as by some deaf adults who were children when the NHS was not as proactive as today in early detection of childhood deafness. The first major theme is the relatively lesser degree of State intervention in the family in terms of taking an interest in the child's body including their ears. As such, the child often came to the healthcare professional's attention only after the family members developed a suspicion of deafness due to the absence of a reaction to sound by their young child. On the flip side, these families also had less access to the healthcare system or to the type of higher quality healthcare services offered privately and thus incurred an economic cost to use, delimiting these resources as scarce and therefore those families as service users who otherwise could have pursued to be 'normal' to then be distinct from the general public. As a second and broader theme, the overall familial and professional efforts especially at these early stages are towards restoring the child's hearing and thus speech. In terms of the role of language to form and maintain group bonds, helping the child access spoken language is also seen as a means to keep the deaf child within their 'hearing family' and more broadly as a member of the 'hearing world'. At this stage of these two mothers' narratives, this is the dominant (and for the most part unchallenged) view towards childhood deafness. The alternative views existing within various societies toward childhood deafness, such as those, for example, expressed within UK's adult deaf community and reported in the Introduction, were not yet accessible to these parents. This is in line with comments regarding the lack of sign language services available to deaf children and their families in Canada, and that this practice "is keeping with a general worldwide trend in countries that have likewise

established universal neonatal hearing screening programs" (Komesaroff, 2008, in Snoddon and Underwood, 2013, p.532).

After a discussion of some basic speech and language therapy sessions, Gloria continues:

> "And then we had come to a standstill now because there was nothing further that could be done … We'd just go [to the doctors] for the [ear] mold or the [replacement of hearing aid] batteries –he was using hearing aids. And about after two years we decided to move here [to London]. Yeah, the doctor told me there was the option that he could be helped with the cochlear implant. That is the next option ... After looking around, nothing is being done in my own country, there's no such facilities, so my husband was here [London] … [and] I joined my husband." (Interview with Gloria, 29 May 2014)

As is evident from the above account, the third reoccurring theme in mothers' narratives expresses their strong desire to get their child to be able to hear and, as I will further demonstrate below, to consequently produce speech despite the lack of locally available, suitable, and capable third parties. In Gloria's case, their family decided to move abroad, to London, England, when Matthew was three-and-a-half years old. Another mother, Melika, also temporarily lived away from her husband and two older hearing children to support her daughter Aisha to hear and speak. Below is her account of their early years living with Aisha's deafness.

Melika

Melika and her adult daughter Aisha, now in her early forties, were both permanent residents of the UK at the time of the interview and lived together in a one-bedroom flat in London. When Aisha was a preschooler, they had moved to France for several years away from their home country of Lebanon. During my joint interview with the mother-daughter dyad, Melika talked about those early years in search of a diagnosis and subsequent rehabilitation of Aisha's hearing:

"When [Aisha] was one year and a half, I saw the doctor … (What made you want to go to the doctor?) Because at home the [door] bell or her brother … was crying, or TV watching, or something like that, she didn't have any … response, … So I was *very* worried and I went to the doctor and the doctor said 'Yes, you are [right], yes she's deaf but you have to go to France'. Because before in [my country] we haven't got a lot of … technology to see how degree was her [hearing loss]. … So we went to France, and we stayed … just a day at the hospital. They make a lot of exam … and they said 'Yes, she is profoundly deaf'. They said 'you have to buy some hearing aids to help her also she needs [speech therapist] … for 4-5 hours a week to speak with her' … So we … came back to [Lebanon] … and we bought some hearing aids, and we decided to go to France, to stay there, on special school for deaf … I left … my daughter and my son with their father and I went to France … [For] three years in France, we stayed together … So she started [at about] five or six years [old], she start just speaking, speaking very bad but she started speaking." (Joint interview with Aisha and Melika, 19 June 2014)

Ultimately, from Melika's perspective, the result of finally seeing her daughter begin to engage with spoken language was worth the many sacrifices. The high value placed on providing a deaf child with access to speech by many hearing parents with no prior experience with deafness is made clearer by the comments of Margaret whose views on her identification as a deaf person were discussed in the Introduction. For her parents, the birth of a deaf child was not seen as a split between their imagined and actual social identities as parents and as a family. When I asked Margaret what she thought of the Newborn Hearing Screening Test, she replied:

"So what? Why worry? Why shocked when find out that there's something with the baby's hearing? … It's easy to detect … My mom said, when my sister was born, when she was sleeping, she made some noise and checked that the baby's eyelids were moving so she knew that she was hearing. With me, she did the same procedure, but I slept through it, so she knew I was deaf. She knew. … Yes they [hearing parents] are shocked, they need information, they need to be given information. They don't meet a Deaf role model, nothing. They are only offered the cochlear implant. That's all that is presented to them." (Interview with Margaret, 25 July 2014)

Although several of my deaf adult interlocutors noted that it is important to check children's hearing as early as possible, their general argument for the follow-up actions needed if a hearing loss was diagnosed were framed under the attitude of accepting and not of trying to change the child. For example, instead of resorting to interventions aimed at improving hearing and speech, suggestions were made to begin teaching the child and the parents sign language straight away. For example, during the winter of 2014, I attended a training session aimed at deaf adults who wanted to lobby their MPs during the special visit to Westminster the following day organized by a well-established, prominent national charity advocating for deaf people's rights in the UK. The training was organized by a London-based interpreting agency and was led by deaf and hearing activists. One presentation by a deaf activist concluded their remarks with a cartoon of two babies, one deaf and the other hearing. The image was titled "The Greatest Irony[30]", in which the irony was that while the sad deaf baby was prevented from using sign language, the hearing baby was happily signing away, in this case "I love you" in American Sign Language as part of the popularity within some Western countries of 'Baby Signs' where hearing babies are introduced to some basic signs to aid them to express their needs and wants until they are developmentally capable to learn to do this through words.

With all hearing mothers that I spoke to, their accounts signal a common trend in which as soon as the awareness of deafness is brought to the attention of NHS professionals, they in turn immediately offer parents available procedures that emphasize the rehabilitation of the child's hearing. This is supported by other, broader, research where it is noted that within the "medical discourse […] the focus is on the training of listening skills" where the "standard to be achieved is to be as-close-to-a-hearing-child as possible" (Mattjijs et al., 2012). It typically starts with hearing aids followed by assessments to determine suitability for surgery for cochlear implantation as, at times, a more effective measure to improve hearing. I now would like to return to Gloria's story and how she felt about having Matthew undergo surgery for cochlear implantation.

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[30] The cartoon is by an American Deaf artist, Maureen Klusza.

Gloria

Gloria had initially told me that the decision to go for surgery in order to get a cochlear implant for her son aged four was an easy one. At this stage, she was involved with, as she put it, "the cochlear implant group" from the hospital where the surgery would take place. The team included an audiologist, a speech and language therapist, and a TOD. She felt that her decision at the time was an informed decision, that

> "my questions got answered, I got explained too what is going to happen and if I was ready to make the decision. It was easy for me to make the decision because I've always said to myself … that I guess the worst has happened because he can't hear. So, if he has the operation and he can hear than that's good, if he doesn't, too bad [because] there is the chance that [the CI device] might not function". (Interview with Gloria, 29 May 2014)

Gloria was aware of the possibility that as part of the surgery, amongst other risks, that the remaining healthy ear hairs might be also damaged and as a result "maybe in future if something [like a new hearing technology] might come up he might not be able to benefit from it. But sometimes I say you make the decision with what you have at that time because I don't know what is going to be developed in the future so out of that that's how we went ahead. So, me and the family said let's go for the implant."

But then, when I asked if she could talk more about how her family reacted, the story became more complicated. In fact, only Gloria's nuclear family, in this case her husband and herself because their only child Matthew was too young to be included in the decision-making, were in favour of the surgery. An influential part of Gloria's kinship group, in contrast, was highly skeptical of taking this path. Gloria mentioned that:

> "Some of the family was 'No, don't take him through that surgery'. My parents, my aunties they were a bit resistant … I think it was because of the culture; you should accept the way God made you and that's how it is. Ok, my parents are elderly, so there is like [this belief to not] try to change things … from the way they are. So, I think that's

why they were talking that way. And also, part of [it was] the scare of the surgery. People go to surgery and don't wake up or they don't make it; especially [if] it will affect part of the head. And they've seen many people back in Kenya who go to surgery and don't make it so… as much as they know it was a dark, dark path. You never know." (Interview with Gloria, 29 May 2014)

This caused a moral dilemma for Gloria. She too saw herself as part of the religious community – Protestant Christians – her kinship group was affiliated with. However, being a nurse, she was also a member of the medical community and understood well what the procedure involved, including the risks. She knew and trusted the surgeon and what the cochlear implant team told her, and she herself mentioned that the surgery was very successful. As for her moral dilemma informed by her faith, she resolved it by talking to someone with religious authority that she had known well: her pastor from her church back in Kenya. Gloria recounted that:

"When we met I talked with him [about] what was going on, so we did have an extensive talk …, and he told me 'You have an advantage in this nation [UK] and you have such an opportunity, where you had come [Kenya] you would not have such an opportunity. You have this child, you can give him that chance, and he'll say surely my parents have tried, even if it didn't work, they did what was best at the time'. This gave me reassurance … Then I said ok, I can make this [go ahead with surgery], God is with me, you know." (Interview with Gloria, 29 May 2014)

At this stage where there still existed a real possibility that medicine and technology could help Matthew hear, Gloria continues to reject that Matthew is deaf and continues to try to realize the 'virtual social identity' of her son, a son that can hear and speak. When self-reflecting back on the type of person she was during the years between Matthew's diagnosis as deaf at age three up until he was in primary school around the age of seven, Gloria mentioned how she still wanted to construct her new family as a 'hearing' family. Gloria stated:

"You see [back] then ... as a parent you're like 'I want my child to be audial, to be able to speak ... I didn't want my child to be a BSL user [...] I thought maybe he would not be interested in being audial if he is BSL. And from what I had seen from him is like he didn't want to talk, you know [his expression of] 'oh I'm comfortable, I get this', that's it, he doesn't want to verbalize or be vocal. So that was my fear". (Interview with Gloria, 29 May 2014)

Hearing parents of deaf children may experience fear for their child's future such as what languages they will and will not be able to learn and thus what types of groups they will ultimately be associated with. They also experience, I suggest, fear for their own status. Gloria, for example, sought the approval of her decisions regarding her son getting a cochlear implant from her family, pastor and God as well as Matthew himself as she contemplated him being older and reflecting on the process. As hearing adults, these mothers remained in the first phase of their moral careers for a prolonged period, which included enjoying a taken-for-granted 'hearing' and thus 'normal' status. This then is potentially threatened with the birth of their deaf child. While continuing to make use of Goffman's (1963) terms, in this case 'courtesy stigma', below I demonstrate how hearing parents of deaf children may experience, as part of entering the second phase of their moral career which includes 'stigma learning', a lowering of their social status because of their relation to someone deaf – their own child.

2.3 Being the mother of a deaf child experienced as 'courtesy stigma'

'Courtesy stigma', according to Goffman (1963), is a degree of stigma acquired, often by family members and friends of the stigmatized person, because they are "related through the social structure to a stigmatized individual – a relationship that leads the wider society to treat both individuals in some respects as one" (Goffman, 1963, p.43). In Irena's case, for example, her resistance to accepting her son's deafness was strongest during the period which coincided to a time in her own moral career where she began to experience hardships linked to being a mother of a deaf baby. She expressed this resistance when she said:

"At first I think so that I need to fight with myself to just accept that [my son is deaf] …
At first it was very hard to accept it because like … [as a] six weeks old boy he was very
small and hearing aids were quite big … like seven years ago. So even when I go to the
park with him or even for the playgroup so everybody look[s at] it and everybody just
keep asking me why he got the hearing aids because a lot of people they couldn't just
understand that sometimes its happen and kids like just born deaf. So for the, I think
so, first half a year it was quite hard to just be like calm because it was like everybody
look for it everybody ask you." (Interview with Irena, 5 June 2014)

Here the concern is not only for her son, but to a greater extend for herself as well. As a
mother of a deaf baby, his highly visible clumsy hearing aids are self-perceived as a 'stigma
symbol' that also discredits herself with a courtesy stigma (Goffman, 1963, p.59). She abhors
the ambiguous feeling and the anxiety (finding it hard to stay calm) created by the many acts
of staring so much that she would much rather transform such moments into expressions of
curiosity and sympathy through which she can re-establish her status in these starer-staree
relationship:

"Sometimes what I would prefer that instead to looking to me and my kids, they can
just straightaway ask me like 'why your son's got the CI' or 'how you learned him two
languages?' or something like, I would prefer like maybe I'm quite open and I prefer to
if someone's got … the question they can just, I would not be like frustrating or upset or
something, I would be able to answer for any question if they've got, it's better for me
to just answer for the question [rather than] … the feeling that everybody looks [at]
you." (Interview with Irena, 5 June 2014)

One way that some parents of deaf children manage to avoid experiencing actual or perceived
stigmatization could rest in the fact that they continue to live a family life reflective of the
hearing world, in particular by investing in their deaf child's potential to hear and speak made
possible through the medical opportunities available to them. While there are many families
where this is indeed the case, in many other instances, such as with Nimali, despite efforts by
the family and healthcare staff, the deaf child may still not have meaningful access to spoken
language. In such examples, when the parents do not or cannot adjust themselves to their

deaf child's persistent actual social identity as not being an 'oral deaf' child or as being a 'signer' or simply not being a 'hearing' child, major consequences await the deaf child. They may become trapped at the crossroads between being only partially included in, for example, their hearing family, and simultaneously kept at a distance from becoming a member of other groups that are not all 'hearing'. Unable to neither become 'hearing' nor given the opportunity to transition into being fuller members of groups of deaf peers where they could experience more accessible and therefore meaningful communication, deaf youth like Nimali can become marginalized both at home and school (Locker Mckee, 2008; Most, 2007; Valentine and Skelton, 2003). References to this constant exclusion experienced by deaf youth will be made throughout the upcoming chapters, especially in Chapter Five. Other parents, as will be described in the following section, embrace their child's deafness with all its outcomes and move on to become 'experienced' parents, constructing their family house according to this new form of parent-child relationship.

Section 3 – The construction of the home as a 'collaborative place'

<u>Irena</u>

After becoming a mother, Irena continues to interact with people she knows in places familiar to her, such as when she visits her family and friends at their homes. Her experiences of these places, however, are altered because she is now accompanied by Aron. Irena explains that

> "When sometimes I go to visit like … my family or even my friends here who hasn't got the experience with the deaf people, they open the window [and I say] 'We need to close the window'. But for them it's like something new. So all the time when you go to your friend you have to just share your experience and say what is good for your son. Even like one of my friend she was speaking quickly. I say 'Don't speak quickly because like it's hard [for my son] to [follow] everything [being said]…. You … can say everything but more slower because if you … say quickly … sometimes he can just miss it'. So a lot of people, they don't know because they think he's able to hear [normally with the

cochlear implant], so we can speak with him like we [ordinarily] speak". (Interview with Irena, 5 June 2014)

Here Irena is making a distiction between herself – a hearing person *experienced* in communicating with her deaf son – and her hearing acquaintances who are still novices because they have not yet "got the experience with the deaf people". This distinction is significant because, I suggest, her own lived experiences with Aron have gradually changed Irena in terms of her perception of Aron and his deafness. Soon after her son's birth, Irena was learning to be a mother and was also overwhelmed by information made available to her on childhood deafness. At this point her focus was directed towards Aron's body and how his experience of sound reception and production could be altered with hearing technologies and related services accessible to them, with the aim of improving Aron's hearing as much as possible – a value that was jointly shared by the (medical and educational) professionals Irena was surrounded by as well as Irena herself, including her family and her cultural group. With time, however, as Irena moved on in her moral career to a stage where she became more accepting of her son's deafness and had built a strong relationship with him, her focus shifted to the environments Aron frequented and how their social and spatial aspects could be modified to accommodate Aron's actual social identity. As such, because Irena was in tune with Aron's specific communication capabilities and preferences, she used this knowledge to initiate minor yet significant modifications to other people's homes and behaviours, such as closing windows near busy streets to reduce background noise that can make what's being said more difficult to understand and guiding friends to carry on talking in theirusual ways, just in a slightly slower pace, without reducing the depth in which they engage with the topic of conversation. In this sense Irena shifts expectations towards herself and others to self-invest in developing the skills to 'switch' mental and bodily orientations when interacting with a deaf person. 'Switching' to meet the communication style and levels of their co-communicator is something I've heard from my various adult deaf interlocutors. For them, it is an important skill that enables the beholder to engage with people from a rich array of backgrounds and communication styles. As there is no single established standard BSL that is widely used within UK's 'Deaf community', for example, the 'community linguistic repertoire' – as coined by Gumperz – is rich in terms of "the totality of linguistic resources which speakers may employ in significant social interaction" (Blom and Gumperz, 1972, p.411). This

experientially learned skill, subsequently, is the basis from which a relationship can be reconstructed as being socially collaborative and certain places become locations for such 'communicative collaborators' . Through her commitment to her role as a mother of a deaf child during which she has accumulated her lived experiences with Aron, Irena has become a certain 'type of person': an 'experienced' hearing person.

Goffman (1963) makes use of the term 'wise' to decribe people such as Irena who are themselves 'normal' and who through their special relationship to those who do not have this "fully normal status" become aware of and sympathetic to their often little-known way of life (Goffman, 1963, pages 20 and 44). Other scholars use terms such as 'hearing allies' (Ladd, 2011, pages 82 and 156; Nakamura, 2006, p.181). As such, the hearing wise or allies can be professionals or lay people such as hearing interpreters, linguists, TODs, hearing people learning sign language, hearing colleagues of deaf employees, hearing parents of deaf children and hearing friends of deaf children and youth. In Irena's case, she is 'normal' in the sense that she can use her hearing and speech facilities conventionally, without needing the use of any noticible body-worn technologies. Throughout the years since Aron's birth, Irena's knowledge of deafness increases, predominantly shaped by her own learning experiences as a committed mother and informed by Aron's own particular experiences of deafness. Her commitment is apparent in her willingness to always be ready to act as a 'stand-in' – a role, according to Goffman (1963, p.44) taken up by the 'wise'– between her son and her hearing acquaintances, explicitly telling them "what is good for [her] son" so they can shift their bodily expressions and alter their environment accordingly. One aspect of being 'experienced', therefore, is a willingness to actively change one's *own* bodily expressions and initiate environmental changes by being attentive to the specific communication preferences of the deaf person(s) one is interacting with. In this sense, when with Aron, Irena reacts to their proximity as what Goffman (1966) describes as a 'focused interaction' or an 'encounter'. According to Goffman, encounters "comprise all those instances of two or more participants in a situation joining each other openly in maintaining a single focus of cognitive and visual attention—what is sensed as a single *mutual activity*, entailing preferential communication rights", "intimately coordinated contributions", "mutual commitment of the participants" as well as "a degree of mutual considerateness, [and] sympathy" (Goffman, 1966, pages 89, 90 and 96, original emphasis).

Irena is also aware that her experience and knowledge related to deafness provides her with a unique perspective not available to most people who simply "don't know" how to communicate with a deaf person because it is all "new" to them. As such, her awareness is gained through her everyday direct experiences with Aron. To illustrate this point, Irena gives the example again of the visibility of hearing technologies and the common misperception this creates for many 'inexperienced' people. She retells of an encounter relayed to her by a deaf youth whose visible cochlear implant is often thought of as "he's got the implant, he's speaking, so he's okay". As a result, they may continue to speak as they are habitually used to do so without making any adjustments. These people are the 'hearing novices' who can only base their reaction to the presence of a deaf person on an imaginary or generalized type of deaf person which does not involve the appropriate knowledge required to establish a commitment to form a personal relationship. They may, furthermore, even become "utterly disengaged" due to their "insuffiently knowing" how to behave relatively appropriately and receptively when with different deaf persons using diverse communicative means and thus "have great difficulty in sustaining attention and hence proper involvement within the situation" (Ibid., pages 50-51). On the contrary, experienced hearing people like Irena anchor their responses on actual lived experiences with deaf people where the deaf person's feedback are central to their learning, gradually constructing themselves as being "experienced". Guided by the principle of mutuality and collaboration which bring with it the quality of being open to change one's behaviour, especially the means of communication, as well as a sense of equality, such focussed interactions often function as the basis of group formation and maintenance. Goffman (1966) talks about a group atmosphere developing as a result of most focussed face engagements (Ibid., pages 96-98). When discussing the link between language use and the creation of social meaning in their ethnographic work, on the other hand, Blom and Gumperz (1972) talk about how 'heart-to-heart' talk is made possible between members of a small Norwegian community because they both agree that the value of equality and identification with each other as locals with personal ties (and in doing so becoming communicative collaborators) is best expressed through mutually switching to the common local language.

Irena shares her experiences with people closest to her by giving them tips as to how to best communicate with Aron directly on a one-to-one basis. In other circumstances, however, such as when they go to Mass, Irena uses another adjustment strategy in order to make the environment more engaging for her son:

"When we go to the church, we go in the front, because couple of times we was in the back [and] when we finish the mass I asked him 'Aron, can you just explain me what somebody saying', 'I don't know mummy, I can't hear it' … Even we are in the front of it and its better hearing but still it's the noise because there is like a lot of people … That's why he just sometimes say 'Oh, I don't want to go there' 'Aron, why you don't want to go there?' 'Because its so noisy, after that I've got the headache'". (Interview with Irena, 5 June 2014)

In situations where the speech is delivered with a wider audience in mind, in this case all the church members attending Mass, Irena did not have the same opportunities to ensure that there was reduced background noise and that the speech was delivered at a slower pace. In this crowded encounter, Aron was not fully involved in the situation mainly due to the "impoverished environment" – both physically and linguisticly – it provided to Aron's sensory receptors (Goffman, 1966, p.53). Despite his mother's efforts, therefore, Aron could not meaningfully participate in the religious community his mother belonged to and wanted her son to take part in as well. Instead, Aron had an uncomfortable physical pain in the form of a headache associated with these gatherings, further causing him to wanting to withdraw from this collective religious activity. In this sense Aron becomes a "disaffected" participant of the gathering and thus chooses to "refrain from entering the situation in the first place" instead of feeling compelled to demonstrate proper involvement in the religious activity (Goffman, 1966, p.38).

Although Irena had only limited influence over her son's social, spatial, discursive and bodily experiences when they were out and about, she had much more control over changes that could be made at home. When I asked about such modifications, she said:

"Basically … when we've got the conversation … we just switch off the TV. Some of my friends, [when] we come to visit them the TV is still switched on … Some of the people they just speaking [while] sometimes looking at the TV. But in our house it never happens like that because we will not be able to speak with my son if the TV will be switch on … For him it will be like quite hard to answer for the question if he can hear the [background] noise." (Interview with Irena, 5 June 2014)

While discussing her strategies she applies in the domestic space, she also contrasts it with how it's done differently elsewhere. To talk to a person while the TV is generating so much background noise coupled with the reduced eye-contact from watching TV are behaviours common in 'hearing' households occupied by hearing people "who hasn't got the experience with the deaf people". In Irena and Aron's home, however, where a family with deaf and an 'experienced' hearing member live together, this would, in Irena's words, "never" happen. In this sense, since having Aron, coupled with Irena's commitment to her new role as a mother of a deaf child, their communicatively collaborative relationship had also transformed their home into a 'collaborative place'. A 'collaborative place' therefore, gains its meaning from the type of social relationship it enables. Their home is more of a 'collaborative place' where Aron is an active and valued participant in the family group because in most of the other social and spatial situations he is not. Furthermore, their home's gradual formation as a 'collaborative place' parallels Irena's moral career path which coincides to the phase in her life as a mother of a deaf child when she decides to replace her self-idealization as a 'normal' mother (where she has already acquired the experienced status in the affairs of oral communication) with a self-concept as a 'hearing novice' – thus accepting her relationship to her *deaf* son – with the intention of becoming an experienced hearing person. The key to creating this 'collaborative place' is demonstrated by Irena, who herself started with the status of a 'novice hearing' person and gradually gained mastery in the matters of 'switching' relevant to Aron as her 'communicative collaborator'.

As Blom and Gumperz (1972) have outlined, "[t]he notion of situational switching assumes a direct relationship between language and the social situation" (Blom and Gumperz, 1972, p.424). In the context of a deaf-hearing encounter, switching is partly accomplished by the hearing person being highly attentive to the often subtle feedback from the deaf person

received during a face-to-face, unmediated interaction with them in an attempt to ascertain – although not always effectively – their deaf interlocutor's most preferred way of communication, often accompanied by a need for bodily and spatial re-organization. Irena, for example, becomes more attuned to how Aron experiences sound by asking Aron how he feels and the underlying reasons as to why after they return home from trips to various locations that for Irena have a sense of cultural and communal significance. She wants to continue to be part of these places with her son, but she is aware of how her son's experiences in and of these places are not as socially meaningful or audibly accessible and are even sometimes physically painful, at times causing reluctance to revisit. Observations of her son's partial or full exclusion from places of identification for Irena sets the backdrop from which she begins to invest in making her own home a 'collaborative place' – linked to (new) forms of identification for her and her son – as well as actively searching for other places in her locality. In other words, this sense of shared feeling of unsatisfactory inclusion in a majority of places begets the founding of collaborative places as places of fuller participation. As Barth (1969) famously highlighted, it is through "social processes of exclusion and incorporation whereby discreet categories are maintained" (Barth, 1969, p.10). Furthermore, Blom and Gumperz (1972) state that "[e]ffective communication requires that speakers and audiences agree both on the meaning of words and on the social import or values attached to choice of expression", and that social meaning, which is the contextualized social value, can be attached to not only linguistic communication "but also to settings, [and] to items of background knowledge" (Blom and Gumperz, 1972, pages 417-418). In agreement with them, I suggest that a mother's efforts to be a communicative collaborator by gradually developing her 'communicative repertoire' create the potential for a distinct, and possibly for her deaf child the first, form of meaningful communication where not only information but also newly experienced social meanings such as loyalty, sympathy and belonging are exchanged. It is important to highlight here that in line with the concept of translanguaging, the meaning-making process discussed here is not bound by either interlocutor being 'competent' in a given 'language'. Taking a holistic approach to language learning, Humphries et al. (2016) state that "parents do not have to be […] even very good language models" as long as the child is "exposed to good language models frequently and regularly, and models outside the home can serve that function very well" (Humphries et al., 2016, p.514). This issue of when and how deaf children should be exposed to (which) language model, however, is a contested

issue in the education of deaf children, especially for the early years period. Furthermore, Swanwick et al. (2016) highlight the affective dimension of deaf children's conversations with their mothers and how this can be achieved through translanguaging.

When at home, Irena also experiments with different strategies of what works best,

> "for example, like when I speak[31] with him I just close all the window … For the people who hasn't got the hearing problem, even if you've got the open window, for you its not make a difference. But for the people who got the hearing problem, when you just leave the window open, when the car coming … when you speak they can hear [the noise made by the car] and [it becomes] quite hard sometimes to understand something. They need to [ask] 'Can you repeat that one?'. So that's why … even like the small thing but for kids who can't hear its like huge thing." (Interview with Irena, 5 June 2014)

Irena is once again defining her relationship with her son as one taking place, I suggest, in a 'collaborative place' – their quiet home – as compared to the noisy homes of "people who hasn't got the hearing problem". Her empathy as to Aron's bodily experiences in these two different places allows her to place a high value on efforts such as making sure the windows are closed which ultimately create, I argue, a 'collaborative place' which fosters specific yet nonetheless meaningful deaf-hearing conversations. It is important to note, however, that such collaborative efforts may not always be perceived by the deaf child (often in retrospect when older) as being sufficient and is linked to broader political issues on the positionality of hearing parents and deaf adults regarding the learning and development of deaf children. Nevertheless, from Irena's perspective, what she is trying to do when conversing with her deaf son is important, a sentiment made explicit when she describes each adjustment she makes as a "huge thing" because they cannot be taken for granted. Like most deaf people and their hearing allies, Irena has become aware of the rarity of such 'collaborative places' and how strenuous it is to create them outside of their home. After all, Irena is constantly engaging with most people Aron comes into contact with in order to make the communication more

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[31] Irena speaks mostly Polish to her son, especially at home.

meaningful, an issue that will be dealt with in more depth in Chapter Two. As a hearing person with many experiences in the 'hearing world', for example when she is with "people who hasn't got the hearing problem", however, Irena also knows that efforts such as closing the window have little or no value and are perceived as a "small thing" because hearing-to-hearing conversations are much less frequently disrupted when a car passes by.

After acquiring the role of being a mother of a deaf child, Irena is beginning to notice a difference between how her friends make use of the domestic space and how they interact in it as compared to her own home shaped by her growing awareness as to how to best communicate with her son. She is thus beginning to see how her friends and her family are 'hearing' because her son is 'deaf'. While hearing novices who quickly assume that the existence of hearing technologies and the ability to speak qualify the deaf child as 'hearing', these are seen as signs of ignorance mainly due to inexperience by experienced hearing people and deaf people alike. In other words, the way that hearing novices interact with deaf people reveal subjectively chosen "cultural features [that] are used by actors [of 'collaborative places'] as signals and emblems of difference", which in turn contribute to how deaf people and their hearing allies organize their social relationships (Barth, 1969, p.14). She is also aware of how she herself, along with most hearing specialist health, social care and educational specialists, is an 'experienced' hearing person – although at varying levels and within certain restricted domains of deafness – because most other hearing people are novices. It is with the growing set of experiences, knowledge and skills of the experienced hearing person gained in collaboration with experienced deaf person(s) that a place can be transformed into a 'collaborative place'. Each collaborative place allows for both interlecutors to exchange information and socialize through a medium that is comfortable to both. In Irena and Alex's home, for example, because Aron makes use of his hearing technologies, background noise is kept to the minimum. In other collaborative places, this might be less significant, with each collaborative place reflecting the various communication preferences of each participant individual.

This collaboration, however, is not the norm in most 'hearing' places, including majority of the mainstream schools including those that host a deaf units. Irena mentions how Aron feels after school, comparing it to his hearing peers' experiences:

"The hearing [students] can know that they can switch off the [background] noise; they can only pay attention [to] the conversation. But with the coclear implant and with the hearing [aids] … it's not straightaway … They need to learn to just how to don't pay attention of the noise, only for the speech … That's why when he comes back from the school everytime he's tired … It's not only for my son … When I speak with my friends whose got the same kids with the hearing problem, … all of them they said to me the same, that they come back from the school and quite often they needs to have like the time to just do nothing … Other people who hasn't got the hearing problem, they just come to the house and … they like to watch the TV, they like to do the other things. But for my son, even when sometimes 'Aron, do you want to switch on TV? Do you want to just rest and watch something?' 'No mummy, its too noisy for me. I need to have the time to quiet'." (Interview with Irena, 5 June 2014)

Aron's school is a hearing school in which Aron is still learning to be like his hearing peers – to filter out the background noise and focus on speech effortlessly. And although for his hearing peers sitting down and watching TV could be considered a restful activity after a long day at school; for Aron listening to the speech and sound generated by the TV means yet more effort. Alternatively, while hearing children still have the energy after school to be active by doing "other things"; Aron and other deaf children known to Irena, who by the end of the school day feel mentally and bodily exhausted, express a need to "just do nothing" in a quiet enviroment, like lying on the bed for a while. As such, a collaborative place functions as a refuge from the demands of the hearing world and differs from it in terms of its participants' interaction with sound. A mainstream school and other people's homes are characterized by ultimately noisy places which the deaf students need to adapt to. Aron's home, on the other hand, where his demands and needs are positively satisfied, is a 'collaborative place'.

Furthermore, at home he can display greater agency by negotiating with his mother in making it a quiet place. Because Irena is still at a stage of finding out how much sound Aron can tolerate and when, their home is not yet an established collaborative place in the sense that they are not all in sync as to what is the appropriate thing to do once Aron is back from school. By continuing to converse with him, for example, about how he wants to relax after school,

however, Irena is embracing her role as a novice hearing mother by demonstrating a willingness to learn from Aron, and adjust accordingly. This in turn allows Aron to have an increased input in shaping his home environment to his preference by stating his likes and needs. In her ethnographic work *Growing Old in Silence*, where Gaylene Becker (1980) also talks about the early family experiences of elderly deaf US Americans. She too concludes that for deaf people born to hearing parents with prior experience with deafness mainly derived from them having older deaf children, they "had more opportunities than most deaf people to develop esteem-giving relationships within the family" because of "[t]he gradual acceptance of deafness in [their] family" (Becker, 1980, pages 32-33). As such, through 'communicative collaborators' the deaf child's self-esteem is nurtured.

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To conclude, in the early years following diagnosis, for the family home of hearing parents of a deaf child mentioned in this chapter has an ambiguous status. It, for example, has the potential of remaining 'hearing' through a continued use and therefore affiliation with the spoken language(s) the hearing parents are already accustomed to use. Additionally, as was in the case of Gloria and Matthew as well as Melika and Aisha, the mothers' investment in their deaf child's body with the goal of restoring hearing and thus speech was the means they had chosen for their child to achieve full membership in their 'hearing' family. On the other hand, the domestic space also has the potential to, as in the case of Irena and Aron, become a place of collaboration experienced by the hearing mother and her deaf child alike. All deaf individuals mentioned so far shared a common experience of not achieving a level of fluency in the family language(s) with the same relative ease and speed as the rest of their hearing family members. In cases such as Nimali's where the family environment continued to reinforce communication primarily through speech, then, I argue that Nimali strove to become 'normal' like her hearing mother. Her home, and later mirroring this, her schools reflected this value for oral communication, with Nimali at its margins. Irena too struggled to achieve this collaborative atmosphere immediately and effectively at their own home and also even less so out of their home environment in places she previously frequented and had provided her with a sense of belonging. This situation indirectly resulted in, for example, Aron

at times being excluded from conversations at a friend's house or him ultimately wanting to self-exclude himself from going to church. As I've demonstrated with Irena and Aron, however, the point where the family home begins to transform into a collaborative place through the efforts of Irena who has come to accept her son as being deaf leads to Aron's fuller participation in family activities. A 'collaborative place', then, is both a physical and social space where the deaf person's communication preferences are attended to at varying levels through collaboration with (often hearing) others who are present and result in adjustments at the physical, corporeal and cognitive levels.

The family group has its own unique social, linguistic, and spatial dimensions from those other groups that children – including deaf children – enter as they grow up and expand their social circles. It is here that the (deaf) child first experiences feelings of either belonging or isolation as a basis of their developing social identities. the home forms the deaf child's first location of lived experiences of being deaf, which is partly constructed through the deaf child's relations with their mother which includes the mother's communication choices with their deaf child. In instances where novice hearing mothers of deaf children deny their child's 'actual social identity' as being deaf for reasons such as threats to group cohesion and status loss, their children then, I argue, may use strategies that will associate themselves with being hearing, or at least oral, at the cost of isolation – an issue that I will discuss further in the upcoming chapters. In contrast, when the mother accepts their child's deafness in actual terms and is willing to switch her own ways of expressing herself in order to have a more effective communication with her child, the result is a strong bond between the experienced hearing mother and a comparatively more actively participant deaf child.

In the next chapter, I will discuss how Irena and other 'new' mothers of deaf children equip themselves with relevant skills and information by developing networks that include 'experienced hearing people' of all sorts –from professionals who are part of various formal institutions within the area of deafness, to other more experienced mothers who come together informally. A particular emphasis is placed on the influence of these networks on the choices parents make in regards to their deaf child's communicative, educational, social and bodily experiences both in and out of the home.

CHAPTER TWO – Beyond the home: participation in the mainstream and other specialized collaborative places

This chapter intends to expand on a representative sample of mothers' perspectives on their own and their deaf child's experiences beyond their home, starting with Gloria and Matthew, aged 10. I will achieve this by demonstrating how inexperienced mothers of deaf children gain different types and levels of experiences in the field of childhood deafness as they uniquely navigate the various collaborative places located within a multiplicity of – going back to Lave and Wenger's concept – 'communities of practice'. In such communities, these 'novice' mothers encounter professionals and other more experienced mothers positioned as 'old-timers'. These notions of 'novice', 'old-timer' and 'communities of practice' as borrowed from Lave and Wenger (2003) as useful analytical tools. Issues of access to these communities and their resources as well as the degrees of participation from the theoretical perspective of 'co-presence' will be of importance to this chapter. Furthermore, the interrelation of communities from the perspective of language choice will be discussed, with references to Barth's (1969) work on the creation and maintenance of boundaries. The chapter is structured into three sections where mothers of deaf children are followed as they move from mainstream settings that do not engage their deaf sons much (Section 1), to then the need to seek out established 'collaborative places' in order to provide their sons with a sense of fuller participation (Section 2), concluding with examples of how they create their own 'communities of practice' as they become experienced mothers themselves (Section 3).

Section 1: Issues regarding co-presence between deaf children and hearing novices in mainstream settings

1.1 Common experiences of minimal co-presence

In Chapter One, I discussed how Irena witnessed Aron's partial exclusion from her church due to his different sensorial experiences of the place and from its majority of participants. Gloria too, who was also a churchgoer and wanted to include her son Matthew in this communal activity, faced similar issues when visiting her church with him. The excerpt below outlines her experiences at her old church with a predominantly Kenyan congregation:

"When I was going to church, I found people are also very ignorant of needs of people with deafness. Actually, my son didn't like it. They [do] not bother to tell him anything because he can't talk. So, he is isolated. It's like he's not existing, he's not there … So, I tried to put that in place but [then] … we started going to church somewhere else … [with a] more open environment. They have an [English/BSL] interpreter and he is feeling okay now because the children there, they understand about deafness. Everyone is supportive – they give him a seat in front so that he's able to see and they are concerned that he's able to learn, which is very different from our old African community … This one is … [located in Central London], it's the Church of England, so it's multinational, so it's more open." (Interview with Gloria, 29 May 2014)

Although Gloria tried to initiate this on her own, in the end she found the solution to the isolation Matthew experienced in changing churches altogether. From Gloria's perspective, this new church had itself proactively amended its existing institutional structures to include its deaf members. The regular use of an English/BSL interprter and the widespread inclusive tendencies amongst its largely hearing congregation resulted, as Gloria put it, in Matthew receiving personalized acts of adjustments and support for him to become a fuller member of the church community. As Barth put it "cultural features that signal the boundary may change" (Barth, 1969, p.14). In this instance and based on Gloria's description, in terms of the social organization of the church community then, 'language' ceased to be a marker of who was and was not a member.

In terms of equality of access provided for deaf people when it comes to more secular mainstream activities, however, the picture drawn by Irena and Gloria was quite different. Irena, for example, highlighted a significant difference in terms of her and Aron's experiences at different degrees of socio-spatial accessibility when they are out and about. When comparing London to Poland in terms of social inclusion of children with disabilities in general, for example, Irena stated that

"the huge difference is that even like [when] I go somewhere here [in London] with my son, we always meet some disability kids. Even if we go for the farm, … the playgroup,

… for music or swimming … Like the last time my son saw the kids without the legs, and he just say to me 'Mummy, … maybe he was born without the legs or maybe it's got the accident' … For my son … it's like nothing like 'Oww, look! He's hasn't got the leg!' It was something normal." (Interview with Irene, June 2014)

The visibility of disabled people in social life was perceived by Irena as a sign that Aron, seen by her as being part of this disabled community, would be socially accepted too. As a result, Irena said that "We decided to stay here because … for kids it's easier to be accept[ed] even if they are disabled because they are in London and [there are] a lot of people whose got some kind of disability … and they feel like normal. But … when I go to Poland I almost never see the people with the disability. So I think so that for my son [it] will be quite hard to maybe be more confident [in Poland]". In such instances, inclusion is mostly captured by physical access to a public place and a comfortable visibility among crowds. A group of strangers who are in each other's presence mainly to experience the place do not necessarily engage in face-to-face conversations, and if they do so, it is more likely to be intermittent and spontaneous. And since conversational communication with strangers is not a requirement for experiencing a sense of inclusion during a visit to the park or a city farm, its absence also has no effect on the pleasure Irena derives from feeling that her son will be perceived as "normal" in such places.

The social, spatial, corporeal and communicative interaction[32] between deaf and hearing people who share a physical space, or in other words their *co-presence*, then, can vary from merely being in each other's presence, or "co-location" – as illustrated above – to a "high degree of co-presence" which is describe by Lyng (1998) as "not only occupying the same spaces and experiencing the same events as one's [fellow interlocutors] but also sharing the circumstances of their lives with a constitutional stance that matches theirs as closely as possible" (Chua, 2015, p.642 and Lyng, 1998, p.225, respectively). Goffman (1963) also touches on the possibilities of co-presence when he refers to 'mix contacts' – such as those, I argue, between the deaf and the hearing – as "moments when stigmatized and normal are

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[32] Here 'interaction' is used to include the whole spectrum of reciprocated influences and responses between people.

[...] in one another's immediate physical presence, whether in a conversation-like encounter or in the mere co-presence of an unfocused gathering" (Goffman, 1963, p.23). Although many variations of the meaning of 'presence' or 'co-presence' are available from across the disciplines (Campos-Castillo and Hitlin, 2013; Mennecke et. at., 2011; Giddens, 1984 as quoted in Scholl, Lahr-Kurten and Redepenning, 2014; for a discussion linked to cyberspace see Lowenthal and Snelson, 2017), I find it analytically useful to draw on Chua's description of the concept as "an inescapably relational and often ephemeral condition that arises when various entities come together and act on each other to produce social (though not necessarily sociable) effects" (Chua, 2015. p.642). On the notion of 'entities', referring to her field site in Malaysia, she keeps the scope broad and includes 'persons', things, place, time and more, which as presences they "make themselves felt in the wider milieu" (Ibid.). Furthermore, as Chua continues to elaborate, at times co-presence can be experienced in many forms from place-based convivial encounters, to unwanted bitter ones as well as "an imperfect but necessary form of communicative co-operation" (Ibid., p.656). In other words, co-presence has an affective component, such as conviviality or otherwise. In terms of its analytical relevance, I use the co-presence continuum to further identify such encounters that are experienced as being at more engaged levels of co-presence as indicative of the relationship being situated in a collaborative place.

While Irena remembered those moments of minimal co-presence she experienced while in public places with Aron as pleasant, she associated different feelings to those moments when more of a focussed interaction between Aron and hearing novices was required. Furthermore, during Aron's swimming lessons or when Matthew was attending his old church, for example, each mother could observe that their son had to be part of a more fully engaged level of co-presence in their respective social situations. This, I argue, is linked to the more enhanced degree of co-presence that is expected to be achieved between participants in such instances as what Goffman (1966) terms as being 'face engagements' or 'encounters' which I have already described in detail in Chapter One. Below I expand on such encounters.

1.2 From mere co-presence to fully focussed face engagements

For Irena, the sense of obligation which motivated her efforts to not be merely co-present with Aron but to fully engage with him was initially perceived by her to be solely endowed upon her and her partner as Aron's parents. In practical terms, because her husband worked, she carried out most of these responsibilities herself. She illustrates this when she looks back to her inexperienced years coinciding to when she attended her local playgroup with Aron as a baby and then a toddler. These playgroups were free, supervised play sessions held at children's centres run by local authorities across London where parents and carers could attend with their pre-school aged child(ren) and use the settings' resources while having an opportunity to socialise. She explains how, for example, the fact that the staff members of her local playgroup were all –using my characterization– 'hearing novices' was not an issue for her. In her view, as a mainstream setting the space of the playgroup was designed with hearing families in mind. When Irena visited the venue, which she did voluntarily, therefore, she did not expect it to be altered specifically to function as a collaborative place for a hearing parent attending with their deaf child. She believed that collaborative places were specialized spaces. She notes that until Aron was "two years old … all responsibility basically for my son … was [on] me. Because I [chose to] go there [to the playgroup]; so … it was like … if you want to go, you can go; if you don't want to go, you can stay at home." As Lave and Wenger (2003) talk about it, "there are multiple, varied, more- or less-engaged and -inclusive ways of being located in the fields of participation defined by a community" (Lave and Wenger, 2003, pages 35-36). As Irena was still at this early, 'novice' stage, she and Aron were a lot less engaged with others when in mainstream places doing the activities taking place in such settings. In other words, they were closer to being merely co-present in relation to other participants, interacting mainly with each other, but not necessarily with the staff or other parents and children also present in the same location. As years went by, however, Irena and Gloria both became 'experienced' mothers who were more and more aware of their families' right to equally access and be similarly included in events and services organized by either public bodies or private companies, with the organizers bearing the responsibility to ensure it. Their changing perspectives on inclusion in mainstream settings is a "part of actors' learning trajectories, developing identities, and forms of membership" (Ibid., p.36). As a result, both

complained about how such places typically did not cater to their deaf child's communicative repertoire. Below is an account of Irena's experiences of trying to identify suitable leisure activities for Aron where following instructions was a core element of participation.

"My opinion is that in each council they should just organize some kind of playgroups, classes for kids [who] are deaf or just in part of that [mainstream] class, there is deaf children … like football or something. I never hear from the council that there is like something … that he is able to go ... So everything … I need to find by myself … After [finding a class], … I need to meet with the teacher, … explain him everything about the deaf kids and ask him if he is able to start to doing it … The same with … a lot of things, even the swimming … I speak with the teacher, [tell him] that he's got the implant, explain him 'Can he be all the time in front of you?' … And the thing is that it's like one of the basic things because in a lot of school they've got the [mandatory visits to the] swimming pool." (Interview with Irene, June 2014)

For Irena, then, local authorities had a responsibility to provide equal access and inclusion to 'basic services' such as playgroups and organized sports by expanding their service providers' communicative repertoires to include a degree of cultural knowledge of how to interact with deaf people and an adequate level of skills in the various suitable communication method. For her these were necessary elements to ensure her son's fuller participation in at least some of the mainstream events open to all locals who wished to attend. As Bestard-Camps (1991) puts it, she was in search of "spaces of communication" beyond domestic life where she and Aron could meet local people and communicate with ease while also helping each other (Bestard-Camps, 1991, p.133). For the most part since becoming a mother of a young deaf child, however, Irena felt that the only resource that she could tap into to educate the many 'hearing novices' found in mainstream places was her own life experiences as an experienced 'hearing ally'. She mainly felt on her own while embarking on this arduous task of trying to create specks of collaborative places scattered around her local community as her son Aron grew up and ventured into new locations to try out his new interests.

Gloria, on the other hand, talked about her experiences with a private service provider. She said that she had placed Matthew in a mainstream nursery "but the nursery was not … very

good because there was not that awareness of deafness because I think in this country there is not much awareness [of deafness] in some places … It's like they're not keen and they don't understand the behaviour of a child with deafness … So that's another thing that I encountered and I got a bit frustrated too". The local authority did intervene and a representative "did go there and did explain to them and then they tried. But I think it takes people time to really realize, because I think it was their first experience in this nursery to have such a child. Yeah, so that … awareness was not there at all. So it took time for people to really understand and adjust their ways." In the end "they seemed not to understand … and I actually pulled Matthew out from the nursery, because it's like they are picking on him. But they don't understand it's because of his hearing … [They think] like he is [intentionally] not listening".

This lack of accommodation by the wider society of the specific communicative repertoires of deaf children (and adults) when organizing a public event or service increased the need and value of 'collaborative places' that these mothers of young deaf children could identify outside of their homes. At such collaborative places, as Irena and Gloria both describe in detail below, a certain 'type of person' is found who in their experiences can and does consciously and consistently apply their various communicative resources to accommodate their sons' spatial and conversational preferences. These are dedicated professionals who have gained these relevant specialized skills as a required part of their qualifications and then as part of their job roles working with people who are deaf or have a hearing impairment. As reported by Irena and Gloria, however, the information as to their whereabouts was hard to come by, and their locations were few and scattered. Once discovered, such as during a routine visit to the hospital, these collaborative places offered an opportunity for both parents and their preschoolers to socialize and improve communication. Some examples of such specialized 'collaborative places' included specific structured events for deaf children and their families organized within an institutional setting associated with local authorities and voluntary organizations as well as informal parent networks.

Section 2: Hearing mothers with deaf children navigating the professional networks on deafness

2.1 Hearing mothers as participants of different communities of practice

The discovery of other specialized public institutions acting as collaborative places out of the home and beyond the specialist hospital environments can be so significant for parents of deaf children that it can be marked as a turning point in their life. Irena, for example, talks of the moment when she felt that she could finally share her parental commitment to fully engage with Aron with other experienced people at the point when she was introduced to a charity which ran a specialized nursery for children with communication needs. She became aware of this place two years after Aron's diagnosis. During a routine hospital visit for Aron, Irena commented that "everything changed when one time I was … [at the specialist] hospital, and I met one of the parents with deaf kids and she does advise me that … on […] High Street there is like the nursery for the deaf children". Irena truly welcomed this discovery of the existence of a collaborative place beyond the small circle of home and hospital because, I suggest, there Aron could interact with a greater number of 'experienced' people where he would ultimately achieve a sense of being co-present where he was more fully engaged. Below I further describe Irena's as well as Gloria's exploration of these different collaborative places as they gradually develop their own networks as hearing mothers of deaf children.

Besides Irena's willingness to learn from young Aron, one other major factor affecting this family's enhancement of their home as a collaborative place was the availability and accessibility of various relevant resources outside of their home. When Irena, for example, was reflecting on the "huge progress" she saw in Aron, aged seven, both in terms of his language abilities as well as self-esteem evident in his involvement in sports, she remarks that "there is like a lot of help which the parents … can get … Probably if I will not get a huge help from … NDCS [The National Deaf Children's Society[33]] or [the specialist nursery] and even from the NHS – from the Speech and Language Therapist, the Teacher of the Deaf –, probably …

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[33] The National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS) is a nationwide charity that provides free information and advocacy on all matters related to childhood deafness. Here a 'child' is someone who is under the age of 25, after which they are categorised as an 'adult'.

my son would not look like that." Here Irena is referring to several professional groups. Moreover, she is once again alluding to her initial 'novice' status as a mother of a deaf baby and how she needed help from others who were more experienced in issues related to raising a deaf child as a way to become experienced herself. In this sense, initially as a service user of core national health and social care services, but more importantly as she began to expand her network of support, Irena gradually became a new member of various 'communities of practice' in which one priority was to supporting members who had different experiences of sound than those with 'normal hearing' and thus had diverse ways of expressing themselves communicatively. In communities of practice, membership is an evolving form of participation through learning, with an inherent possibility to become a different person in the process which begins with entering a community as a 'newcomer' and gradually, through sustained participation, progressing to becoming an 'old-timer' (Lave and Wenger, 2003, pages 53 and 56).

In acknowledging that Aron would not become a 'hearing' person because of his differently defined experiences of sound, Irena, then, ultimately suspended her role as a hearing person experienced in speech when relating to Aron. She instead reoriented herself towards becoming experienced in communicating with Aron, herself starting as a novice, in order to reshape their shared domestic life as a new community of practice. By hastily trying to become an experienced hearing mother of a deaf child, Irena was determined to present herself to Aron as an 'old-timer' and a 'collaborator' whom he could more easily relate to. In other words, by repositioning herself, Irena had allowed Aron to launch a learning trajectory where he was a 'peripheral participant' in the relationship. Far from having a dichotomous connotation as in opposition to being 'central', as Lave and Wenger (2003) put it, in relation to communities of practice which are not envisaged to have a single core, peripherality is "a place in which one moves toward more-intensive participation" (Ibid., p.36).

In order to become experienced, however, Irena had to reach out to others who already were old-timers in the sense that she could aspire to be. In this regard, having access to and thus participating in communities for which their practice involves supporting deaf children in their acquisition of language is crucial for hearing mothers of deaf children. It is through participating in such specialized communities that hearing mothers gain an opportunity to

learn from "exemplars" such as specialist professionals as well as other more experienced mothers who demonstrate ways to be increasingly more co-present with deaf children as the "grounds and motivation for learning activity" (Ibid., p.95). By presenting Irena's and then Gloria's narratives successively below, I hope to demonstrate how each novice mother entered different communities of practice in relation to deafness and this in turn influenced their learning trajectories differently in terms of type of knowledge gained on deafness and their development of specific communicative repertoires.

Irena

As Irena explains, the specialism of the nursery that she had been casually introduced to by another mother was

"speech and language therapy. So basically, they just look … [at] each of the kids differently because all the kids [are] basically different. So they've got like the different … tips to [teach] them. So for me it was quite huge help because when they know my son, they know how to work with him and how to help him. And quite often I get the information how I can work with him to just improve his speaking and also I want to see how they work with him so it was huge … I start to go there like two or three times a week … When I start he was two years [old], he almost he didn't speak. He's got a huge problem with the [communication]. Basically, he was able to say maybe like couple of words but not too much. But when he start[ed] there …, he was starting learning the speech quite quickly … after half a year I just noticed that … he was able to starting saying sentences with two, three words. So for the deaf kids it's like a huge progress". (Interview with Irene, June 2014)

When she was made aware of other services beyond the statutory public resources, such as those offered by voluntary organizations, this had yet a further impact on Irena's ability to provide an even more improved 'collaborative place' for Aron in the home environment. Additionally, her continued association with a new community of practice that focussed on speech meant that Irena became more knowledgeable about how to teach Aron to speak,

which in turn kept Aron on the path of becoming an oral deaf person while moving between compatible collaborative places due to their shared oral orientation. In this sense, Aron was "learning to become a legitimate participant in a [*particular*] community [because he was] learning how to talk … in the manner of full participants" – this particular community being the community of English speakers (Lave and Wenger, 2003, p.105).

Furthermore, besides being informally referred to by other more experienced mothers, Irena also uses her other pertinent competencies to identify and get involved in even more communities of practice. She enables her own positional shift from 'exclusion' to 'peripherality' because of her level of fluency and literacy in the English language coupled with her computer skills which she uses to go online and access vital information regarding the existence of other local and accessible communities of practice. During our interview Irena described in detail how she was also a frequent visitor of The National Deaf Children's Society website in search of useful information, advice and resources. She yet again positioned herself as a novice mother, for example, when she did not know how to wake her son up until she learned about vibrating alarm clocks from the website. As another example of participating in The National Deaf Children's Society community, Irena mentioned how she read the association's printed magazine with Aron. By learning about what other deaf children do to participate more fully in their everyday lives, Irena saw how Aron was able to leave behind the idea that being deaf was a barrier to taking part in mainstream leisure activities. Previously, young Aron who did not have much exposure to other deaf people had often thought, as recounted by Irena, "Mummy, I'm deaf, I can't do it". Lave and Wenger (2003) talk about how one way of learning to participate in a community can be by observing demonstrations by more engaged members (Ibid.). These deaf children and their families depicted in the magazine[34] motivated Aron to be like the exemplar deaf youth. His engagement with the community these deaf peers belonged to, therefore, attests to the "effectiveness of the circulation of information among peers" (Ibid., p.93).

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[34] The 'Families' magazine is available for free in print to member families of deaf children as well as digitally on the National Deaf Children's Society website and it features deaf children using various communication methods and technologies.

While in its early Irena had her own learning trajectory take her beyond core services and into the voluntary sector made up of members who were also familiar with the oral approach, Gloria's interaction with old-timers, on the other hand, took an unexpected shift into the practice of visual communication.

Gloria

When Gloria first arrived in the UK, besides registering with a local GP[35] she did not know who else could support her. Now fully reliant on public and voluntary sectors because "going private here [in the UK] is very expensive" and unsure where to begin, Gloria – like Irena – made use of her English proficiency and computer literacy to go online and find out about The National Deaf Children's Society. She contacted them and "they connected me with the local authority [Sensory] Support Centre … I had these two ladies [from the Centre] who used to come and visit Matthew at home because he was not school age and they were working with him with everything, with toys and trying to help him with his talking". She further added that "one was a Teacher of the Deaf … and the other was a Teaching Assistant who was quite good in signing". As such, because of where they lived within London, Gloria and Matthew became new members of a community that practiced a language policy which incorporated what Gloria was familiar with – an oral approach through speech and language therapy – but also introduced both of them to BSL. As such, what Gloria witnessed with the local authority professionals acting as 'old-timers' was how they were prepared and willing to switch communication modes in line with Matthew's developing communicative repertoire. In other words, still from the perspective of a peripheral participant, Gloria was "gradually assembl[ing] a general idea of what constitutes the practice of the community" (Ibid., p.95). She was learning, I suggest, how the choice of language(s) to be used with Matthew also depended on the skills and attitudes of those communicating with him. Language choice reflects social and relational dimensions of communication. As such, it highlights the "socially negotiated character of meaning" – as in the meaning of the chosen language – "and the interested, concerned character of the thought and action of persons-in-activity" – as in the

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[35] GP or General Practitioner is a community doctor.

professionals working with Matthew and Matthew himself (Ibid., p.50). Going back to an inexperienced Gloria's fears expressed in Chapter One, she had "thought maybe he would not be interested in being audial if he is BSL. And from what I had seen from him is like he didn't want to talk". Since becoming a member of this new community of practice, however, she came to realize that Matthew could simultaneously learn – given the relational opportunity to have a more fully engaged level of co-presence with experienced others – two or more languages which relied more on either aural or visual modalities to engage him.

Besides providing home visits during pre-school years to improve deaf children's communication within the family, many of London's local authorities' specialist 'Children's Sensory Teams' also provide advice and information on what other specialist local authority or voluntary services are available locally – a process which is formally known as the 'Local Offer' (NDCS, 2015a). What's included in a 'Local Offer' can change from borough to borough. In terms of what was available in Gloria's local community at the time, Gloria mentions that

"this lady [from the borough] told me of a school nearby that was having a Hearing Centre … Since he was not yet school age, I could go there for two hours every week. They had their own nursery. So I started taking him there and that's where I started my first signing classes, introductory classes for parents … I think it was the borough's initiative that the school would have, with the support of NDCS … [which] was providing the materials." (Interview with Gloria, May 2014)

When I asked if she found the group helpful Gloria was very clear that

"it was very, very helpful, especially learning [to sign]. It helped because it eased Matthew's anger of not being understood and also eased my frustration too. Because now we had a way to communicate than just pointing, 'that, that', you know … And in cases when he wanted something, he was crying. So if you don't give … to him what he wants, it was really, really hard. But with the [family signing] groups and the ladies who were coming from the borough to support him at home it was helpful because we were able to establish a way to communicate." (Interview with Gloria, May 2014)

In Gloria and Matthew's situation, it becomes clear that Gloria had initially focused on developing Matthew's communicative repertoire in the form of hearing and speaking by accessing initially private and then public resources such as hearing aids, cochlear implants and speech and language therapies. This is typical for many hearing parents in the early stages following their child's diagnosis of deafness, where the information they receive on existing "perspectives and approaches" is not comprehensive (Matthijs et al., 2012, p.388). In Gloria and Matthew's case in particular, during the period of post-diagnosis (at 18-month-old) and pre-implantation (at four year of age), however, and despite the use of hearing aids and therapies, there was a lot of frustration and anger between the mother and child due to the continued lack of a shared means of (oral) communication because, as Gloria reported, Matthew was not accessing spoken language sufficiently enough to learn to understand and produce it himself and also was showing a preference for more visual forms of communication such as gesturing and BSL. At the point when Gloria was introduced to her local authority's specialist team who then worked on Matthew's "talking" but also "signing" simultaneously and encouraged Gloria to join a local Family Sign Language group, she felt that she finally found "a way to communicate" with Matthew that was meaningful for both. As Gloria became more experienced herself, the initial negative emotions, such as frustration, attached to her moments of co-presence with Matthew gave way to a more positively affective atmosphere where both were more relaxed in their interactions.

Both Irena's and Gloria's narratives demonstrate how inexperienced mothers need to participate in communities of practice initially as novices in order to be able to gain access to the learning opportunities and resources that allow them to gradually become experienced mothers of deaf children and to then subsequently co-construct their home as a collaborative place. One essential resource was the access they both had gained to specialist professionals working with deaf children. These 'old-timers' knew how to take into consideration each child's biological possibilities as well as their subtly expressed preferences to then switch to meet them as a crucial element in actively including deaf children in their own learning. As such, involving themselves in various professional networks, each its own community of practice, provided novice hearing mothers of deaf children "the interpretive support necessary for making sense of" the highly complex and deeply historical issue of childhood deafness (Lave and Wenger, 2003, p.98). By acting as avenues for moving forward from being

novices to becoming experienced mothers of deaf children, therefore, such communities of practice are crucial to the process of deaf children becoming fuller participants at home and in their local communities.

As I have also demonstrated above, however, these varied and somewhat disconnected communities of practice (as opposed to others) that Irena and Gloria almost haphazardly become aware of and subsequently get involved in highlight, I argue, the important issue "of the social organization of and control over resources" that shape hearing mothers' and their deaf children's understanding and say over language preference (Ibid., p.37). Entering each of the multiple communities of practice with an interest in childhood deafness, then, requires some form of, as Lave and Wenger (2003) put it, "sponsorship" – such as the formal or informal referral or recommendation made by a professional or an experienced mother – or, as I suggest, find their own way in by, for example, a hearing mother using her own capabilities in the dominant language and computer technology to make the first contact with the communities beyond those described as providing core services (Ibid., p.92). This in turn implies how novice hearing mothers' legitimate access to the potentially quite expansive network of communities is not systematically or equally secured (Ibid.). To illustrate, I would like to re-introduce Damla, the young deaf woman who signed competently with a Turkish background mentioned in the beginning of Chapter One, as well as her mother Hatice.

Damla and Hatice

Damla is the eldest of the five children in her family. She and her youngest brother are deaf, while her other two brothers and sister are hearing. Their family moved to London from Turkey soon after Damla was diagnosed as deaf. Her parents' disappointment with the limited public services to support deaf children in their home country was a major cause in their decision to migrate to London. They, however, had little knowledge of the services available to deaf children in London at first and even initially resisted public funds such as the Disability Living Allowance which they were entitled to because of not being sure of their rights and therefore not wanting to risk their status in the UK. Damla's mother Hatice has never worked since their move over twenty years ago. She instead took upon the main responsibility of

raising her five children. They settled in a neighbourhood in London that had a significant Turkish speaking community, including their own relatives who had moved to this area prior to them and had sponsored their move to the UK. As such, Hatice did not learn to speak English. Hatice and Damla used home signs to communicate with each other. More often, though, Damla's younger hearing sister, Seda, acted as the family interpreter. She was quite proficient at signing (a mixture of BSL and home signs) with Damla as Damla made sure to teach her from a young age[36].

On the day I visited them at their home in East London[37], Hatice expressed her frustration with her borough's social services and how she initially trusted their advice in making a difficult decision in regard to Damla's primary schooling. Damla was sent to a residential school for deaf students with a bilingual approach outside of London at a young age which was very hard for the whole family. Damla talked about how much she missed her family and how her dad travelled long hours back and forth almost every weekend during term time by car in order to make sure Damla was with them at home. Hatice believed that this sacrifice was necessary for Damla to get a good education which was based on her expectation that Damla would be instructed in both English and BSL, with an emphasis that she would eventually become literate in English. To Hatice's disappointment, however, she reported that the school was not persistent in supporting Damla's use of her cochlear implant. Soon after attending this school, and also because the implant was causing her headaches, Damla stopped using it. By the time she finished primary school, Hatice commented[38] that "Damla's English was poor; … she could not write in proper sentences" and she added that "They ruined my daughter's life". From Hatice's perspective, this was a major limitation for her daughter as at the time of my visit Hatice was witnessing how Damla struggled to find a job and to even secure a job interview for various reasons all linked, in her opinion, to her being a BSL user. Damla later told me that at the time her parents had complained to the relevant authorities

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[36] Based on my conversations with deaf adults, this was a common occurrence among deaf signers who are the only deaf child in the family. They often get to teach their younger siblings to sign, but often not their older ones. Atkin et al. (2002) also note how "Mother and siblings, especially sisters, were more likely to learn BSL than fathers" (Atkin et al., 2002, p.29).

[37] By the time of this visit, Damla and I had become friends and due to our shared Turkish background, which Damla strongly identified with, she had invited me to be a guest at her home and to meet her family.
[38] Hatice spoke to me in Turkish and these are my English translations.

about the education she was receiving but that nothing had come out of it. She also added that "they did not know their rights", so they couldn't pursue it any further. Neither Hatice nor Damla wanted the same educational experiences for Damla's younger brother Mehmet, who was also deaf. Damla stated[39] how "I saved my brother from going to boarding school. Now Mehmet is close to home."

When Mehmet was approaching school age, Hatice this time was more experienced and thus assertive in communicating which school she wished Mehmet to attend to her LEA which she no longer trusted. Hatice had remarked to me that with Damla, "*acemiydim*" meaning that she was 'inexperienced'. She said when deciding on Damla's school, the LEA team had shown her a list of schools but explained little about the difference between each. Because of Hatice's long-term isolation from other voluntary specialist professional services and lack of connection with other families of deaf children, especially those with a similar cultural background, her decisions regarding supporting the development of Mehmet's language and communication skills – whatever she perceived them to be – were mainly guided by her own past experiences raising Damla. Due to the coincidental nature of having someone to act as her 'sponsor' and unequipped to reach out to the unknown, therefore, Hatice's learning trajectory as a mother of a deaf child excluded those spheres of participation involving communities of practice within the voluntary sector beyond the basic core health and educational services. As a result, Hatice's reduced opportunities to engage with and learn from people with a range of experiences and to access resources in regard to childhood deafness meant that as Damla was growing up Hatice had lingered in the position of a 'newcomer' all the while she was expected to make important decision regarding her daughter's education as if she had knowledge and information on the matter at the level of an 'old-timer'.

Furthermore, with Damla gaining proficiency in BSL and to a lesser extent in English while Hatice remaining fluent only in Turkish, up until now they had lacked a common language and relied on their more premature home signs or the assistance of Seda to communicate. In terms of their relationship, therefore, their home did not reflect as persistently as being a

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[39] This is my English translation of what Damla signed to me in BSL.

collaborative place. For example, during my visit to their home, when Hatice was speaking to me in Turkish, Damla often turned to me to ask "What did my mum say?" and on several occasions Hatice addressed us both while her back was turned to us. This made it impossible for Damla to recognize that there was a conversation going on, resulting in her remaining in a silent, still posture – a true contrast to when I saw her socialise with people who could sign.

Hatice's, Irena's and Gloria's family histories clearly reflect the impact of the influence (or lack of) a wide network of specialized professional services on each mother's decision regarding their deaf child's multiple and overlapping actual or potential memberships to linguistic communities. In addition, their stories, I suggest, also pinpoint to a recurrent theme of a particular 'choice' they feel compelled to make within this specialized field of deafness they've come to inhabit as mothers of deaf children. From an analytical perspective, the 'choice' was one between encouraging their child's receptive competency to be predominantly aural or otherwise visual, and also to whether maintain a strictly English or rather a multilingual parent-child communication; in other words, a situation that through the framework of monolingualism demanded a definitive 'choice' rather than the potential alternative of the situational acceptance of all available linguistic options.

2.2 Language choice as an assertion of group membership and the implied impossibility of a deaf polyglot

Gloria and Matthew

Below is an excerpt for my interview with Gloria where she's talking about the period in their family life when his parents were still highly oriented towards improving Matthew's hearing. As previously described, Gloria and her partner had already made the difficult decision to get Matthew, still a pre-schooler aged four, implanted with a single cochlear implant device. Gloria then continues to explain what happened after the surgery.

"These TOD [from the LEA] still come and visit and they explained what to do ... There was really good support I would say from the Cochlear Implant Team at the hospital;

and the follow-up, I would say, it was amazing at [specialist hospital] … [Contact with the Cochlear Implant Team is] much less now –once a year. But at first it was quite frequent …The speech therapist would work at the school so … he start learning how to use [his] hearing." (Interview with Gloria, May 2014)

Once Matthew was implanted, Gloria's experiences as a mother of a deaf child were shaped by actualizing her parental choice at the time to receive professional assistance that was relevant to making the best of this new technology. It was yet a new stage for both Gloria and Matthew during which they surrounded themselves with a select number of groups that belonged to the broader amalgam of people experienced in deafness. These groups, or communities of practices, included many professionals who diverged from each other as old-timers in respect to their contested methods and beliefs as to how to develop 'language' and communication in relation to deaf babies and children. TODs from the LEA, for example, had introduced a more varied set of linguistic resources to Matthew than Gloria had anticipated. They could work to improve family communication by resorting to a range of options from the use of spoken English, to SSE, to BSL. In fact, while receiving the services of this team that were partly shaped by the changing parental choices at different moments during Matthew's childhood, Gloria came to realize that there were different linguistic possibilities available to her son. For example, initially when the TODs from the LEA first met Matthew and Gloria, Matthew was showing a preference for using his body, such as pointing and gesturing, to express himself. Local authority TODs picked up on this and incorporated signing along with speech to their approach towards supporting the family. Post-surgery, however, the same team readjusted their support and helped the family manage the cochlear implant due to changed circumstances primarily shaped by Gloria's exercise of her parental choice.

As Gloria had pointed out, because initially Matthew, as a "hearing aid wearer", was not responding to spoken language with speech and instead was more "comfortable" in using gestures to express himself, I suggest that this is perceived by Gloria as a malleable state of Matthew's 'agency' in the form of his communication preference that still could be diverted. Because Gloria knew that her son was still young, which made him a suitable candidate for the cochlear implant as, in her view, the next and last possible medical intervention to improve his hearing, she continued to invest her efforts and hopes in this potential to redirect

Matthew towards speech. By making this decision, she simultaneously refused to continue with the process that would eventually lead to him becoming a "BSL user" which was perceived by Gloria, I argue, to be discrete from that of learning to speak. This process would have involved her reinforcing his tendency for bodily expressions other than speech which was already enhanced through the introduction of family signs encouraged by the LEA TODs. So far the use of visual communication provided by BSL had worked for them as the means to shaping their home a 'collaborative place'. Despite this, and despite the professionals' initial acknowledgement of Matthew's expressive tendencies being more towards visual-corporeal communication, Gloria's parental choice to develop a 'potential' tendency in Matthew for oralism, at a cost of delaying his ongoing language (BSL) development, was supported by these professionals.

When I interviewed Gloria, however, she was no longer the 'inexperienced' Gloria described above. The Gloria I was talking to was an experienced mother of a deaf child who in retrospect regretted not providing Matthew with a language, any language. She acknowledged that she instead chased an ideal by insisting on a purely oral, strictly monolingual, route. Referring to post-cochlear implantation, she said

"I thought … after one year, you couldn't see much progress[40]. After two years, not much progress. It was at the third year [that] … at one point I went and I said I want to move him to a deaf school because he has had the surgery [but still] there's really no progress … You see he's not able to learn … It's difficult for him to communicate as much. The learning is very slow to begin with, really slow … And so I was thinking [only] if he had language, proper sign language … Because he did not learn the sign language back in Kenya and here you see [at his school] it was Sign Supported English." (Interview with Gloria, May 2014)

Furthermore, once a certain route is taken as to the type of school that a deaf child will attend, changing schools cannot be achieved easily due to complexities linked to bureaucratic processes and how deaf education is funded. After a long period of talking to the LEA staff

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[40] Here Gloria is referring to Matthew's spoken language (English) reception and production skills.

about her desire for school (and thus language) change, there came a point when Gloria did not want to waste any more time negotiating with people from her current borough who, similar to what Hatice conveyed, seemed to be reluctant to the idea of transferring schools. Therefore, she instead decided to move to another London borough in order to "start afresh and maybe I can have an opportunity to choose the school I want to take my child to". Here Gloria demonstrates how exclusion from a community of practice can be self-imposed as a strategy to re-shift the 'old-timer'-'newcomer' power dynamics imbedded in mothers' dealings with the LEA. Gloria expanded her parental experiences regarding formal educational options available to deaf children by paying a visit to a special school for deaf children. Although as part of her first impressions of the school "I was thinking it's purely [BSL]. You see when you are reading from the internet is very different than when you visit a place and have the feel of a place." What prompted Gloria to make the visit was the influence of her growing network of mothers of deaf children, which I explore further in the next section. According to Gloria, she "had [met] parents … with children at [this school] and they had cochlear [implants]. They were very good audio, and they were good signers … There is a speech therapist there … I was not aware until I visited and I get that experience." As a result of Gloria's experiences of co-presence in various collaborative places that incorporate BSL, she came to the realization that these places were not necessarily monolingual and that she was mistaken to think that exposing a deaf child to the visual-spatiality of sign language would inevitably mean the absence of the use of spoken language.

During the years that led to the decision to choose a school, Gloria could see how Matthew struggled with his hearing and speech regardless of all her efforts to provide him with medical and therapeautic assistance to develop his spoken language skills. She was still, however, reluctant to accept that he would only use BSL and thus did not consider a potential special school for deaf children that used it. As a result, when she was introduced to an educational method of instruction that seemed to be a good compromise, she chose it. She recounts how when choosing a school, "what I found good was SSE because that would give him the signing and it would give him the audial", followed by summarizing her then inexperienced self's state of mind as "That's what I thought." In shifting to SSE, I suggest, Gloria continues to assert her affiliation with a dominant spoken language – English – and her aspiration for Matthew to become a member of the community for which English is the shared language. All the while,

she keeps her distance from immersing Matthew into signing and thus from the idea that Matthew could one day become a 'signer' at the expense, in her view, of being associated with English-speaking hearing people such as herself as well as those in her family and community. For Gloria, the two communities of practice and the identities they endow upon their members is still mutually exclusive. According to Barth (1969, p.14), when a group or community is perceived as being exclusive, becoming its member as oppose to its outsider relies on the maintenance of a boundary.

Unlike English and BSL, however, SSE is not a language on its own. It aids the comprehension of spoken English by simultaneously visualizing each word as it is spoken using either artificial signs or those borrowed from BSL (Marshall and Hobsbaum, 2015; Swanwick et al., 2016). As for SSE, The National Deaf Children's Society describes it as "This is not a language in its own right like BSL but instead involves using BSL signs to support speech and aid understanding. It could also involve signing without speech but in English word order" (NDCS, 2015b). It is more of an educational method to aid deaf students' perception of spoken English as part of the 'total communication' approach. It is a corporeal way of presenting spoken English by borrowing BSL signs and at times inventing others that are not expressed in BSL with an individual sign but are instead integrated into the sentence structure, such as 'the', 'is', 'to', although these may at times be omitted, fingerspelled, or only be spoken or mouthed and therefore expected to be received by hearing or lipreading. By using SSE, therefore, an English sentence can be simultaneously reproduced corporeally on the hands and the mouth either through speech or mouthing (without sound) – and therefore it is often associated more with English than BSL. As a result, "there can be no doubt that it fills a much needed hole" in, for example, adult deaf-hearing social interactions (Walker, 2019). To illustrate, I had often observed the use of SSE by English-speaking hearing adults who were learning BSL and had become familiar with a sufficient number of signs but who had not yet mastered the BSL grammar when they were having a casual conservation with a deaf person who was either a native BSL user or was familiar with BSL and was comfortable with being signed to and also had knowledge of English. Signed English, on the other hand, is "[w]hen signs are used simultaneously with speech" and unlike SSE, "every word of a spoken sentence is signed" (Deuchar, 1984, p.37 and Sense Australia, 2019, respectively). Those using Signed English have to develop specific 'sign markers' to highlight each of the units of English grammar, such

as 'on', or 'the', which are not used in BSL. Furthermore, however, as the emphasis is on demonstrating English grammar use at a morphological level as well as conveying meaning, "[b]oth the root word and all affixes are made visually obvious" so the words 'interesting' and 'interested' can be accurately distinguished (Nielsen et. al., 2011, p.280). Similar to SSE, it has been used in deaf education by, for example, TODs to "to assist in the [E]nglish literacy development of deaf (sign language using) children" (Senses Australia, 2019). Historically, it has entered the British deaf education system as part of the Total Communication movement which I will describe further (in Chapter Three) in the 1980s (Swanwick, 2010). The use of SSE in deaf education has been long contested and academic research on its impact on language acquisition and comprehension by deaf children is varied (Lynas, 1988, in Marshall and Hobsbaum, 2015; Swanwick, 2010; Swanwick et al., 2016; Coryell and Holcomb, 1997). As Swanwick (2010) describes it, for example, the use of SSE as the main form of communication in the education of deaf students represents a monolingual language ideology "where sign language was used as little more than a prop to support pupil comprehension of spoken English" and stood in contrast to the bilingual approach which was being advocated around the same period (Swanwick, 2010, p.148).

Going back to Gloria's narrative, within the context of Matthew's education Gloria gradually notices that the audio infrastructure and specialist practice at his primary school was insufficient and becomes concerned that for Matthew SSE is experienced as a mere visual input disconnected from speech. Gloria then makes a reassessment of her son's communicative repertoire: "I found my son was getting too slow. He's not getting the sign [language] exactly, so he's not able to communicate well in sign; and he's not able to communicate audially, so it's compromise in both ways. That means he's growing up and not having a language yet." She gradually recognizes how by exposing Matthew only to SSE as the way it was practiced at his school was not bringing him closer to the English language but was in fact keeping him at bay from becoming competent in any given language which in turn suspended his membership in their associated communities. This again illustrates the importance of 'sponsorship' for novice hearing families and their deaf children. In order to become a novice in any given community of practice, one must first know how to enter it. As for Matthew, it was up to Gloria to position him as a novice within a language community or a group with a certain way of communicating. Ultimately, the collaborative place said to have

been created at Matthew's first school for deaf students it admitted in practice did not function as such a place for Matthew specifically.

Gloria's growing confidence in making the right decision for her son in relation to her increased experiences as a mother of a deaf child is clear when she accounts for the new process of choosing a school for Matthew after moving boroughs. After leaving the first school, "and now that I had knowledge of what I wanted for him, then it would be much easier for me. … The second time I think I had now more insight and information … But the first time … I think because I was not aware of the education system and what happens, so it was a bit hard for me … So [only once] you're in it is when you realize 'I should have gone for this'". In other words, Gloria's actual experiences of co-presence as a mother of a deaf child within mainstream as well as special educational settings were what she really needed to make the 'right' or 'informed' choice. The dilemma was, however, that as a hearing and inexperienced parent of a deaf child, she had to make important decisions regarding her son's language of instruction and communication at school long before he even began school.

Irena

Unlike Gloria, for Irena, on the other hand, adjusting her home to accommodate Aron during his preschool years did not involve the need to introduce sign language into their parent-child relationship. As Irena had emphasized, Aron was an 'oral deaf' in the sense that he could access spoken language with the aid of a combination of his cochlear implants and lipreading and he could also express himself orally. In fact, as Irena reports, Aron was bilingual from a young age, conversing in both English and Polish. This was a source of pride for Irena, as it was mainly through her self-determination that Aron was now competent in the two languages that mattered the most from her perspective as a hearing mother accustomed to life in hearing-dominant communities. As a result, for Irena the decision to provide Aron with cochlear implants and enrolling him in a mainstream school with only oral provision intertwined with a narrative of 'success'.

Nonetheless, early on in her moral career as a mother or a deaf child, Irena too was presented with a similar dilemma centered on language choice. As a native Polish speaker living in London, Irena initially felt forced choosing between an English monolingual and an English/Polish bilingual approach when communicating with Aron. When she talked with professionals working with Aron, Irena said the advice was similar to what other Polish families with deaf children she knew of received:

"At first we just get the information as well 'Oh, you should maybe just only like [teach] the English'. But for me it would be quite hard to [teach] my son English because it's not my first language, so my pronunciation, it's not like the English people. And if I would like only [teach] him English, how my father and my family [will] communicate with him? So that means he would be completely separated here. He would not really be able and probably he would not be happy to go to Poland to visit family and our culture ... Even we live in London we've still got like Polish culture". (Interview with Irene, June 2014)

Despite the professional advice, Irena continued to expose Aron to both languages, mainly Polish at home and English during visits to specialist collaborative places she became familiar with. As such, she was constructing her "own reality of deafness during the course of the early care trajectory" and beyond (Hardonk et al., 2012, in Mouvet et al., 2013, p.233). Further on, as I will explain below, Aron's knowing Polish *and BSL* alongside English had become equally necessary from Irena's perspective as means for him to more fully participate in these more informal yet highly valued minority language communities of family and friendship. Although multilingual deaf children may present 'unique challenges' to professionals, partnerships with parents to better understand "the cultural values and beliefs that guide parents and families in their child-rearing practices" as well as "the influence of the first language on the acquisition of the subsequent languages" would be an approach that demonstrates the value of having a broad communicative repertoire rather than that of monolingualism that inevitably promotes a 'deficit model' (Bowen, 2016, p.34 and Cannon et al., 2016, p.10, respectively).

Years had passed, and Aron grew up to be a young schoolboy in Year 2, aged seven. Because Irena was eager to expose Aron to collaborative places beyond the home and the school, when she found out about an access event for families of deaf children – a fleeting collaborative place – hosted by a major museum in Central London, they attended as a family. The incident that took place here, which I am about to detail, prompted Irena to re-evaluate her so far bilingual, yet oral-only approach towards Aron. During this family outing Irena noticed that "there was like a lot of people completely deaf who don't use the [spoken] language, they use the sign language." Irena continued to talk about how until then all the deaf children Aron had met were similar to him in the sense that they either wore hearing aids or cochlear implants and could make use of their voice. Although some of them were bilingual in English and BSL, when they met oral-only children like Aron, they simply 'switched' to accommodate him. As a result, Aron was never really exposed to BSL. Irena specifies how Aron's unique encounter with another deaf boy who only used BSL in face-to-face interactions – and placed them both in a position where neither of them 'switched' – triged a desire in both Irena and Aron to learn BSL. After a frustrating failed attempt to converse with this other deaf boy, Irena accounts how

"my son [said] 'Mummy, I'm deaf, so why I can't use the sign language?'. And … I said 'Aron, … you are deaf but you are able to speak' … Do you want to learn sign language?'. 'Mummy, I'm deaf, I need to learn sign languge' … That [was the] time when … I starting think about sign language. Now is the time when he needs to learn it because he's starting realize that he always will have the relationship with the deaf people [and] that they use the sign language." (Interview with Irene, June 2014)

Irena's comments of "you are deaf but you are able to speak" indicate an oral-signer dichotomy similar to the one Gloria also struggled with when engaging in her earlier decisions regarding language choices for her own son, which stems from the belief that a deaf child who is oral does not need learn to sign (Atkin et al., 2002). Although she was aware of other deaf children who received a bilingual education in English and BSL, however, Irena seemed to have reached a realisation after her experience at the museum that Aron's learning of BSL and thus to be able to switch to it when with deaf children who signed would open up to him a new form of membership. It is common for parents to believe that the best approach is to

invest in their deaf child's hearing and speaking skills initially, and to only see sign language as being supportive of this or as a language that can be acquired afterwards rather than simultaneously at an early age, most likely remaining unaware that with the potential ineffectiveness of hearing technologies, they risk missing this as a critical period of language learning (Mouvet et al., 2013; Humphries et al., 2016). These new relationships would be formed on the basis of friendship – an area Aron had beenfacing challenges to establish with his hearing peers at school. While speaking English had strong connotations for formal relationships such as those formed while in education and then most likely in employment, and knowing Polish was a way to maintain strong ties within the family and those who shared the culture his family was linked to, BSL, on the other hand, allowed Aron to explore a different type of relationship – friendship. As Irena reasoned, Aron's ability to sign to his deaf signer peers would "mean that they can be like the best friend … They can do the same things, they can go together for the football. So that's why I think so its right now I will try to push and get the option to just learn the British Sign Language". Irena's use of a time period such as 'right now' is her reference, I suggest, to it being the 'right time' for Aron to learn BSL. As a seven-year-old schoolboy, Aron had entered a period in his life where he was forming relationships beyond those initially established with experienced adults within the home and specialized professionals. As such, I further argue, Irena was acknowledging that his peer group was emerging as an important set of relations shaping his sense of self as well as his language choice. In other words, Irena had begun to contemplate a future for Aron where he would have deaf friendships as yet another important 'collaborative place' for which entrance was achieved through learning a language other than those used at his home and school environments. Research shows how most deaf children from hearing families learn sign language through horizontal relationships of deaf peer friendships (Hoffmeister, 2007, in Snoddon and Underwood, 2013), which, as an informal form of learning, can be ignored as being a critical relationship in deaf children's (language) learning trajectories.

She thus talked to the speech and language therapist and the TOD at the LEA supporting Aron where she presented her rationale. "But I get the advice 'No, you shouldn't just [teach] him now because it's better to [teach] him like the speech, not use the sign language'". In her long relationship with specialist professionals, Irena went against their advice twice; firstly, to teach English only at the expense of Polish, and then to teach him speech only at the expense

of BSL. She taught Aron Polish at home. Irena's response to choosing to expose Aron to the Polish language alongside English demonstrates, I suggest, her awareness of the role of language in group formation. As a consequence of Aron's lack of knowledge of Polish, the language already shared by Irena's cultural group, he would be "completely separated" from that group. Her then subsequent perseverance to introduce Aron to BSL demonstrates how Irena valued an alternative collaborative place to that of family and formal education that Aron could belong to, which was a deaf peer group that had a (potential) connection to the larger adult deaf community. As a result, unable to secure financial or structural support from her LEA regarding learning basic BSL as a mother of a deaf child, Irena enrolled on a private BSL level 1 course by paying the course fees herself.

Many other hearing families with Polish heritage that Irene knew who were also raising their deaf child in London, however, took such advice offered by some professionals to concentrate on making their deaf child a competent monolingual in English. Within the wide network of mothers she was currently part of, most of whom were Polish like her, Irena singled herself out as the parent who raised a bilingual deaf child. She relayed to me how one "of my friends, she's also like Polish and her husband he's English … They decided to only use English because they [too] just get … information that for their kids it would be quite hard to learn two languages. So, they just decide 'Okay, we live in London … in England so we need to [teach] them only English'".

Below I return to Melika and Aisha whom I briefly discussed in Chapter One, whose joint narrative includes a move to monolingualism after a difficult journey by the couple to France in order to support Aisha's acquisition of speech. Similar to Irena's narrative, as a multilingual hearing parent of a deaf child, Melika also felt compelled to make the decision to introduce only one language to her deaf child in the home environment which corresponded to the dominant societal and educational language where they lived. This meant that within the collaborative place of their home, Aisha was not exposed to other home languages nor to the national sign language.

<u>Aisha and Melika</u>

Melika's family were from Lebanon and both Arabic and French were spoken at home. In order to fully support Aisha's language acquisition in French, however, Melika accounts that she has not been speaking Arabic to Aisha because "before [at home] we spoke Arabic language, … but [later] we spoke a lot of French because she [was] on the French school." Aisha, therefore, never learned Arabic. Melika continued, however, to speak French or Arabic to her other family members, relatives and friends. After three years in France, once Aisha began to speak, they returned home. Aisha enrolled at a mainstream school, where making friends was not easy, especially during her teenage years. Aisha remembered how "it was difficult for me yeah, because I couldn't, *common dit* … I couldn't speak well so it was difficult for me with my friends". Melika added how as a schoolgirl Aisha was "shy to speak" and how she wanted to hide her hearing aids because she didn't want to be constantly stared at and asked about them. In her early teens, "she was always with boys. Boys [were] little bit more friendly … than girls" added Melika, followed by the comment "because we could play football" from Aisha. When Aisha compared her early school experiences at her oral deaf day school in France to that of mainstreaming, for her when in France "I remember, it was nice because my friends are all deaf". A shared language – or lack of thereof – was at the heart of Aisha's experiences of making friends and determined the extent to which she identified with them as a group. She had fond memories of her earlier friendships with other children who were all at a similar stage of their oral communication – acquiring their first spoken language – due to a shared circumstance of being deaf. As a teenager, on the other hand, she hung out with boys more than girls because of a shared state of wanting to be more physically active than to converse with each other. Moreover, during the years that I most frequently socialized with now an adult Aisha, which extended to times before and after my fieldwork, she generally wasn't very comfortable with hearing people and often did not have the suitable resources in her communicative repertoire as well as the confidence to engage with deaf BSL users independently. She had also told me that she was never involved in a romantic relationship. I also noticed from our various conversations that she rarely went out and when she did it was often limited to family events.

As a mother of a young deaf child, Melika felt like she had to choose to raise Aisha as a monolingual French speaker both at home and at school. Although there was a specialist deaf school in their city, Melika could not imagine young Aisha attending it because, as she put it, "Aisha was starting speaking so it wasn't for her. This school is for children [who] … didn't speak at all, just [sign language]." As a result, Aisha neither had exposure to Arabic which was otherwise commonly used by her family and society nor did she pick up the local sign language. Once as an adult in London, however, Aisha began to contemplate learning BSL more formally. This time round, Melika was highly supportive of Aisha learning BSL because she wanted Aisha to go out more and make friends.

Aisha's home experiences demonstrate the extent to which hearing parents of deaf children make an effort to create a collaborative place within their family in order to accommodate the perceived communication status of their deaf family member by, for example, witholding from using other communication means shared by the rest of the family. Aisha had a very strong bond with her mother founded on a highly cooperative and fluent communicative exchange. Melika knew to turn to Aisha so her daughter could lipread her with ease. Aisha felt safe taking off her hearing aids at night before going to bed, which meant that she heard absolutely nothing, because she knew her mother would warn her in case of an emergency. They understood each other so well that Aisha, who otherwise only used her mobile phone for texting and internet searching, at times of need called Melika to exchange a few brief words of reassurance such as letting her mother know where she was and when to expect her home.

In conclusion, in instances where monolingualism is actually practiced in the dominant language with the hopes of accessing a 'good education' followed by a 'good job', families may experience emotional and mental stresses from not fully integreting the deaf family member into the wider circles of extended family, ethnic community and friendship groups. In contrast, when deaf children are nonconventionally exposed to various settings which overall provide the deaf child with opportunities to become bilingual or multilingual, either consecutively or simultaneously, and therefore to develop the ability to 'switch' as they move between the spheres of home, school, work, leisure and community as well as those location or moments where they take upon the role of a consumer or a citizen, all equally valued as

sites of meaningful social interaction (co-presence) by deaf individuals, it becomes less possible to describe 'success' using only a single language.

When a newborn or a young child is diagnosed as being deaf in England, everyone with a responsibility towards and an interest in the child's wellbeing agrees that the child, just like any other child, should acquire language. This, however, seems to be the extent of uniform thinking. There are major contested arguments amongst the wide range of hearing and deaf 'authorities on deafness' related to the questions of 'Which language(s)?', 'When?' and 'How?'. Each group of connoisseurs in turn assert their influence, with varying degrees of impact, on the central decisionmakers on this matter – the inexperienced hearing parents – through sharing their 'knowledge' generated in very distinct circumstances that fall short in reflecting the alternative knowledges owned by other groups. The consequence of belonging to a certain group that has as its ideological premise the belief that the deaf child has a reduced capacity for bilingualism or multilingualism, be it professional or cultural/communal, is that the process of prioritizing one language at the expense of all other differ for each group. As such, when parents are exposed to these different groups, they may experience moral dilemmas when making a 'preference' between the standard/dominant, home/ethnic and the deaf community's language.

2.3 The distinct language and type of knowledge owned by professional old-timers

On the other hand, neutrality in presenting available communication options to parents including multilingualism without necessarily advising one option over the other, where such knowledge is passed on primarily through a discussion without an equal emphasis on other ways of knowing through co-presence such as the encouragement of a school visit, was also reported by the parents that I interviewed as a common practice of professionals in the area of deafness. Returning to Gloria, below is an account of her early experiences with professionals and her views on the meaning of professional neutrality at a time when she tried to make crucial decisions regarding Matthew's future.

Gloria

When I asked Gloria how she first went about choosing a school for Matthew, she said the TOD from the LEA gave her information about all the available options "but they don't tell you 'Go for this' … [or] 'don't go there'", adding that when asked about any given school, she was always reassured that we "will have the support". She further described these specialists' discourses as being 'professional' in the sense that any shortcomings known about the school would not be laid bare, at least not directly. Instead, when sharing their professional advice, Gloria said that "they will tell you in a [subtle] way … that I didn't really grasp. Because I remember … this lady [TOD] from the [borough's] hearing support unit, she had told me about [the special deaf school] … She was gearing me to that side … but … she didn't want to impose."

In other words, the TOD that had got to know Matthew during her home visits and continued her professional contact with the family could therefore see which school's specific type of deaf educational provision with its specific specialist skill set, resources and ethos could potentially be best placed to support the development of Matthew's language and communication. She nonetheless left it at the level of a suggestion in order not to impose, as Gloria reported, her view that would risk undermining Gloria's parental right to make a choice herself. As an experienced mother, Gloria in retrospect could better interpret the information presented to her during that initial meeting with the TOD. But at the time her 'inexperienced' self, guided by misapprehensions, strong turbulent emotions and approaching deadlines, was not equipped to hear and understand that advice. As such, besides the content of the information being accessible and available, the form in which it was presented to parents, either through a meeting, as a list of names, a website or through direct experience of a place, also had an impact on making decisions appear either more or less 'informed'.

In Gloria's case, she found out that she could balance professional attitudes towards knowledge sharing, be it the bias of an advice or the neutrality of a list, by listening to personal experiences of other, often more experienced, mothers of deaf children. As a stark contrast to the TOD's choice to withhold her professional view as to what course of action to follow, Gloria notes that "it's not the same as when it's a parent who has gone through the

experience … So, it was much easier for me to tell someone else [what to do] because I didn't want them to go through what I was going through". As an inexperienced mother who struggled with each decision regarding her son's deafness that was interpreted in retrospect as a crucial milestone, at times Gloria also valued the sincerity she sensed in the personal bias of mothers' lived experiences to the removed stance and subtle presentations of professionals.

As I have demonstrated above, as they became more experienced, hearing mothers of deaf children did not always identify with the professionals posing as the old-timers. As I intend to expand on in the next section, in such instances, therefore, they turned to a new type of a community of practice where they themselves could become old-timers among an informal group of hearing mothers of deaf children.

Section 3: Parental networks as distinct and valued communities of practice

3.1 Experienced mothers as the new 'old-timers'

Irena

Although initially Irena was very involved in the support that Aron received through public services, she was less aware of other professional services available run by voluntary organizations. As described earlier, this changed when she was informed about such services from another hearing mother of a deaf child. They had met each other by chance during a routine visit to the specialist hospital when Aron was a toddler. Irena's following statement illustrates how the transitory and anonymous nature of a hospital waiting room can be transformed into a convenient place to meet other parents and exchange information regarding their new lives as hearing parents of deaf children. Irena acknowledges that she in fact met a lot of parents at the hospital which they have been regularly visiting over the years for hearing test appointments. According to Irena they "just starting speak with me because they noticed that … I speak with my son in Polish but when the doctor come … we'd speak in English". These parents approached Irena because they were "quite surprised that he's got

the two cochlear implants and he's able to speak two languages. And after that they asked me 'Oh, is it possible to [ex]change the telephone number? Maybe we would be able to meet sometime?'". For these parents, I argue, Irena symbolized an experienced old-timer who was competent and had achieved what they aspired to be like. She represented a person they closely identified with but up until then had not come across as part of their learning trajectories as hearing parents of a deaf child. Irena also acknowledged her position as an experienced mother and an 'old-timer' within a newly emerging network by offering her time, friendship and experiences to novice parents. She even went a step further to build such relationships where she was, I suggest, more legitimately positioned as an old-timer by going through their specialist doctor and stating how she consented to being contacted by a "Polish family … [if they] would need any like advice or maybe they want to share experience". What's significant about Irena's growing community of practice made up of exclusively hearing parents of deaf children is that it was set apart from the communities of practice where the old-timer status belonged to the professionals.

When I asked Irena as to what happened when she met another mother, she said

"Just basically … I share my experience, and what I know … Basically I was the same … when I find out that my son, he is deaf. I haven't got any knowledge about it, everything was new for me … So even sometimes when … we speak with somebody, we find out that [s]he's got the deaf kids, … [but that] they don't know nothing about deafness. They didn't know about what they can ask [for in] … the statement; that … there's like some kind of extra institution like [that specialist nursery which] help [with] audio-verbal therapy … [and] rehabilitation for the … deaf kids. So, basically for them it's something new, that they never heard about it … They sometimes even … cry because for them it's something like 'Oh, … I never cry because nobody understand me because all my friends they've got hearing kids…' and when I speak with them, I say 'If you want you can cry in front of me. I was crying so you don't need to be shy with it'. So the people starting cry and say 'Oh, gosh I now feel like much better because I can just share my feelings'. So I think so that's good." (Interview with Irene, June 2014)

These exchanges between mothers can be useful, for example, by explaining what to put in their application for their child's special educational needs statement by giving concrete examples, highlighting information about other voluntary organizations available, or emotional support and empathy that comes from being understood by someone who has shared feelings and experiences. Furthermore, meeting casually at either each other's house or at a place associated with sociality such as a café, beyond the impersonal and institutional feeling of a hospital's waiting room, meant that mothers, as well as their young deaf children who accompanied them, could build a strong sense of co-presence linked to comforting emotions such as empathy.

When I met Irena, she was at a stage in her life where she had accepted her son's deafness and had accumulated substantial knowledge and first-hand experiences as to how to best 'switch' to create an envirinment where, from her perspective, Aron could best make use of his own communication strengths. As such, she was in search of opportunities where she could meet other hearing parents with a child who was newly diagnosed with a "hearing problem" and pass on her wisdom as a fellow companion and help them accept and adjust sooner than if no such contact was available. Both Irena and Gloria, I suggest, were very aware of the direct implication of parents' emotional and communicative readiness on their deaf child's age of language acquisition, for which their complexities have been illustrated throughout this and the opening chapter. They, therefore, valued timely parent-to-parent support right from the beginning of their moral careers as hearing mothers of deaf children in addition to their sustained meetings with medical and educational professionals that mainly focussed on the child and the parent-child relationship. As Gloria had illustrated, relationships with professionals were mainly centered on receiving more legitimate, formal information and knowledge on deafness and appropriate ways of communication which at times could be overwhelming or indisputable for new parents. Getting together with experienced parents, on the other hand, provided novice parents a more accessible language that presented information by filtering and contextualizing it which allowed parents to prioritize their actions more confidently and in a way that was more meaningful to them. Furthermore, by being allowed to openly express the challenges they felt as novices, hearing parents could better deal with strongly felt emotions of, for example, denial, isolation, failure and confusion.

3.2 Being a committed parent as a key component in making informed choices

The importance of experiencing a wide range of collaborative places representative of different communities of practice is described by Gloria when she cautions new parents that "if you're not aware of your child's needs and if you're … not fully aware of the support you can get, then you will be okay with what the teacher … or [any one] group [says] because you feel like 'I'm the gainer' because at the end you can't [compare] what your child should be getting". And going beyond the initial communities of practice novice hearing parents of deaf children find themselves in to eventually reach such a level of awareness – a process which is not systematically coordinated – is thus only possible by, according to Gloria, being "fully committed as a parent". Gloria's notion of a committed parent, I suggest, is equivalent to Irena's diligence, as described at the opening of this chapter, to strive not be merely but rather fully present when interacting with Aron and in turn enable him to be a fuller participant in the relationship. As such, both Irena's and Gloria's determination to co-create collaborative places within their home and neighbourhood made them recognize that both their own and their child's learning trajectory from novice to experienced had to encompass multiple communities of practice available to them, each offering a distinctly valuable set of 'situated' knowledge (Lave and Wenger, 2003). As Gloria put it, by "exploring … what is [out] there", such as "interacting with other parents from other boroughs, and [learning about] what they get … in their areas", parents are "able to question what is being given to [them]".

Also, by talking about the quality "to be fully committed as a parent", Gloria brings the attention back to the obligations of the 'hearing adult' towards the 'deaf child' in order to achieve a meaningful relationship enabled by the co-production of a collaborative place. Her statement also signifies how the moral career of becoming a mother of a deaf child entails a toilsome journey. This twofold journey involves an inner struggle for acceptance. Additionally, it is also about facing the many challenges of trying to fathom the scope of the 'map' of in/formal collaborative places that exist beyond the home, to learn how to navigate it appropriately, as well as to demand and initiate new collaborative places where it was felt to be absent. Furthermore, I argue, to be a 'committed parent' in this sense of its meaning is influenced by parents' own cultural backgrounds, social networks, educational level, and class statuses. Being able to communicate in spoken and/or written English, for example, or the

ability to understand the medical information presented to them, to be "aware of the education system", or being computer literate, are all parental resources that can determine the speed and quality of entering London's collaborative places with their deaf child or, if seen as necessary, establishing new ones.

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In conclusion, by looking at the early experiences of hearing mothers with deaf children I aimed to highlight the complex social processes by which deaf children learn language (and often one language rather than another), including the parental decision to alter a deaf child's body and the degree of access to a rich – and often contested – array of resources.

In this chapter, I examined the variety of collaborative places generated within a range of communities of practice available for London's highly heterogeneous group of deaf preschoolers, both in terms of their deafness as well as their socio-cultural membership resulting from being born into a diverse range of hearing families. The main focus was on mothers like Irena and Gloria who, through their sustained commitment towards their deaf sons, Aron and Matthew respectively, expanded their joint membership in collaborative places beyond their home environment by taking up the role of a novice within a range of communities of practice specializing in matters linked to childhood deafness. Other mothers such as Melika and Hatice, on the other hand, were themselves had lesser resources available at hand which limited their ability to expose their daughters[41] Aisha and Damla, respectively, to various collaborative places. As I argued, this was partly linked to circumstances that prevented them from becoming novices in multiple communities of practice in the first place.

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[41] As I also indicated in the Introduction, the gender of the deaf children in terms of their degree of access to collaborative places was not a distinctive matter in my research. Related to this, while the interrelation of gender and childhood deafness stands as a potential area of future exploration, this topic was beyond the scope of this research. For a discussion on the role of gender in deaf youth's socialization and identity formation, see Atkin et al. (2002). In terms of age: although there was a unified focus on understanding all four mothers' perspectives regarding their deaf children's early years, the fact that Damla and Aisha were adults themselves at the time of the interviews meant that the mothers were able to reflect on a longer relationship history than Irena could with Aron and Gloria with Matthew. Furthermore, the different cultural attitudes, educational, medical, and social approaches to childhood deafness as well as the availability of various technologies during the specific era and geography that each deaf child is born into are highly influential in shaping parents' access to resources discussed above as well as each deaf individual's childhood experiences.

For example, as was the case with Hatice, her own lack of proficiency in the dominant language of these communities of practice – English – reinforced her access being limited to readily available core public services. Likewise, the unavailability of other families with deaf teenagers where they lived meant that Melika could not encourage Aisha's involvement in such informal peer groups until they had moved to London and Aisha had reached adulthood. To be clear, however, situations where, for one reason or another, a parent cannot practically demonstrate their 'full commitment' towards their deaf child in terms of actions they may take to allow for their deaf child's fullest possible participation in everyday life, this does not necessarily lead to serious outcomes which in the UK context can be interpreted as being a neglectful parent. Therefore, it is important to note that the range of activities carried out by mothers described so far are all meant to demonstrate some form of parental involvement. As Lave and Wenger (2003) have put it, within a "closed domain of knowledge or collective practice", such as the different specialist collaborative places, there exists degrees of acquisition, beginning with the peripheral participation of newcomers and gradually leading to their full participation as "newcomers-become-old-timers" (Lave and Wenger, 2003, pages 36-37 and p.114). Alternatively, as conceptualized by my interlocutors, mothers of deaf children they all share a growing involvement, although at different scales, in an increasing number of collaborative places as over the years they transform from being 'new' and 'inexperienced' novices in the area of childhood deafness to becoming 'experienced' authorities themselves. For some, this newfound status as bearers of specialized knowledge compels them to generate their own communities of practice made up of informal gatherings among hearing mothers of deaf children who at times share the same ethno-linguistic background.

I have also hinted at how each community of practice often prioritized one language possibility over others or may have promoted a bi- or multi-lingual environment where experienced hearing adults switched between linguistic options as a way of including the individual deaf child. The home, for example, could be a place where only the dominant societal language (i.e. English or French) was spoken and (other) home languages (such as Polish or Arabic) were dropped. It could also be where the home language was emphasized, such as when Irena preferred to speak to Aron in Polish and Hatice only knew Turkish when Damla was growing up. Both mothers left the teaching of English to the specialist teams at

their children's schools. Encounters with professionals within the UK – at the specialist hospital and at school as well as with the local authority's specialist team –, on the other hand, took place in English, at times alongside BSL or another suitable means of communication. Other organized events for families with deaf children, furthermore, could be dominated by the widespread use of BSL. Thus, deaf individuals from minority ethnic backgrounds who were living in London at the time of my fieldwork such as Aron, Matthew, Damla, Aisha and Nimali, as well as the deaf students to be discussed in the subsequent chapters, all came into contact with at least three different communities of linguistic practice at some point in their life – their home language, the national language and an indigenous sign language.

In the next chapter, I will be moving away from the mother-child relationship and the sites it is linked to, such as the home and the local specialist facilities for deaf preschoolers. As they reach school age, deaf children form new relationships with new types of novice and experienced deaf and hearing adults, as well as deaf and hearing peers within their school's different communities of practice. From this point on, therefore, I will look into how these new 'collaborative places', also known as bases, function in comparison to the wider hearing mainstream schools they are positioned within.

Before I proceed, however, a brief note of introduction outlined in the Transitional Section below will be useful.

Transitional Section

So far, I have considered mainly the relation between mothers and their deaf pre-schoolers and how, as the mothers become more 'experienced', so did their home gradually transform into an increasingly 'collaborative place' where the mothers, as they reported it, were increasingly more confident in responding to the communication preferences of their deaf children and to include them more fully in their home and community life. Furthermore, I have touched upon other, more 'mainstream' community activities, such as church-going and leisure activities, where the novice-becoming-experienced mothers acted as negotiators in order to alter – with various degrees of success – common practices in such a way as to no longer exclude their deaf children from becoming fuller members. I also demonstrated that the speed and degree of such transformations were augmented when mothers joined in the diverse range of communities of practice in the field of childhood deafness, from those where they were among health care and educational professionals to more informal encounters with experienced (deaf and hearing) mothers of deaf children. As a consequence, the mothers and their deaf pre-schoolers had experiences of two different places – those that were collaborative and those that were not. As deaf pre-schoolers become 'students' upon starting their formal schooling and joining their local mainstream schools, they once again become participants in new communities of practice. In the following three chapters, I will describe the different 'communities of practice' co-existing within the two mainstream schools with Deaf Resource Bases where I did my fieldwork – Appletree Primary School and Hallsbury Secondary School – which I will refer to as the 'school' and the 'base' communities.

Firstly, the dominant community of practice in each school, mainly discussed in Chapter Three, was the 'school community' which occupied the mainstream classrooms and the wider school environment. Furthermore, it was predominantly made up of hearing participants who used English (in its numerous varieties and registers) throughout the school day, with a priority given to Standard English in spoken and written forms by the teachers during lesson time as the medium of teaching (mirroring the language variety of formal assessments) and by management during formal presentations such as at assemblies. As a reflection of the school population's diversity, however, students also used their home languages amongst themselves, mostly during break times. As for the hierarchy of the school community's

participants, its 'old-timers' – those with the most say over the use of community resources – were hearing adults, consisting mainly of senior managers and mainstream class teachers. During the school day they typically only communicated in English. In this sense they embodied the school community ideology of favouring monolingual English, especially during formal events. As such, they did not make much use of the (potential or existing) "ability … to shift from one language [or modality] … to another" and thus had limited access to the "various linguistic resources" available in their schools (Duranti, 2001, p.18). Deaf students, on the other hand, were 'newcomers' in these school communities, as they had not yet mastered Standard English, while their English-speaking and hearing peers were also 'old-timers' relative to them, yet with less status than the adult old-timers. Although the base staff were clearly the old-timers in their relationship to their deaf students, their status in the school community was more ambiguous. The various levels of status attest to the presence of a "diversified field of relations among old-timers and newcomers" which reaches beyond the 'teacher-student' dyad often found in approaches to learning (Lave and Wenger, 2003, p.57). Furthermore, the usefulness of the notion of 'learning as increased participation in communities of practice' (Ibid.) which allows for the social complexities of schooling to be more accurately reflected, affirms for me the importance of this theoretical framework within the anthropology of education and the anthropology of communication alike.

Secondly, there was the smaller base community formed in interaction with the school community. Here, the members' communication repertoires incorporated additional forms of communication alongside English including BSL as well as what I will term 'base English' which I will further explain as we move on to the next chapter. Mainly made up of those frequenting the bases at the two different schools, its members included the base staff and the deaf students. Those who took up the 'old-timer' or 'newcomer' statuses were situationally determined. When the base staff supported the deaf students in their development of their individual communicative repertoires, with a priority given – both at the ideological and practice levels – to the use and understanding of English, then the former were 'old-timers' and the latter were 'newcomers'. There were circumstances of role-shifting, however, which I will further discuss. These base communities in both schools are introduced in the next chapter and discussed more in depth in Chapters Four and Five. In Chapter Three, however, the focus will be placed on describing incidents where base staff's and deaf

students' direct interactions are primarily with mainstream hearing adults and peers. In doing so, I will demonstrate common practices that impede deaf students' move towards becoming fuller participants of the school community and, instead facilitate the perseverance of their 'newcomer' status.

CHAPTER THREE – The mainstream school versus the base: two different communities of practice

As deaf children from minority ethnic hearing families enter childhood, leaving their preschool years behind, they are initiated into new communities of practice. These new communities of practice – mainly their mainstream school and its designated Deaf Resource Base – are not only temporally and spatially but also often relationally and linguistically separated from those familiar communities of practice located in and around their home which they have been partaking in along with their mothers. By continuing to study the place of school as an equally compelling location where communities of practice are in operation, I wish to continue the argument – which has been strongly emphasised by Lave and Wenger (2003) and Busch (2017) alike – that all learning, including children's language acquisition and development as well as their formal schooling are relational and historical processes and therefore are shaped by social forces that go beyond these children's alleged 'individual' and 'inner' biological and cognitive abilities. As such, the chapter begins with Section 1 where a fresh set of 'old-timers' interact with newly introduced deaf children and youth acting in their role as 'students'. In Section 2, I address the dilemma felt by the base staff and students in the latter group's integration into school life as multilinguals. I finish by describing in Section 3 how deaf students face many institutional barriers to their learning and a fuller participation in the mainstream school community invisible to most.

Section 1: Visualization of language and the implications of English monolingualism on deaf students' participation

In this section, I will describe the different communication methods used by each of the two bases of Appletree Primary School and Hallsbury Secondary School. Albeit different in form, however, I will illustrate how the base staff in both schools in fact share the same linguistic practice – the increased visualization of English – as a demonstration of their valuing English and the membership it secures in the mainstream community more over other forms of communication and memberships. Despite attempting to further integrate their deaf students into mainstream education by remaining in the same language community of English users, however, the shift in the use of various communicative modalities, I will argue,

produces a 'base community'. This base community is located in the base and has its own community of practice distinct from that of the mainstream school. As I will further demonstrate, it has its own cultural and linguistic practices and its own 'situated' knowledge, which goes unrecognized by the school community which has the effect of thus furthering the distinction between the two communities of practice.

As the theoretical framework of this section, I will make use of the notion of the 'whole person' described in conjunction to communities of practices as discussed by Lave and Wenger (2003). For them and equally for me, the term 'whole person' is a theoretical attempt to "arrive at a rich notion of agency" (Lave and Wenger, 2003, p.53). It is put forward as an alternative to the conventional account of 'learning as internalization' which is problematized by the authors because it "leave[s] the nature of the learner, of the world, and of their relations unexplored ..., suggests that knowledge is largely cerebral … [and] is too easily construed as an unproblematic process of absorbing the given" (Ibid., p.47). They instead offer a more embodied and situated view of "learning as increasing participation in communities of practice [which] concerns the whole person acting in the world" (Ibid., p.49). In other words, learning "implies not only a relation to specific activities, but a relation to social communities" (Ibid., p.53). In this sense, language learning processes define and are defined by many types of persons in the making (Ibid.). As such, I use the notion of the 'whole person' in conjunction with my previous argument on the role of a shared language in reaching more engaged levels of co-presence in different places and relationships, as well as the notion of becoming a fuller participant, and more precisely a "complex, full cultural–historical participant" with constantly shifting positions within and between places and communities (Ibid., p.32).

In contextualizing the notion of a 'whole person' in relation to deaf students' experiences of schooling, I look at each school community's interplay with the notion separately, beginning with Appletree Primary School and then moving on to Hallsbury Secondary School. On a further note, although Appletree's base team was large enough to provide support to deaf students across the year levels, my accounts of the base staff will largely relate to those who had worked with the Foundation Stage deaf students on a consistent basis, including Miss Ann, Hussam, Mary, Shazia and Nesima. By comparing two seemingly divergent approaches

prevalent in each base on how to, in the long run, support the achievement of increased membership for their deaf students in their respective school's as well as other (future) mainstream communities, I aim to highlight their fundamental similarity in terms of what these practices represent for the base staff themselves.

1.1 Appletree Primary School: Total Communication and the base's staff and students

As one of several designated deaf provision schools for this London borough, Appletree Primary School's ethos was 'Total Communication'. The Total Communication approach stands in-between the said approaches of only using English, on the one hand, and where BSL/English bilingual teaching prevails, on the other. As discussed in the Introduction, however, its practice varies from country to country and even from school to school. According to a National Deaf Children's Society publication cited in McDonald (2006), which is embedded in a British context and, based on my observations, was also relevant to Appletree's base, the idea in using the Total Communication "approach is not that sign will *replace* but *support* the use of the oral method of communication and the use of any residual hearing, to help the development of speech and language skills. The most common sign […] systems used in this approach are Signed English and Sign Supported English" (McDonald, 2006, emphasis added). In other words, the Total Communication approach at Appletree's base, I argue, treated signing more as a teaching aid rather than the primary language of its deaf students or a medium of education, and thus in doing so demonstrated an aspiration to retain strong ties with the school community by means of producing 'base English' as a variety of English.

To further illustrate, what made 'base English' different from all the other forms of English used at the two schools was its link to a certain type of space (primarily the base classrooms) and more importantly its unique multimodal features. Firstly, it was best practiced in the base rooms, between the base team and the deaf students. The room designs purposefully incorporated carpets and acoustic wall panels to reduce background noise which allowed for improved hearing of speech by the deaf students most of whom used hearing technologies. The well-lit smaller class sizes and seating arrangements that promoted face-to-face

interaction and eye contact, furthermore, made lipreading – the visual element of speech – easier. There was a lot of emphasis on behalf of the base staff that the deaf students could see what was being read aloud, either by following the same page on the book being read or by providing written instructions in the form of hand-outs or a projection before verbal instructions were given. Drawing and writing was frequent, and the handwriting was intentionally kept neat. Furthermore, as practices only observed at Appletree Primary School, sign system of SSE was used frequently as well as Signed English (reserved for assemblies). As such, although the spoken (with or without sound) element of English remained the primary modality, with base English the visualising aspects of the overall communicative act were increased and enhanced. Finally, a less formal register was observed in comparison to the standard register used by the mainstream teachers – its users spoke at a slower pace, interruptions between interlocutors were expected and repetitions were commonly accepted. In brief, base English was a "local adaptation" of shared communicative resources that was "in response to the contingencies of the setting" found in the bases of the two schools (Goodwin, 2003, in Kusters et al., 2017a, p.227).

The TODs were positioned as the most senior 'old-timers' at Appletree's base. There were several reasons for this. Firstly, they were all permanent staff, unlike the many peripatetic TODs visiting mainstreamed deaf students across London. Secondly, more than any other school staff, they acted as, going back to Lave and Wenger's (2003) discussions on entry into communities of practice, the 'sponsor' for all other base members, including the deaf students and the specialist TAs. It was due to their presence that the existence of an established 'deaf provision' at a dedicated base could be declared. In other words, it was their place in the base community's unique division of labour and their 'intentional relations' with the specialist TAs and the deaf students alike that brought legitimacy to the base (Lave and Wenger, 2003, p.92). And finally, they were the most 'adept' in English, and particularly Standard English as the school's dominant language variety, as well as frequent users of various other contextually legitimate communicative resources such as BSL and base English that they made use of when mediating for 'newcomers' (Ibid., p.70). These newcomers, or novices, were situationally both oral English-speaking hearing (mainstream) students and staff who did not know how to meaningfully communicate with the deaf students, and the deaf students themselves in relation to community activities that required the use of spoken

and written English. In relation to their deaf students, if English was considered a valued 'artifact' of this community of practice located within the base, then TODs – along with specialist TAs – were responsible for making sure that "the inner workings of [this] artifact are available for the [deaf] learner's inspection" (Ibid., p.102). They provided such access by incorporating the use of other such "supportive artefacts", mainly base English and BSL (Ibid., p.103).

As old-timers of Appletree's base community operating under the philosophy of Total Communication, however, the TODs were not required to become fluent in BSL; nor did they learn SSE as part of their TOD training. As it was reported to me by several TODs I interviewed throughout this research, all teachers in England who go through the additional training to be qualified as a TOD had only basic mandatory training in BSL, either at Level 1 or Level 2. As such, most TODs – except for those who themselves are deaf or are hearing but have deaf parent(s) – are introduced to deaf children within the base communities as adults as part of their career path to specialize as a TOD. While still in training, as do all BSL learners do, they gain some knowledge of BSL signs as components of that language, learning that signs convey meaning through their association with facial and bodily movements. Based on my observations, however, for the TODs placed at a Total Communication school such as Appletree these 'signs' were often taken out of their original linguistic context to be rearranged to produce SSE and became 'visualized words' representative of English.

As for the status of specialist TAs working with Appletree's Foundation Stage deaf students, they were what made the relations of learning "a triadic set of relations", as they were not yet old-timers like TODs, but were not novices as described above either and could be considered "*relative* old-timers" or "more advanced" in relation to the latter (Ibid., pages 56-57 and p.95). As such, they were all proficient English users and were also learning other skills by observing the TODs and also by being instructed by them.

The specialist TAs level of competency in communicating visually at the point of recruitment varied considerably. Out of the four base TAs I worked with the most in the two Reception classes, two of them, Hussam and Shazia, were the most competent BSL users, with Hussam obtaining a Level 3 qualification. He had no qualification or prior experience relevant to the

educational sector. Despite our shared exposure to BSL linguistics in our respective Level 3 courses where students are provided with linguistic grounds as to why there exists major differences in sentence structure between BSL and English as two distinct language systems, Hussam at times hinted at what appeared to be the irrelevance of BSL as a resource for language learning used with the Reception deaf students. One day during class, as we were transitioning from one activity to the next, for example, he told me "SSE is better than BSL because in BSL you say 'car green'[42] and in SSE it is 'The car is green' – this is better". In fact, as a hearing member of a mainstream school community with the duty to support his deaf students in becoming fuller members of the same community, I argue, Hussam was concerned with resources that were relevant to this community. For him, BSL did not provide the deaf students with a link to learning English and thus a means to participate in the school community. In other words, it did not provide them "with opportunities to make the culture of [English] practice theirs" because it did not allow them to absorb "how masters talk" (Ibid., p.95)

Hussam's attitude, like all the other base staff's behaviour towards different forms of communication that I observed daily, had a further implication. For Appletree's base team, the learning and participation happening within the base community was imagined as being a part of the wider English-speaking school community and detached from, for example, the sign language community. Although all the deaf students could sign and did so voluntarily, from the perspective of the base staff, I argue, signing was a means to becoming more 'hearing' and not an implication of a lasting "signer" identity. In his valuation of English over BSL, Hussam, for example, was stating his position in and alliance with the school community, and his role in encouraging his deaf students to become fuller participants solely in this community of practice as 'monolingual newcomers' who were ultimately learning to listen and speak in English. But as I observed and will further show in Sections 2 and 3, the Reception deaf students at ages four and five were already all developing their individual communicative repertoires by incorporating aspects of English, BSL and their home language. They were all

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[42] When Hussam said 'car green', he was using a sign-for-sign literal translation of a BSL sentence into English. He had not considered its semantics, in which case I would have transcribed his words as 'CAR GREEN' as writing in all capital letters is the conventional method used within linguistics for glossing sign languages in written English. As such, 'CAR GREEN' in fact does mean 'The car is green' when interpreted for its meaning.

from minority ethnic backgrounds and they were growing up in households where their parents' home language was the most prevalent means of communication. Furthermore, because of the nature of the core health and educational services available within their borough of residency, they had all been introduced to BSL as pre-schoolers, either at a specialist nursery or other local authority provisions. The systematic failure to acknowledge these deaf students developing identities as multilinguals as a reflection of them as 'whole persons' is, in my analysis, characteristic of the hegemony over language use by those who prioritize English monolingualism as a community practice. This in turn facilitated the generation of "interstitial communities of practice" between a monolingual English-speaking school and the non-English-speaking home as well as the community of BSL users as equally relevant sites where deaf children and youth develop different statuses and identities (Ibid., p.42). This divide, evident in the lack of collaboration and continuity in supporting deaf children's learning did, I suggest, "truncate possibilities for [multiple] identities of mastery" (ibid.).

The other two base staff, Mary and Nesima, both had qualifications in childcare, but no prior knowledge of or training in BSL. Mary had initially started at Appletree as a nursery staff and was assigned to work with some of the deaf children who had since progressed to Reception. When a position opened to join the Deaf Resource Base working with deaf students in Reception, she applied and got the job. She was using her voice, at times supplemented with SSE. She explained that she picked up the signs by observing Miss Ann. When I told her that I had completed some BSL courses, she was eager to find out if I knew of any local ones because she wanted to learn BSL more formally. She asked me about the cost of training and hoped that the school would fund it. Mary's circumstances are illustrative of how control over resources by certain persons, and more generally the type of division of labour found in the given community of practice, plays a part in the definitions of who is an old-timer and who is a newcomer. Mary was hired to be a sub-level old-timer without concern for her potential newcomer status as a BSL learner by those who "organize opportunities to learn" (Ibid., p.92).

Nesima, on the other hand, told me that this was her first time working at a school and that she applied to the position because she wanted job stability, previously working as a child carer doing last minute cover work through an agency. She was doing one-on-one work with

Padma, a deaf girl currently in the school's nursery, who was later described to me as a "signer" by Miss Ann. Hiding in the small staff kitchen during our 15-minute break where we coincidentally met, we continued chatting as we quickly sipped our hot cups of instant coffee. She explained how when she was called for an interview for her current position, she did not have any high hopes of being selected because she had no prior experience working in the field of special educational needs. But, as she was told, she was hired for her background in childcare. She too began learning to sign on-the-job by attending the in-house BSL lessons for all interested staff taught by a deaf BSL Instructor who also delivered BSL lessons for the base students. She enjoyed the lessons, but she knew that Padma was already a lot more advanced than she was as they signed to each other throughout the day. Nesima's relation to Padma further illustrates how Nesima's status as a 'relative old-timer' is only possible if English proficiency alone is taken into consideration. From the perspective of BSL fluency, although Padma is clearly the old-timer relative to Nesima, her status, and more broadly the "continuously renewed set of relations" between old-timers and newcomers, is not legitimately recognized by school's communities of practice as a direct consequence of the lower status given to BSL within Appletree's approach to Total Communication (Ibid., p.50). As BSL was not 'characteristic' of Appletree's base community, it did not, I suggest, stand as a valued artifact in its own right which made it (as well as Padma's old-timer status) less readily available (Ibid., p.102). Although I was aware that Appletree, like Hallsbury, had a deaf BSL Instructor visit the school weekly to teach some deaf students and staff BSL, the overall base ethos did not incorporate BSL consistently into the deaf students various learning activities taking place throughout the school days alongside the base staff.

In the above description of Appletree Primary School's base, its members, principles and means of communication, I have shown how TODs were positioned as 'old-timers' due to their English proficiency as well as having a broad set of communicative resources that they made use of when interacting with their deaf students. Similarly, the specialist TAs who worked closely with the Reception deaf students prioritized the modelling of English. They used visual communication options such as BSL, SSE and Signed English as means to support their deaf students to become fuller members of the school community. Based on my observations which I will detail later in the chapter, however, the Reception deaf students were members of at least two other communities of practice, gradually developing in their

own distinctive languages simultaneous to learning English – their home language and BSL. The emphasis of the base staff on predominantly English and therefore deaf students' ascribed status as newcomers relative to this, therefore, meant that the deaf students could not participate in their own learning as 'whole persons'. Their curtailed agency was apparent in their unrecognized status as old-timers as confident BSL users in relation to most base staff. Therefore, how members of a community of practice access, move between and retain different positions in its division of labour such as the 'old-timer', 'old-timer-in-training', and 'newcomer', I argue, becomes more apparent once these relations are examined through the lens of language choice and the hierarchy of communication options.

Furthermore, in the case of Appletree's deaf base, visualization of the dominant language which included the use of BSL –a distinct language independent from English– was perceived by the base staff as a process that supported the deaf students' fuller membership in the school community. In contrast, as I will describe below, for the base staff at Hallsbury Secondary School, despite their closer language affiliation to English from the outset, their unique multimodal practices with enhanced visualized features acted as a marker of their distinction as a community of practice from the dominant school community, which in turn made their relationship 'interstitial' rather than closely connected to or in agreement with each other (Lave and Wenger, 2003).

1.2 Hallsbury Secondary School: "An Oral School" and the base staff

Hallsbury Secondary School's provision for deaf students was based on an oral philosophy. This meant that only those deaf students who could receive information and express themselves through spoken language were selected by their LEA, in collaboration with parents, to attend this school. When I interviewed Mr. Sodhi, one of the two TODs at Hallsbury, he provided me with a broad description of how Hallsbury was different from other schools with deaf provision. When he first started here:

"What I did know about the school right from the beginning is that it is an oral school. So our main method of teaching … is they listen, the deaf children[43] have to practice their listening and practice their speaking. So there's different kind of deaf education, but this school was very much oral … and that was their philosophy really. And [also] 'integration' – getting them into the mainstream. So … parents know that their deaf child is coming here to be integrated into a mainstream class as much as possible … There's so much disagreement about how deaf children should be educated, still … We've had children here which we've felt this is not the right place and it's taken about 2-3 years to discover that. And then, they're kind of encouraged to go somewhere else where they might be using more sign, like sign bilingual provision, or a total communication provision where they'll use everything." (Interview with Mr. Sodhi, February 2014)

All but one of twenty deaf students at the base could use their residual hearing enhanced with either hearing aids or cochlear implants, and they also talked to staff and their peers through the medium of (base) English. Nonetheless, they were not 'hearing' students. In addition to the obvious case of Nimali which I have extensively discussed in Chapter One, all base students at Hallsbury were severe to profoundly deaf with a 'statement' of special educational needs. I clearly remember my first visit to the base during my initial interview with Miss Collins and how we walked into a base lesson with three Year 7 girls. Miss Collins asked the girls to introduce themselves to me, and the first one replied with "Hi, my name is Samar. I am deaf". Despite their participation within the school community derived from being mainstreamed at varying degrees, the base students' identity as being deaf was a

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[43] Throughout my interview with Mr. Sodhi, he referred to base student(s) in various ways including 'deaf child/ren', 'our deaf children', 'our children', 'children', 'the children', 'this/that child', 'our kids', 'people', 'these people', 'this person', 'deaf people', 'deaf student', 'one girl', and 'deaf girl'. He also referred to hearing students as 'the mainstream', 'mainstream children', 'people in year 7', 'another person', 'someone', and 'other people'. During the interview, he also used informal language such as 'gonna' and 'cuz'. With his personal profile drawn from my limited interaction with and observation of him in mind, therefore, I could state that Mr. Sodhi's use of the pronoun 'person/people' when talking about deaf and hearing students and 'our kids' when referring to base students was also part of his informal language use which at times had a paternalistic tone. This parallels, I believe, his growing authoritative presence at the school (and at a higher degree when with mainstream students), as he's career in education begun as a specialist LSA at the base, shifted to a brief career move outside education, and then progressed with his recent return to the school in his double-roles as a mainstream teacher and a TOD with changing weights given to each throughout the years. Miss Collins, in comparison, who was a full-time TOD for the most part of her career, was a lot more down-to-earth with her interactions with students, which was also true for all the LSAs.

shared source of differentiation from it, catalyzing the formation of their own base community. This will be discussed further in chapters Four and Five where I will describe the deaf students' relations amongst themselves and with the base staff.

I also got to know the base 'team' at Hallsbury Secondary School. Overall, most of them were full-timers and had been part of the team on average for a decade. None of the LSAs had any formal training before taking upon their role, although some LSAs were away for training during the school year. They had all accumulated their knowledge on how to support the learning of deaf students through practice, developing their skills through trial and error and through mutual support, much of which took place at the base staff room. The 'visual' ways of the base team, as opposed to the 'hearing' ways of the mainstream class, will be further discussed in Chapter Four.

Miss Collins and Mr. Sodhi were both experienced TODs who, like all TODs do, had first trained as mainstream teachers. Reflecting on the TOD training she received, Miss Collins also felt that much of her learning took place on the job.

"The training doesn't by any means help you to know what to do … I would say my training really was an awful lot about what deafness is, you know, the sort of biological side of it … It was an awful lot of academic stuff on actually how [deaf] students find literacy and numeracy so difficult, but there wasn't an awful lot on how to deal with it when you're confronted with a student who is not able to sort of read or write by the time they're 11. There was a little bit on hearing aids and how to retube[44], but not much." (Interview with Miss Collins, July 2014).

Especially when I first joined the team, there were frequent occasions during staff breaks where I would ask about how things worked around the base and in mainstream classes. On each occasion, both TODs made a clear effort to emphasize that the good work that was done at the base was because they all worked as a "strong team", with good communication, mutual support, and recognition of each member's hard work. The TODs, who officially had a

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[44] Retubing is a process of replacing the tube that connects the earmold to the hearing aid with a new one as part of the regular maintenance of hearing aids.

higher status than the LSAs on the staff hierarchy, were in a way levelling out the official differences in status among the team members and by doing so declaring all base staff as equal 'old-timers'. As I became more aware of the little acknowledgement and support they received from most mainstream teachers and especially the senior management team, I began to understand better how much the base team depended on each other. They were a community of practice, yet an unprivileged and unrecognized one in relation to the mainstream school community.

I had early on sensed a disconnect between the base staff and senior management as Miss Collins continued to give me a tour of the school on my first day of volunteering. As we walked out of the base rooms and walked up the stairs, which felt like we were transitioning into the mainstream hearing world, I commented on how modern the school building looked. It had glass exterior walls and wide circular hallways with low walls on each of its three levels looking down to the centrally located cafeteria at the ground level. Miss Collins agreed that is was a very modern design. She then added how concerned they were at first as the base team. They were not sure if the new building's interior design with open plan classrooms would be disruptive to their deaf students' learning when in mainstream classes because of the potential outside noise levels and poor acoustics. To their relief, the new classrooms functioned well for the deaf learners. However, as a school with a long history of providing deaf provision for over forty years, she had wished that the senior management had consulted them about the matter during the design phase.

For Miss Collins and her base team, their concerns reflected their vision to create a 'collaborative place' for their students as expansive as possible, not only in the base itself, but also wherever their students went, such as mainstream classrooms. In order to do so, however, they needed the collaboration of the novice hearing, specifically the mainstream teachers as those who would have direct contact with mainstreamed deaf students. For example, below is an anecdote from my interview with Miss Collins where she comments on some practices that in her opinion supported deaf students' learning in a mainstream classroom:

"There are some very, very good examples of practice in this school of [mainstream] teachers who understand the needs of our deaf students and who will make everything really, really visual[45] for them and slow the [pace of delivery of] whole lesson down. But that's normally teachers who have maybe lower ability groups anyway; so that actually assists everybody in the class – not just the deaf students … Whilst we try really hard, as a team, to inform teachers – 'Please don't … talk with your back to the student' and I send out top tips every week on the bulletin – there are some teachers who don't understand" (Interview with Miss Collins, July 2014).

Miss Collins further explains that the training of mainstream teachers as to how to best integrate deaf students in their classes is an ongoing matter, partly linked to Hallsbury's high staff turnover rate. She therefore continues to point out how it is equally important for them to be supported by the senior management team:

"It boils down to the fact that we haven't been able to do any inset[46] with the new staff for a good three years because it's not seen as a priority [by the senior management] … For the last three years, we have recommended that it would be a good idea because … we get quite a big staff turnover here … All we would need to do is … maybe do an hour presentation to the staff … We can even manage with half an hour … It's a management that seems to have … different priorities and that seems to be exam results basically … Whilst outwardly they are really supportive of the Deaf Resource Base, they're not *really*. To be quite frank, I'm not sure that they really want the Deaf Resource Base here despite the fact that it's been here since 1973 … The Head [Teacher] says it is a financial burden on the school … [But] our students bring in an awful lot of money[47] so … how the Head can say that … I don't know. Plus, the fact is that the

[45]Based on my observation of Hallsbury's mainstream teachers' delivery of lessons, examples of something that is 'really visual' could include integrating relevant subject-specific images and educational videos into their PowerPoint presentations as well as the use of clip art in instructions of classroom work handed out to students. In the following sentences, moreover, Miss Collins details this visualisation within the broader context of awareness-raising amongst hearing people through the encouragement of the use of some basic 'tips' when communicating with deaf individuals who have a variety of communication preferences with examples that would also be relevant to the oral deaf students at Hallsbury.

[46] An inset is a training day for school staff held periodically, often the day before students return to school following each school break.

[47] As I already explained in the Introduction, here Miss Collins is referring to the mandatory funding provided by the local authority per each student that has a 'statement' to the school they are attending.

borough is paying for all the audiology equipment … I might be a bit cynical but as far as I can see the senior management in this school like to use our deaf students as a fine example, to maybe show people around the school. They [the students] are always terribly polite, they will shake hands with visitors. You know that's as far as it goes … apart from that, they're not really bothered." (Interview with Miss Collins, July 2014).

As Miss Collins explains, the base team have not been granted legitimate access to the 'new staff' who are hearing novices. Their status as old-timers in the base community and their skill in visualizing language were not perceived as 'characteristic' of the school community as imagined by the senior management. The base staff were not considered "learning resources in the community" (Lave and Wenger, 2003, p.86). These "unequal relations of power", in turn, creates a sense of alienation from the higher ranks of the school community and a stronger sense of 'we' among the base staff (Ibid., p.42). This growing social "boundary canalize[d] social life" of the school, I argue, reduced the base staff's identification with the hearing old-timers as "fellow members" and led to their "dichotomization … as strangers, as members of another … group [which] implie[d] a recognition of limitations on shared understanding [and] in criteria for judgement of value and performance" (Barth, 1969, p.15).

In conclusion, in both schools, English remains the dominant language, with both bases openly or otherwise being compelled to enable their deaf students to become competent English monolinguals. As I will argue in the next section, this dominant language practice present both at Appletree and Hallsbury is maintained by the common theme of some mainstream old-timer staff resisting their repositioning as newcomers relative to the language(s) being used both in the school and base communities. As such, and as I will also demonstrate in the following section, the monolingual English approach of the mainstream school can also be at odds with the base community by highlighting how the base staff's attempts to embrace the multilingual status of their students as a means to increase their participation in school life is restricted by the mainstream school which has control over school resources.

Section 2: The difference in reactions to deaf students' identities as multilinguals in both school and base communities

Back in September 2013, when I first embarked on my fieldwork in locations where there was a group of deaf children or youth, I was given the opportunity to interview the Head TOD in one of London's LEA-funded nurseries for profoundly deaf preschoolers aged 18 months to four years of age. She had noted that "We get twelve children maximum […] We have to prioritize. If there are more than twelve children, we choose according to hearing loss level and we support other nurseries [for those who don't get a place]. For our children, ten out of twelve, English is a second language. For only two English is spoken at home. So most of them have two to three languages." Since then, I've volunteered at a primary school, a secondary school and a deaf youth club, and worked with several colleges around London. It has also been my experience that for most deaf students, their home language is not English.

For most of the Reception deaf children at Appletree, as well, English was not their first or preferred language. As for Hallsbury, only one deaf student came from a family where English alone was spoken. However, their degree of participation in different aspects of mainstream school life was directly affected by their ability to converse in English. As such, the dominant community of practice within these two mainstream schools was the English-speaking school community. This community's 'old-timers' were typically promoters of English monolingualism – an issue which I engage with in more depth especially in Chapter 4[48]. They were full participants in mainstream school life, and they had unrestricted access to all mainstream school premises. They were in classrooms, assembly halls and staff rooms. They guarded the school entrances, patrolled the hallways and had control over toilets. It was only in the premises of the base that I hardly ever saw them. For example, when Miss Collins, who as the Head TOD was the liaison between the old-timers of the school community and the base, brought news from senior management, it felt like she'd been to an unknown place and back. These old-timers also made decisions regarding the use of school resources such as the structuring of time, the use of materials and personnel and the distribution of the legitimate

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[48] As a further note, I also unpick the institutional-level promotion of monolingualism throughout the thesis, discussing it from different angles in each of the chapter. As such, the 'promoters' I'm referring to here are taken as people in an institutional role rather than people that may also hold personal views valuing bi- or multi-lingualism.

school community knowledge by the mainstream teachers. Because the base team were not granted access to these old-timers, they were not able to reposition them as newcomers in the base community as a way of "increasing [their] understanding and identity" as hearing novices as the basis of their relationship with their deaf students (Lave and Wenger, 2003, p.84).

When interacting with these hearing adults, both the hearing and deaf students were positioned as 'newcomers' to the school community as they were still improving their spoken and written (Standard) English skills. Their membership and status in other home language communities was officially a negligible factor in increasing their learning through participation. As also highlighted in the Introduction, the backgrounds of deaf students at both Hallsbury Secondary School and Appletree Primary School reflected these schools' wider student population insofar as a high proportion of them came from households that used a minority ethnic language alone or in addition to English. This was also the case with Matthew, Aron and Damla whom I have discussed in the previous two chapters. All mainstream school activities, however, except for foreign language and BSL classes, were delivered in English. The official disregard for all students' identities as multilinguals and an ignorance of deaf students' preference for visual modalities in the school community impeded student learning, which I will discuss in more depth in Section 3. The two bases' staff, on the other hand, although they recognized the importance of embracing their deaf students' alternative communication preferences and strengths in supporting their fuller participation in the base and school communities, lacked the resources to do so because their own resources were partly controlled by the old-timers of the school community. On occasions where they did interact with their deaf students as multilingual 'whole persons', this was done haphazardly and never completely. In support of this argument, below I provide illustrations from each school, starting with an incident that happened during outdoor free play with Jamal, one of the Reception deaf students at Appletree.

2.1 Appletree Primary School

It had only been a few weeks since I had joined the school as a volunteer specialist TA for the Deaf Resource Base in early November 2013. I was assigned to be in Miss Lauren's class, observing and supporting Hakan, Mahmoud and Jamal, all aged five, throughout class time as well as during their free play time in the designated outdoor play area. As she often did, the TOD responsible for the Foundation Stage deaf students, Miss Ann, was also outside. She was using play time as an opportunity to build the deaf students' language skills. When I saw her with Hakan and Jamal, they were all using large colourful foam bricks to build a tower. Miss Ann was saying 'tower' while at the same time pointing to the structure and signing the BSL sign 'TOWER'. She also repeatedly spoke and signed many related adjectives and verbs to describe what they were doing. Later on, back in the classroom, she advised me to also be as descriptive as possible when working directly with the base students, primarily in English and if possible, with SSE. This was because deaf children born to hearing parents did not benefit as much from incidental learning as their hearing peers, such as, for example, overhearing nearby adult conversation as part of their everyday experiences (Marschark and Spencer, eds., 2011, p.190). As all the blocks came tumbling down and the boys had enough of this activity, they went their own ways in search of something else to do.

I continued to watch Jamal, who was running around, jumping from one activity to the next scattered around the playground. As he ran, I heard him shout out the word '*umma*'. I recognized that it was not in English, and approached Miss Ann still present in the playground to check if she knew what it meant. She said she believed it meant 'mother' in Bengali and added that Jamal was most likely visiting family back in Bangladesh during the recently past summer holidays where he experienced an intensified exposure to the language. Miss Ann, a White British woman in her fifties, was not familiar with Bengali language apart from knowing that this was a major part of Jamal's home life. She then added "You can only hope that there is language modelling at home, with any language, with correct grammar". In my brief experiences of written communication with some of the deaf students' mothers, I too noticed that many parents' own communicative repertoires did not always overlap with the school's English monolingualism. To illustrate, all six Reception deaf students had 'home-school' books where daily notes were exchanged between parents and the base staff. On several occasions,

I had the chance to contribute to them and saw parental comments and replies, which I at times struggled to read due to the different spelling and grammar used. Overall, I argue, there was often a stark split between the two 'interstitial' communities of practice the Reception deaf students belonged to at home and at school (Lave and Wenger, 2003). Neither community of practice's 'old-timers' had much participation or influence in the other to collaborate in progressing deaf students like Jamal from their double 'newcomer' status towards fuller participation in both communities. As Miss Ann had at one point commented, "We rarely see the [our deaf students'] parents because the children come from far away. But one parent, who drops her son off herself, we see every day." The rare face-to-face encounters were limited to Annual Reviews, potentially fraught with communication difficulties. As such, home languages were a matter of the home and the responsibility of its own old-timers that made it up as we have seen in Chapter Two, for example, with Irena teaching Aron Polish.

Furthermore, as already discussed in Chapter Two, the parental knowledge that the language of mainstream schools in London was English brought with it dilemmas for some hearing minority families of deaf children to consider whether or not they wanted to or could drop their home language, which was also linked to some professionals' advice to parents to only focus on English at the expense of BSL. Considered in relation to this backdrop of language politics during many minority deaf children's pre-school years, therefore, Miss Ann's eagerness for her deaf students to have language learning experiences in "any language" seems to be challenging the monolingual approach. In practice, however, and as discussed in Section 1, because of the base staff's strong affiliation to Appletree's school community of English language practitioners, her main duty and capability was to support the Reception base students to learn English. In the case of Jamal, for example, although she could not use his existing communicative resources in Bengali, Miss Ann tried to engage Jamal's visual modalities to prioritize, I argue, his increased learning of English and subsequently his participation in Appletree's school community, and gradually, as an extension of it, the wider (English speaking) 'hearing world'.

As a school located within a multicultural community of London, Appletree Primary School's type of schooling with an emphasis on English monolingualism, then, inhibited the

"possibilities for developing *identities* of mastery" by its Reception deaf students (Lave and Wenger, 2003, p.41, emphasis added). Hallsbury's base staff, as I will describe in the next sub-section, faced a similar dilemma in the sense that the resources available to them in their efforts to engage their deaf students – and in fact hearing students as well – as multimodal, multilingual 'whole persons' were restricted by the school community's emphasis on English monolingualism[49].

2.2 Hallsbury Secondary School

When I first visited Hallsbury Secondary School to have an interview with Miss Collins briefed me about some of the base students' backgrounds. Because she knew that I spoke Turkish, she mentioned that "We also have a Turkish boy. He is not in today. He prefers Turkish. He was born in Turkey." She then continued to add that "We have deaf children with all sorts of other issues. They are assessed only as 'deaf' but clearly they have other needs that we just can't put a thumb on." As time passed and I got to know the base staff and students better, I came to realize that the types of 'needs' Miss Collins was referring to varied greatly within the context of their past as well as current deaf students. It ranged, for example, from potentially a combination of cognitive, physical and emotional needs due to Global Developmental Delay, to psychological needs manifested through public episodes of self-harm, to predominantly linguistics ones where comprehension of English as the new dominant language was hindered due to being a 'newcomer' to the country. Furthermore, as I interacted with deaf students throughout their school routines, I increasingly became aware how 'deafness' always entailed a combination of medical, socio-cultural, linguistic and psychological issues, to list but a few, which were difficult to disentangle. The focus of this sub-section, however, will be limited to the spoken and written English proficiencies of teenage deaf students, not from the perspective of native language acquisition, but rather from their specific sociocultural status of being 'English as an Additional Language' students

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[49] To reiterate, when I talk about English monolingualism in this context, I am referring to a public educational institution's policies and practices and how these exclude community languages from being used alongside the dominant school language in formal schooling (and beyond making lessons in modern foreign languages available to its students for example), rather than to individual staff members' personal views on whether mono-, bi-, or multi- lingualism is better.

due to recent migration to London from a non-English-speaking part of the world. To further illustrate this matter, I will provide a more thorough account of the circumstances of the abovementioned 'Turkish boy' – Tuncay, aged fifteen and in Year 11 – and draw comparisons with another Turkish-speaking Year 11 hearing student named Burak in terms of the use of different aspects of their communicative repertoires in their school interactions.

When I first met Tuncay in October 2013, he was in one of the base rooms taking part in a Functional Skills English lesson. In fact, as a volunteer LSA I spent most of my time at the base, other than the occasional visits to mainstream classes to assist deaf students. Unlike the other two deaf students in class with him, Nimali and Taahir, who were both comfortably wearing their hearing aids, Tuncay did not appear to be using any assistive hearing technology. During our brief conversation in Turkish, I had no difficulties understanding him. He stated that "*Türkçe benim hayatım*" ('Turkish is my life'), which I better understood later as to why: it was because he was a much fuller participant of the community of Turkish language practitioners than the community of English speakers. Tuncay had only been living in London for the past four years since his family had moved here when he was eleven years old. He was the eldest of three sons and a daughter.

Although he talked about having a "*kulak problemi*" ('an ear problem'), as Miss Collins had once stated, he denied being deaf. He had only recently been diagnosed with hearing loss after he started Year 6[50] at a mainstream school near his new London home, which was also when he was given his first hearing aids. The base staff recounted that when he joined them at Hallsbury two years ago, he was very angry and frustrated. In his previous local secondary school located in his home borough, he was the only deaf student and was fully mainstreamed. There, I was told, he was often bullied for his deafness. Since receiving a statement of Special Educational Needs, he had been transferred to Hallsbury's base which he commuted daily to via a taxi service funded by the local authority. Although Tuncay admitted to Miss Collins that he was no longer bullied since his transfer, he still expressed his views of wanting to go back to his old school because he had many Turkish-speaking friends there. It was known to Miss Collins that Tuncay's father also did not approve of Tuncay's

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[50] Last year of Primary School.

placement in the base because he did not believe his son 'needed it'. Miss Collins told me how Tuncay's father had high expectations of him and compared him to his younger and academically much more successful brothers. During a coffee break with the base staff, I became part of a discussion where a few LSAs were remembering the time when Tuncay told them how his father and brother called him "retard" to which he responded with a laughter of agreement. Concerned, LSAs had to explain to him that what he was called was not a nice word. At Hallsbury, he had befriended two hearing Turkish boys which he spent most of his school breaks with. Unlike many other base students, he avoided being in the base apart from lesson time. For Tuncay, I argue, his transfer from his previous school to Hallsbury's base meant a lowering of his status from 'normal' to 'deaf'. He knew that at his old school he was fully mainstreamed which meant that he was attending regular GCSE classes as his peers. As it was explained to him, the classes he was placed in at the base was targeted at the lower 'Entry Level'[51].

Although he never wore his hearing aids, and to the base staff's amazement, he seemed to follow what was being said. The base staff had speculated that he had very subtle ways of lipreading people when spoken to in English, and I recall how once – situated in one of the base rooms shared by a few other students and staff working quietly – he had responded to me immediately after I asked him a question in Turkish during a moment when his head was turned away from me, searching for something in his blazer pocket. It appeared, moreover, that he could understand me better when I spoke to him in his familiar language of Turkish than when the staff addressed him in English. As Tuncay and I spent more and more time together during the Science and Functional Skills English classes held at the base, we got to know each other better over small talk in Turkish. At first, I was not sure if staff were permitted to talk to students in a language other than English, especially during official times such as lesson periods. When I checked with Miss Collins, however, she confirmed that it was okay, and that method-wise, the base staff were ready to go with "whatever helps". And in fact, this seemed to be the overall ethos shared among the base staff. This was at a stark contrast with what I learned about the 'mainstream school' in general during a discussion I had with Mr. Sodhi. He had originally trained as an English teacher prior to embarking on

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[51] Entry Level qualifications are part of the National Qualifications Framework and once achieved, can lead to GCSE level qualifications.

receiving a qualification as a TOD. While he was initially hired as a full-time TOD, demands for mainstream English teachers meant that he gradually had to balance being a TOD, which was reduced to part-time, with his additional mainstream role as an English teacher. As such, he had a good understanding of what happened both at the base and in mainstream classes. He was also knowledgeable about the base students' and the broader student population's circumstances. Below is an account of Mr. Sodhi's perspective on language use at Hallsbury's mainstream classes.

During a short break between lessons several months into my volunteering at Hallsbury, Mr. Sodhi and I met at the base staff room. By this time, Miss Collins had asked me if I was willing to support another Turkish Year 11 student, Burak, who was hearing, during a two-hour mainstream Science lesson. She had explained that he was struggling following the lesson, mainly because he had just moved to the UK from Turkey. When I later experienced the lesson format for myself, I had found it to be highly academic and delivered in a high English register at a quick pace. Mr. Sodhi was aware of my one-on-one work with both Tuncay and Burak. At one point during our conversation, I mentioned to Mr. Sodhi how Burak would highly benefit from out-of-class individualized support to improve his comprehension of everyday English but also the more technical English used in class. Mr. Sodhi opposed this suggestion by stating that "He can learn English if he wants to. Ten out of fifteen students at this school are EAL [English as an Additional Language]!".

In other words, as (Standard) English was the only formal and legitimate language of the school, all of its 'hearing newcomers' had to find their own way to improve their skills in reading, writing, speaking and listening in its various registers without the potential use of their relationships with committed old-timers such as their teachers or other competent school community members as effective resources solely for this specific purpose. In a sense, although he was "an absolutely new member" of this English-speaking school community, he was positioned to perform academically similarly to his peers – at a level of someone who had proficiency in spoken and written English but not yet the subjects being taught (Lave and Wenger, 2003, p.80). Put differently, the entry-point from which to be considered a 'legitimate participant' as a 'mainstream student' was to start from a more advanced point in the division of labour within the school community than Burak belonged to and from which

progress to become a fuller member could begin to evolve. Although the school did have a small 'English as an Additional Language' department, Burak's experience of it was a brief and insufficient orientation at the start of the year, and the lending of an English dictionary which he had since lost. As a fluent English speaker listening to Burak's Science teacher whizz through presentations and race through answer sheets, I could see how he was indeed thrown into the deep end. As such, Burak in a way was experiencing "the hegemony over resources for learning and alienation from full participation" within this historical version of a 'community of practice' – namely the dominant school community (Ibid., p.42). Comparing his mainstream Science lessons with the few complementary Science coursework sessions he had with Miss Collins and his two deaf peers, Muneeb and Jamila, in the base as a tag along, Burak was able to comment how "Miss Collins uses more visual aids and speaks more slowly"[52]. In a sense, Burak had noticed a contrast in teaching styles related to the use of different communication methods between the old-timers of the school and base communities.

Tuncay, on the other hand, like most base students, had regular weekly speech and language therapy sessions with Susan, the Speech and Language Therapist sent by the LEA. I had the opportunity to participate in some of these therapy sessions upon the mutual agreement of Susan and Tuncay. At one stage during the hour-long session, Susan focused on helping Tuncay to realize and to practice the different uses of 'he' and 'she' in a sentence. She had noticed that Tuncay was using them interchangeably while talking about a single individual. As we were seated around the three sides of a table with Tuncay in the middle, Susan at one point turned to me to ask if there was a gender differentiation in the third person in Turkish. I clarified that the third person was designated with a gender-neutral '*o*'. Finding out more about this other community of practice Tuncay belonged to, I argue, allowed Susan to have a better understanding of Tuncay as a 'whole person' which she, as an old-timer, incorporated into her collaborative work with Tuncay in order for him to become a fuller participant of the community of English-speakers. According to Lave and Wenger (2003), a 'whole person' as a notion of agency "does justice to the multiple relations through which persons define themselves in practice" (Ibid., p.53).

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[52] This is my English translation of Burak's spoken statement in Turkish.

Both Miss Collins' incorporation of Burak in the base revision lesson and Susan's initiative to collaborate with me as an old-timer in the community of Turkish-speakers stand as examples of base staff valuing students' communicative repertoires as multilinguals as well as the process of " fashioning of identities of full participation" (Ibid., p.43). Yet these moments of increased participation are dismissed as being legitimate by the school management and mainstream teachers and thus reduced to sporadic and supplementary incidences in the experiences of newcomers such as Tuncay and Burak in term of potentiality of forming collaborative relationships with them.

Gradually, Tuncay's understanding of written and spoken English was expanding, and he even made a statement that this was aided "because at home our Turkish TV is not working". For example, he could hold an informal conversation in English with his peer Taahir and their two LSAs, Kimberly and Saiqa, during their Functional Skills English lesson. When more formal learning began, however, and they were directed towards an English text, it became apparent that some very causal words were unfamiliar to both boys. When Saiqa, for example, asked them the meaning of the word 'fascinated', they tried again and again to guess what it meant to no avail. Within the school community, Tuncay was still very much a newcomer. As a Turkish speaker, however, he saw himself as a full participant and thus he much preferred to speak in Turkish. It appeared that Tuncay in fact was more 'deaf' in the school's school and base communities and he was more 'hearing' in his native Turkish community. In other words, his communicative repertoire had a lot more resources related to the Turkish linguistic and cultural context that he could draw upon when interacting with Turkish speakers, while his newly developing English resources restricted his positioning as a legitimate speaker in the current situation he found himself to be in (Busch, 2017). This self-perception can be linked to several factors. First of all, throughout his life in Turkey, he never wore hearing aids. The receipt of this technology as a very visible sign of being 'deaf' coincided with his entering an English-speaking mainstream society. As for his prior experiences with hearing aids, he once told me "*Ben öyle şey görmedim*" ('I never saw anything like that'). In total, he only wore them for two years at his previous secondary school where he also experienced related harassment. Since coming to Hallsbury, he had not been wearing them, often replying that he 'lost them' when their whereabouts was questioned by the base team. Secondly, he could express himself in Turkish fluently. As mentioned earlier, in my experience, he could even reply to my

questions asked in Turkish while his back was turned to me. Kimberly, on the other hand, believed he relied on lipreading when she spoke to him in English, saying "he bends his head and lipreads". Based on Tuncay's accounts (which he relayed to me in Turkish and I have translated to English), however, his lesser participation in the community of English speakers "is not because I don't understand what is said to me in English. It is because I understand but give the wrong answer. I do struggle to understand English, but I do understand Turkish". For him, it was not that he was not 'hearing', but that he, like Burak, was an EAL student.

As a result, Tuncay preferred to be accompanied by me to his mainstream lessons rather than his formally assigned LSAs. In fact, he had a quarrelsome relationship with one of his regular LSAs, Donna. Donna opened up one day about the difficulties she was experiencing with Tuncay as she hastily made herself a hot drink. They had just had their mainstream Art and Design class together and Donna was worried that he was falling behind his work. She commented that "If his teacher thinks he's too far behind in his coursework, that he should not carry on, then there is nothing else for him". In a frustrated voice she added that "If you are near him, he will not do the work. He expects you to do it. In Art and Design class, he was told to first try out a drawing, and then make a 3D model, but he did not do it. He just cut it out, like an upward paper model. If there is a LSA, he switches off his ears[53]. This is the only level he must do. If he doesn't do it, he won't have any GCSEs". By talking to her fellow base team members, Donna was trying to bring some reason to her confusion as to why Tuncay sat back and did not do his work. They were all trying to figure out if it was a comprehension issue linked to either English or his deafness, or if it was more of a cultural attitude, or "maybe a bit of all", Donna added. Before we went back to our scheduled lessons, Donna and Miss Collins both asked me if I could have a chat with Tuncay in Turkish, not as a "pressure talk" but to see if I could get out of him what he thought of his own performance. When I talked to Tuncay, I could see that he did understand the task at hand during Art and Design class. Upon reporting this to her during another tea break, Miss Collins re-focussed the discussion on Tuncay's family situation. She began to speculate if Tuncay got this "attitude" from his father who believed that Tuncay should not have had any base lessons but be fully mainstreamed instead. In other words, his disengaged behaviour was his way of refusing his current status

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[53] By which she meant that Tuncay would not concentrate and listen to what was being said by the teacher.

as a lower-ability student and the social disadvantages it generated such as being belittled both at home and among his Turkish-speaking peer group which he so strongly affiliated with and wanted to be a valued member of.

If, however, Tuncay did understand the task at hand, then it is important to look at the social circumstances that Tuncay might be reacting to when Donna was present. As discussed earlier, Tuncay had made his point of how he did not want to be part of the base and instead wanted to rejoin his previous mainstream group of peers of Turkish origin like himself. Donna's presence, then, I suggest, was yet another occasion where Tuncay felt he had to reaffirm his true allegiance by not participating in an activity that involved Donna who was representative of the base. His motivation for learning as a process closely linked to his "changing participation and identities … [was] about the structure of communities of practice and their production and reproduction" (Lave and Wenger, 2003, p.56). By acting disengaged, Tuncay was asserting his agency and contributing to the production of social boundaries that were relevant to his self-perception and self-presentation as being 'hearing'.

Although the base team did not systematically get to collaborate with other old-timers from other minority language communities of practice (such as parents or other native speakers) to which their deaf students were affiliated with, their effort to learn from me as a Turkish-speaker demonstrated the team's willingness to outreach when the opportunities did come about. To illustrate, by the end of a Functional Skills English lesson delivered by Kimberly and Saiqa to Nimali, Taahir and Tuncay, I had already had several short sessions with Tuncay where I explained the activities to him in Turkish. Witnessing this and also taking advantage of the few remaining minutes until the next lesson, Kimberly asked Tuncay to teach her some Turkish words so she could use it with one of her best friends who also knew Turkish. Tuncay was up for the task and taught her an entertaining expression and then helped correct Kimberly's pronunciation, with everyone laughing in a relaxed, friendly atmosphere. In this moment of role reversal, Kimberly was demonstrating to Tuncay her recognition of his 'old-timer' status as a member of the community of Turkish practitioners. Most of the time, however, as part of his identity as a 'student' at this school community, with a further lowering of his status as a base member, Tuncay was primarily a 'newcomer'. Over the year that I worked with them, the base team put in a lot of efforts to outreach and understand

Tuncay as a 'whole person' as much as possible, taking in account of his different identities and memberships. They did this mainly through collaborating with me as a bi-lingual old-timer in both the English and Turkish communities of practice. In the end, as the school was about to close for the summer holidays in July and as I said my farewells to the base team, they commented on how since my arrival they had become much better equipped at helping Tuncay. They felt like they know him better as a person and that, as Donna put it, "now he is much calmer". I argue that this aspect of Tuncay's personal transformation was a result of the base team's efforts to form collaborative relationships with him by embracing his multiple identities.

As demonstrated in the above discussion, the base team embraced opportunities to learn more about their deaf students' additional identities as a valued means to increasing their participation in school life. Any such knowledge transfer, however, remained haphazard, because ultimately, I suggest, the base was a part of the mainstream school, and its resources were controlled by a group of old-timers with values that were in conflict with those held by the base team.

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So far in this chapter I have demonstrated how the mainstream school communities of Appletree and Hallsbury have their members moving from being newcomers to the achieved status of old-timers based on becoming competent English practitioners. For the majority of deaf students for whom English was a second or additional language, such as for Tuncay and Jamal, this meant that their bi- or multi-lingual status had no impact when determining their status in these school communities. Despite Tuncay's more advanced oral skills in Turkish and Jamal's rich exposure to a mixture of English, Bengali and BSL, then, they were both newcomers in their respective mainstream schools. Furthermore, both base staff's inability to secure collaboration from the senior management and in effect mainstream teachers signalled the social demarcation between the school and base communities. In the following section and subsequent chapters, I will shift the focus to the spatial organization of mainstream and base classrooms by English-speaking old-timers (or hearing novices) and old-timers of the base community, respectively, as well as to the positioning of bodies and how

this affects deaf students' levels of participation in their own learning as co-occupants of these different parts of school life.

Section 3: Deaf students' levels of participation in the school community and its consequences for their participation in the base community

In this section, I will make use of the concept of 'participation' taken as Goffman's 'participation framework', which is "the circle, ratified and unratified, in which the utterance is variously received, and in which individuals have various participation statutes" (Goffman, 1981, p.226). These participation statuses include the 'animator', the 'audience', the 'bystander' and the 'nonperson', which I will further explain as I introduce them (Goffman, 1981). Widening Goffman's 'circle', I will return to Lave and Wenger's (2003) notion of 'communities of practice' to illustrate how deaf students acquire very different participation statuses depending on which community of practice they are participating in at any given moment of the school day. Participation in the base communities will continue to be discussed in Chapter Four. Furthermore, what is crucial in understanding a given participation status, I suggest, is knowing that participation is "always based on situated negotiation and renegotiation of meaning in the world" (Lave and Wenger, 2003, p.51). Identifying such situated negotiations will not be limited to exchanges through language; I will also focus on how particular social organizations of space and the presentation of the body also communicate different levels of participation for deaf students. In doing so, I will make use of Goffman's (1966) theories on 'face encounters' and anthropologist Hall's (1963) notion of 'proxemic behaviour'.

Proxemics has been discussed by Hall (1963) as "the study of microspace as a system of bio-communication" (Hall, 1963, p.1022). When describing proxemic patterns within relationships, attention is paid to meaning associated with different tones of voice, posture, bodily distance, touch, vision, and body odour (Hall, 1963). I will employ proxemics as an analytical tool for understanding the implications of the organization of microspaces found within the two mainstream schools of Appletree and Hallsbury such as mainstream classrooms and the assembly halls. I will do so by describing the existence of different

culturally-specific practices encountered by deaf students as they engage in various interactions during the school day. By highlighting specific incidents during the mainstream school day, it is my intention to discuss what the base students of Appletree and Hallsbury are learning from these social interactions. In doing so, I will continue with Lave and Wenger's (2003) conceptualization of 'learning' "as increasing participation in communities of practice" with a focused "attention on ways in which it [learning] is an evolving, continuously renewed set of relations" (Lave and Wenger, 2003, pages 49-50). In other words, I will examine if deaf students are gradually increasing their participation in the hearing world through their daily experiences in a mainstream setting whilst forming relations with hearing teachers and peers.

3.1 Mainstream and base classes: Organization of space and positioning of bodies

As they did routinely every morning, Hakan, Jamal, and Mahmoud entered the classroom after their routine check of their cochlear implants in one of the base rooms by Hussam. They also usually left their school bags in that room.

1 Interior door
2 Teacher's desk
3 Interactive Whiteboard
4 Low stage
5 Student computer desks
6 Toys & games cupboard
7 Students' sitting area on carpet
8 Two-sidedtrayunit& cupboard
9 Students' pegs
10 Child-sized activity tables & chairs
11 Dressing-up box
12 Library
13 Imaginative play area with tent
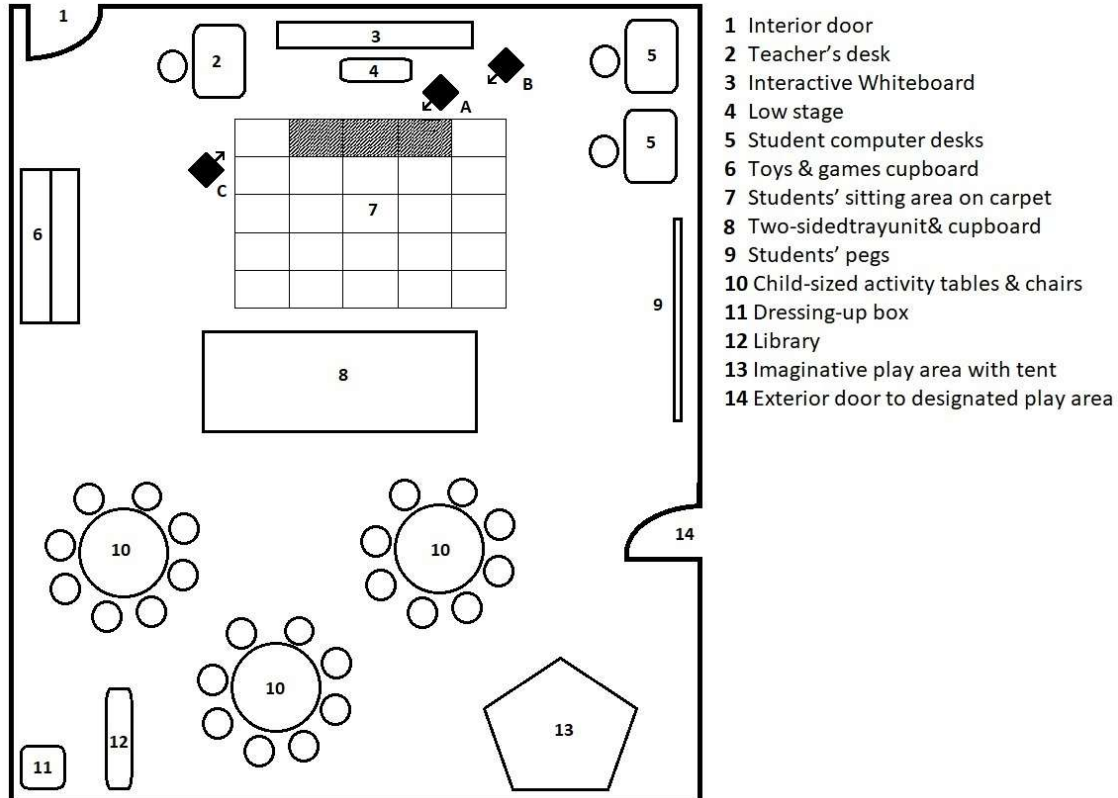14 Exterior door to designated play area

Figure 2: Blueprint for Miss Lauren's Reception classroom at Appletree Primary School

As illustrated in Figure 2, in the mainstream class, they shared the same pegs (9) for their coats with their hearing peers, as they would need them whenever they went out for play. The classroom was fully carpeted, and the students all sat on the carpet within a large square created with duct tape with further divisions into smaller squares, each designated for an individual student (7). Hakan, Jamal and Mahmoud had their name tags on the three front and centre squares (filled in area of 7), with two hearing students to their right and another to their left. In addition to the three deaf boys, there was an autistic boy – Alex – who had an assigned support worker working with him most of the time at a one-on-one level[54]. The remaining twenty-one hearing students expressed themselves confidently in English both during lessons and play time but were also eager and open to learn and use BSL with Hakan, Jamal and Mahmoud. On the front wall was a large Interactive Whiteboard (3). Miss Lauren (or Miss Amy) was either at the teacher's desk (2) or otherwise sitting on a small platform (4) placed in front of the Interactive Whiteboard when addressing the class for most of the time in oral English. The only exceptions I had a chance to observe where she consistently used both oral English and BSL were when she was taking the morning and afternoon registers. She simultaneously said and signed 'Good morning/afternoon' followed by saying each hearing student's name and then saying and using the sign names (initial letter of their name) for Jamal, Mahmoud and Hakan. Hussam and Shazia, who took turns to sign to the boys what was being said during lesson in BSL or SSE and relayed what they signed to the teacher, typically were either seated or standing at points 'A' and 'B' respectively depending on the activity, always facing the boys and choosing a position that was near the 'source' of learning – be it the teacher or the Interactive Whiteboard for example – as to have both of them in the boys' visual field. I mainly sat at a place on the side of squares nearer to the teacher's desk between the first two rows and diagonally facing the students (C) where I believe I had a good view of the teacher, the three deaf boys and their specialist TAs but also the larger student group without being much of a distraction and also because I was not there to act as one of the specialist TAs during formal instructions. I did, however, also sit in Hussam's and Shazia's locations, which I will explain as to why later on. Behind the students there was a two-sided furniture (8) that had shallow tray units for students on the front side and cupboard space on the other. This acted as a separator between the front and the back of the classroom,

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[54] As my main focus was on Hakan, Jamal and Mahmoud, and for the most part Alex was interacting with his support worker, I was not able to observe his preferred communication methods.

with the front used for more instructional, synchronized whole group activities and the back used more for the hands-on, individual or interactional small group activities.

I usually volunteered on Thursdays, when the day's schedule started with a music class taught by one of the school's music teachers, Miss Amy and carried on with sessions on numeracy and drama lead by Miss Lauran. In between formal teaching periods there were lots of 'busy time' sessions where the students engaged with the various themed resources spread out across the activity tables (10) as well as more fixed resources at different parts of the classroom (5, 6, 11, 12, 13). They could also go outside to play. During such times, Hussam, Shazia and I always coordinated among ourselves as to who would accompany who as the boys made their own individual choices as to where to be and what to do and we either interacted with them ourselves or encouraged their interaction with their hearing peers by relaying what was said into English or BSL respectively. During 'busy time', the teachers and the mainstream TAs might have separated a group of students who formed an ability group in order to further work on their literacy and numeracy or carry out assessments. Jamal, Mahmoud and Hakan were exclusively instructed on these matters in the base rooms next door, either by Hussam, Shazia or as their TOD, Miss Ann. There were also regular assembly times for whole-school activities or announcements.

By examining the sitting arrangements of the deaf students on the carpet, it is possible to see how this practice limits them becoming fully engaged in the mainstream classroom. Seating the deaf boys in the front of the room provided a spatial emphasis on their interaction with Miss Lauren either directly or through Hussam and/or Shazia as opposed to the other class participants. Once commenting on the boys' relation to their class teacher, Hussam had noted that he believed the boys had a "concentration problem". When Hussam or Shazia were not signing to the boys and instead wanted them to look at Miss Lauren directly and "listen", the boys commonly and quite quickly averted their eyes back to the specialist TA or down at the carpet. The shifting of the attention away from the deaf boy's inner state (i.e. their ability to concentrate) to a perspective provided by Goffman (1966) that examines the individual's behavior in negotiation with its surroundings, however, can provide an alternative interpretation of what was perceived to be a 'concentration problem'. As Goffman states, "Eye-to-eye looks … play a special role in the communication life of the community, ritually

establishing an avowed openness to verbal statements" (Goffman, 1966, p.92). He also adds that "an individual who feels he has cause to be alienated from those around him will express this through some 'abnormality of the gaze,' especially averting of the eyes" (Ibid., p.93).

Furthermore, Hakan, Mahmoud and Jamal were subscribed to the role of the 'audience' or 'ratified participants' by Hussam and Shazia through their persistent encouragement to listen (Goffman, 1981). The audience's role "is to appreciate remarks made [and] not to reply in any direct way" (Goffman, 1981, p.138). However, their behavior indicated, I argue, an experience of distancing from such encounters due to an indifference to speech when their preference for visualization was also readily available. Although it was difficult to discern how much of what was being said they could actually hear, their bodily expressions, I suggest, communicated a reduced state of involvement, either as 'bystanders' or even 'nonpersons'. Bystanders, or 'unratified participants', is a term used Goffman that refers to those people who can hear and/or see that a conversation is taking place but are not invited to join as participants (Dynel, 2011, p.459). In the case of the above example, although the three boys were physically close enough to eye-witness Miss Lauren talking to the class, their aural perception of what she said in detail may not have been clear enough to ensure their full participation. On the other hand, it can be argued that to be "maximally disassociated from talk, a bystander is more of a non-participant" (Ibid.). A 'nonparticipant' or a 'nonperson' symbolizes exclusion in the way they are treated – they are "looked at as if they were not social objects but, rather, physical ones" (Goffman, 1966, p.133). As their backs were turned to most of their fellow class participants, this significantly decreased their ability to see and interact with the rest of the class. Most likely unable to overhear what their peers might have been saying in response requested by Miss Lauren meant that they were not able to become participants of such discussions. In other words, sitting in rows distanced these deaf students from the hearing students behind them. This situation can be described as being 'sociofugal' (Hall, 1963, p.1008). In Hall's (1963) reference to Osmond's (1957) use of the term 'sociofugal' and its contrast 'sociopetal', they are respectively described as "spatial arrangements or orientations that push people apart and pull them in—orientations that separate and combine people, that increase interaction or decrease it" (Ibid.).

In contrast, during their BSL lessons and when formal learning took place in the base, the deaf students of Hallsbury were seated around a table or a set of tables arranged as a U-shape. This is a common way of arranging classroom furniture in deaf education as it "enables members' visual access to one another (Holmström et al., 2015, p.260). The classroom groups had as little as three and as many as seven participants including staff. This allowed the base staff to keep all students within their visual range and the students could also interact with each other with ease. As such, the base was a 'sociopetal' space which encouraged communication and enabled all participants of the base community to have more intensive levels of co-presence (Hall, 1963). The (re-)organization of base rooms so that it met the needs of the members of this base's community of practice was crucial to its old-timers. For example, Mr. David, who was a deaf BSL user, set aside a good few minutes from his one-hour lesson to rearrange the classroom to his satisfaction before beginning the day's lesson. Firstly, he pushed his big office chair far back to the rear wall and stretched his arms to check that he indeed had enough space to sign. Secondly, as depicted in Figure 3 below, when one of his students, Farzana (A_1), was expressing her mood to not fully participate in the class by lying her upper body on the table behind the front group, Mr. David asked her to join the rest at the set of tables right in front of him (A_2). In doing so, I argue, he shifted her participation status from potentially being a 'bystander' or a 'nonperson' to that of an 'audience' (Goffman, 1981). There were two other girls – Sabiha and Naseen – and me already sitting there. As best friends, Sabiha and Naseen (B_1) sat next to each other at one desk as they would in a mainstream class. Mr. David, however, asked them to move further apart (B_2), placing all four of us at the four different outer corners of the U-shaped arrangement. As BSL was set by Mr. David as the shared language of the group during his lesson, this reordering allowed for more inclusive visual conversations between all the group members.
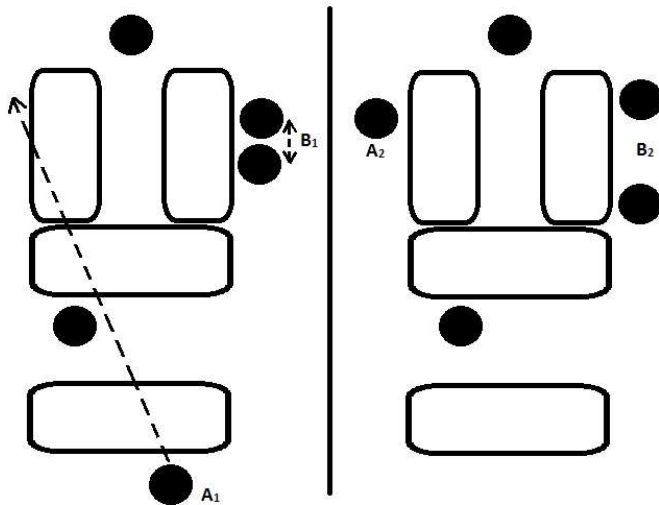
Figure 3: A sketch of a U-shaped sitting arrangement, with Mr. David positioned at the top-centre.

In the next sub-section, I will move onto the at times more subtle differences in the organization of the school and base communities at the social and communicative levels which may not be readily observable but nonetheless are significant in shaping deaf students' experiences of school and schooling.

3.2 Deaf students' learning in 'closed' and 'open' stages

In this sub-section, I will make use of the notions 'open' and 'closed' stage as used by Eidheim (1969). Imagined together, these notions highlight a demarcation between groups for which one primary source of differentiation is the "relational frame of reference" captured by the minority-majority dyad where the minority status is 'illegitimate' and the majority status holds authority (Eidheim, 1969, p.39). Furthermore, Eidheim (1969) describes 'closed stage' as the consistent use of the minority language "only in situations where trusted [minority] identities are involved" (Ibid., p.44). The spheres of public interaction, on the other hand, are when the more formally accepted form of institutional behaviours are enacted, including the use of dominant language, conversations are constrained by the dominant group's cultural values (Ibid., p.46). In the context of Appletree Primary School, then, its base community is taken to be the closed sphere and the school community is the open or public sphere. This analytical tool is useful in describing the different participation levels achieved by Hakan as

he moves between the two stages throughout a regular day at school. In the first instance, I will briefly describe deaf students' common learning trajectory within the 'closed stage' of the base community in terms of behaving appropriately in relation to its old-timers. Against this backdrop, I will then contrast these shared experiences to the more public reactions Hakan, in particular, receives from the old-timers of the school community and how this in turn restricts his access to increased membership on the basis of misinformation regarding how to correctly behave as a student.

Mahmoud, Jamal and Hakan were often removed from the mainstream class during parts of the day to do more focused literacy and math sessions often led by Hussam alone. During one such literacy session, Hussam had handed each boy a copy of the same book themed 'pets and their homes'. Before moving on to group reading, he instructed the boys both in oral English and BSL to initially examine the books independently for themselves and give it a go at reading the one-sentence-per-page descriptions accompanied by images of pets on the opposite page. As the boys began to flip through the pages, Jamal, who had chosen to sit next to Mahmoud, began tapping on his peer's shoulder and arm as an attempt to get his attention and share an anecdote with him. By then I had noticed how Jamal habitually followed Mahmoud around the play area during free play and preferably only wanted to engage with him. He also looked up to Mahmoud and often copied his actions. Once Hussam saw what Jamal was doing and interpreted it as an inappropriate behaviour as he had allocated this period as self-study time, he promptly signed to him to not bother Mahmoud and look at his book instead.

There were other strategies commonly used by the old-timers of the base community to manage the behaviour of their deaf students during formal teaching time. To maintain the continued attention of their deaf students, for example, they often stopped what they were talking about and began waving their hand until they recaptured the visual attention of a drifter[55]. Yet another illustration, taken from Hallsbury but equally applicable to Appletree's base was in relation to the degree of effort the base staff put in place to eliminate highly interruptive background noise. During one of his BSL lessons, for instance, Mr. David had not

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[55] Similar attention getting strategies include a tap on the hand, walking in front of the student, or switching on a microphone that is linked to the student's cochlear implant (Holmström et al., 2015).

felt he had captured the full attention of his students. His assumption was confirmed when he was eventually told that there was a lot of noise coming from outside the room which made his students want to turn around and investigate. As described earlier, most of Hallsbury's deaf students wore hearing aids or cochlear implant which meant that they had access to such loud background noises. As a deaf adult, Mr. David, on the other hand, did not use any hearing technologies and had mentioned that he could not hear even the loudest of sounds. Once Mr. David was made aware of the source of his students' inattentiveness, he suggested that they all tried to ignore the sounds or better yet just take off their hearing devices during his lessons which exclusively relied on visual means of communication and learning anyhow. Although the students did not switch off or take off their hearing technologies, they did reseat themselves and once again faced Mr. David with a posture of readiness to resume the lesson. Finally, the characteristically small-sized classes of the base and the convention of maintaining eye-contact during instruction ensured that any side conversations between deaf students was immediately noticed and terminated as untimely. In summary, in situations where old-timers of the base community were formally instructing them, deaf students were learning how to suitably behave, such as by being quiet and paying full attention to the correct person or object of instruction.

Returning to Appletree Primary School's mainstream old-timers' organization of their classroom space and participants to secure a learning environment that used English-medium instructions, I had observed how, for example, Miss Amy's gaze was also in constant scrutiny of the students' bodily movements. She was searching for indications that their attention might not be fully on her. One day, during music lesson, Molly, a hearing student, was a bit fidgety as usual, taking a bit longer to settle down for the group song. She could often be occupied with things around her, giving her teachers the impression that she might not be paying full attention to what they were saying. On one such occasion, she had her pink hair clip in her hand and her eyes were focused on it, turning it around her hand. Miss Amy noticed this and said "Molly, come up here". She continued as Molly approached her, "Can I have that please?", pointing to the object in her hand, and then added "You can have it back at the end of the day", finally instructing Molly to go sit back in her place, which Molly complied. Miss Amy had successfully removed a source of interruption to her lesson. Like Miss Amy, Miss Lauren too had many strategies to keep the hearing students' attention on her. She might

have called out a student's name in between instructions so to pull back the attention of a drifter, or specifically choose a quiet student to answer a question as a way of evenly distributing her own attention among all her students.

On the other hand, these two teachers' reactions to disruptions caused by the deaf students or their perceivable lack of attention to the main subject were significantly different. While some interruptions were tolerated and even praised, as I will further explain below, many side conversations as well as recurrent moments of inattention, which I will illustrate subsequently, went unnoticed.

To illustrate, as Miss Amy played a song that introduced musical instruments to her class of four- and five- year-olds, Hakan was truly excited by the rhythmic sounds and movements performed by everyone during music class and joined in by imitating some of the melodies. Before she could move on to the next song, however, Hakan used the opportunity provided by this moment of transition to say something. He got up from his spot on the carpet and stepped forward to take a prominent place in the 'public sphere' (Eidheim, 1969). Although the timing and the way he went up to the stage did not follow classroom rules (he was supposed to continue sitting and listening), he was in fact copying a behaviour that he had been visually observing taking place throughout the day between his other peers and the teacher, possibly devoid of its oral English context. As he stood right in front of Miss Amy, however, he did not seem to designate any given person or group as his 'audience' (Goffman, 1981). For instance, he did not raise his head to make eye contact with Miss Amy, and he remained with his back turned to his peers the whole time. Then he began a monologue which he delivered through speaking and signing, producing words and signs one after the other. From what I could make out, he was using a mixture of English and Turkish words which were not easily comprehensible to the unfamiliar persons which made up the majority of classroom audience. Miss Amy looked at him and listened with amazement, for the time being tolerating him stepping in and assuming the participant status of the 'animator' that was formally granted to her as her privilege within her capacity of a teacher within the 'open stage' of the mainstream classroom. Going back to Goffman (1981), the animator is "the sounding box from which the utterances come" and it is intended to be appreciated by an 'audience' (Goffman, 1981, p.226). From Miss Amy's 'hearing novice' perspective, Hakan was "so shy"

up until this moment when, in her view, "he has blossomed". As two members of the base community, however, Hussam and I had both already noticed how chatty Hakan was when he had the chance to interact with other signers like us which were, I suggest, interactions taking place within the 'closed stage'. Miss Amy had clearly seen this as a 'breakthrough', an extraordinary moment, and thus did not interpret it as she would have if it was a hearing student that stood up to say something at a similar moment that was chose by Hakan. By suggesting in oral English only that "we should film this", Shazia too reinforced to the 'audience' the notion that what they were witnessing was remarkable and rare. As Hakan continued, whenever pairs of students distracted each other's attention, Miss Amy quickly announced to the whole class "Let us all listen to our friend", reminding them, I suggest, how to behave as members of the 'audience'. She did not, however, modify Hakan's posture, such as by urging him to make eye contact by going down to his level or by gently turning him around to face his classmates as a way of showing him how to address his audience better. As she gradually encouraged him to bring it to a closure and confirmed, through a big smile, how what she heard was "Great talking!", back in his spot, also smiling, Hakan was clearly proud of himself. In the end, Miss Amy had given Hakan the floor for a good few minutes – a long enough uninterrupted time allocation for any student that was indicative of a difference in treatment.

Throughout Hakan's vocalization and signing, however, although the whole class paid full attention to Hakan, it was obvious that the hearing novices could not quite figure out what he was sharing. Soon after Shazia interjected to explain to the audience that he was listing the names of some colours, which she could decipher mainly by looking at what he was signing rather than voicing. Furthermore, I was the only one who noticed that he said some Turkish words related to major Turkish football teams. In fact, at that moment, from among everyone present, I was the only 'old-timer' best equipped to comprehend most of what Hakan expressed due to our shared multiple identities as members of the same three language communities – English, Turkish and BSL.

Any similar attempt by a hearing student to seize the 'animator' role from the teacher – be it Miss Lauren or Miss Amy – during formal teaching time had been kindly postponed with an explanation of it being inappropriate timing. For example, on one occasion George, who often

cried for his "mummy", came up to Miss Lauren seeking adult reassurance when everyone else was settling on the carpet. Miss Lauren gave him a quick pat on the back which also acted to gently push him back to his spot. Every student behaviour that was out of sync with what was formally expected of them was an opportunity for Miss Lauren to remind and reinforce the norm. When Hakan acted inappropriately by taking the floor when in fact it was still Miss Amy's, however, Miss Amy's praise communicated, I argue, a different message to both Hakan and his hearing peers. For the hearing students acting as the 'bystanders', they observed how Hakan was treated differently to them when he talked. Although Hakan was both signing and speaking during the above example, I argue that Miss Amy's focus was on his speech, captured by her comments such as 'Let us all *listen* to our friend" and "Great *talking*!". As such, this interaction was taking place in the 'open space' where the dominant language of oral English was prioritized (Eidheim, 1969). As such, Hakan's boost of confidence, I suggest, was derived from the perception that what he did was celebrated and thus appropriate, both in terms of content and context. By not using Hakan's aforementioned actions as an opportunity to teach him the class rules and to reinforce the fact that it was not *what* he did but *when* and *how* he did it that needed modification, Miss Amy contributed, I argue, to the expansion of the gap in Hakan's learning of how to act in order to become a fuller participant in such 'open stages' as her mainstream classroom.

To place the above incident in a wider context, there were also many counter instances during mainstream teaching where I frequently observed how both Miss Amy and Miss Lauren, for example, did not pick up on how either individually or as a group Jamal, Hakan and Mahmoud were not paying any attention to them. Mainly due to the presence of either Hussam or Shazia, but also because they didn't have or employ relevant communicative resources when addressing the deaf students as part of whole class, these mainstream teachers' authoritative distance could be perceived in their lack of bodily reorientations. For instance, as far as I could observe, they had never once interjected to terminate a side conversation between Jamal and Mahmoud in BSL when in fact they were reminded by Hussam or Shazia to 'listen' to the teacher for a given period without them mediating it. Their reliable gaze that scrutinized the students for signs of inattentiveness, on the other hand, often skipped the part of the carpet where these three boys were seated. This is possibly because she saw the deaf students as

the specialist team's direct responsibility, although as the class teacher she had the overall responsibility for all her students.

As someone who was aware of Hakan's more frequent expressions in BSL, by not interrupting Hakan's more public session that included him speaking in the instance detailed above, I suggest, Miss Amy made an attempt to include Hakan as a 'newcomer' to the school community by providing him with an opportunity to act like its members by practicing his oral English. I further suggest, however, that the social discord inherent in the instance due to Hakan's timing, gaze and bodily orientation – along with the many other examples where Hakan's two mainstream teachers could not themselves detect his inattentiveness to them – instead acted as "marked infractions of [the mainstream classroom] rules" (Goffman, 1966, p.26). Together, they pinpointed to a lack of "controlled alertness" where the person disciplines their body ready for face-to-face interactions and a state of "insufficient presence" in the situation representing a person who is not "in full social capacity" (Ibid., pages 24 and 30, respectively). As a result, Hakan's representative example described above raises concerns as to whether mainstream old-timers hindered rather than advanced deaf students' progression to become fuller participants of the mainstream community, potentially impacting their entrapment in the prolonged position of a 'newcomer'.

Next, I will reflect on similar instances of exclusion from opportunities to fully participate in the school community at a larger setting than a mainstream classroom – school assemblies – followed by illustrations of how in mainstream classrooms, base staff had less control over resources with consequences for deaf students' degree on inclusion and participation.

3.3 Assembly Time at Appletree and reduced control over resources

Many deaf students at Appletree accessed oral English and thus the school community through the base staff relaying the information in a visually more enhanced way. This visualization was especially important during school assemblies where there were a lot of people in a big room with lots of noise. On one such occasion, a member of the senior management was making a presentation on the importance of each student striving to reach

their individual learning targets. As I was standing on the front-left of the assembly where all the deaf students had gathered, I was watching a TOD visualizing the speech in the form of Signed English. As the senior manager hurried through his motivational speech, at one point he asked all students to "talk to your partner" near them about what their targets were, such as what they wanted to be better at this year. I then suddenly noticed Miss Beth, the TOD who was also herself deaf, approaching. From where she stood earlier more towards the back of the assembly, she had realized that a couple of Year 3 deaf students, Karim and Amal, had not understood the task despite watching the Signed English version. Miss Beth came close enough to wave her hand in front of them to get their attention. Amal looked up and Miss Beth explained the task in BSL. After displaying a facial expression that she had understood, Amal then displayed a posture of readiness to talk to her partner, Karim, about it. But she quickly realized that Karim did not know the task yet since his back was turned to Miss Beth. So she tried to sign the task to Karim herself, but soon gave up and prompted him to turn around to face Miss Beth so she could explain it to him. Once they were both on board as to what to do, Amal took a deep breath in preparation to begin the conversation. She was unable to start, however, as Miss Beth had to once again wave her hand in front of them. Miss Beth was facing the stage and picked up that the presenter resumed talking by saying "OK, now...", which meant that the exercise was over and he expected everyone to once again pay attention to him. Once she received this information, Amal joined the assembly in raising her hand for 'silence', looking quite disappointed. After so much effort by the various base community members, she was finally ready to become a participant in an activity coordinated by a school community old-timer – a senior manager. She nonetheless had to abandon the opportunity without any real engagement, which was disheartening. Sitting amongst the crowd of the whole student population, this incident portrayed one of many similar other deaf student experiences of 'school assembly' which took place almost daily as part of the school community.

On stage, I could see that the senior manager was wearing a radio aid around his neck and he also knew that there was a TOD, also on stage, visualizing his speech for him. As such, he was aware that there were deaf students among the audience. Nonetheless, his judgement of how much time would be sufficient to presumably allow all student pairs to have a chance to engage with the task he had just given was in fact only valid for hearing students. His

assumption was based on students immediately turning to their neighbours and beginning the discussion right after he had explained it. Realistically, only hearing students could act so swiftly. Deaf students, such as in the case of Amal and Karim, often needed additional time for the information to be relayed to them. Furthermore, Miss Beth, a senior old-timer in the base but not in the school community, did not try to intervene and inform the speaker of their situation in order to maybe negotiate an extension. As a result, the time lag between communicating information in oral English and then visualizing it meant that deaf students were not given appropriate time to become full participants through maintaining a sense of being "situationally present" throughout the event (Ibid., p.38). The abrupt conclusion of the given exercise, I suggest, reinforced a sense of separateness of the school and base communities of practice as well as of missed opportunities for learning for the base members.

To illustrate, when I was with Selma in her mainstream Science class, Mr. Wilson wanted to change the students' seating arrangements as his strategy to reduce distractions caused by friends sitting next to each other. So, he randomly began to ask some students to get up and move to another place that he had chosen. While Selma and her two other deaf peers always sat in the front rows of the class to make it easier for them to lipread the teacher, Mr. Wilson seemed unaware of this arrangement and asked Selma to move back to a table in the third row. Although all the base team and students present knew that this was not appropriate, no one raised the issue with Mr. Wilson. The base team's rapport with the mainstream teachers was not necessarily one based on collaboration but rather on listening carefully to the instructions given by the teacher to then support their deaf students. Any discussion with their deaf students regarding reinforcing or clarifying the lessons taught took place out of the mainstream classroom, often back at the base. This was also the case when at the end of Mr. Wilson's lecturing, as the base staff and students we all moved out to find a quiet place to go over the lesson. In their roles as intermediaries between the teachers and their deaf students, the base team did not have much control over a mainstream classroom structure such as the content, medium and speed of the lesson or bodily positioning. As such, their ability to re-structure the mainstream classroom in the shape of a collaborative place was restricted.

As another example when in a mainstream hearing setting the base team had significantly reduced opportunities to fully engage their deaf students, I would like to return to the

frustration felt by Donna who often worked with Tuncay during his mainstream Art and Design class. Donna had mentioned how Tuncay's behaviour changed in mainstream class and how "If you are near him, he will not do the work. He expects you to do it … If there is a LSA, he switches off his ears". As opposed to their primary active collaborator roles at the base, when acting as intermediaries in a mainstream classroom, the base staff's relationship with their mainstreamed deaf students was speculated by them to entail either the dynamics of dependency or acts of conscious disengagement, or both. With an interest in them performing well against mainstream standards, the base team's involvement with their deaf students' participation in the classroom swayed between supporting their learning by merely acting as a medium for relaying mainstream teachers' instructions to ending up doing the work for them.

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In conclusion, Chapter Three marked a new location – that of the school – for the examination of communities of practices relevant to deaf children and youth. By conceptualizing the mainstream schools of Appletree Primary School and Hallsbury Secondary School, on the one hand, and their respective bases, on the other hand, as different communities of practice, the dilemmas faced by the base staff in supporting their deaf students to become members of both became more apparent. The inequalities of control over resources, including the appropriate access to the old-timers of one community by the novices of the other, furthermore, underlined the possible challenges often faced by both hearing and deaf members in their individual journeys to gradually increase their participation in all of the communities of practice they in one way or another associate with. Tuncay, for example, aspired to once again be seen as a hearing member of a Turkish-speaking community while resisting to be perceived as an English-speaking deaf monolingual. His commitment, presence and participation in his formal learning, therefore, were directly linked to his sense of belonging and identity. Hakan, on the other hand, could not fully and consistently engage with his own learning as a multilingual 'whole person' due to his hearing novice mainstream teachers' and, to a lesser degree, the base staff's communicative repertoires that were

systematically restricted. As a result, Hakan's interlocutors had limited understanding of his translanguaging practices between the three different languages he was being exposed to.

In the next chapter, I will move on from the mainstream school communities and examine even further the practices of the two bases as unique components that differentiated them from the school communities they were embedded in yet distanced from.

CHAPTER FOUR – The base

Thus far, we've examined how certain communicative and broader interactional behaviours dictated by the old-timers of the school communities in each school's mainstream places were experienced as implicit moments of exclusion by its legitimate deaf participant. In this chapter, I turn to those strategies used by the old-timers of the base communities explicitly designed to include their deaf students in their own learning experiences in each school's secluded base as they stand as places somewhat removed from the conventions of the school communities surrounding them. As this chapter unfolds, therefore, it is my intention to further explore how the two bases at Appletree and Hallsbury were constructed as places and as communities that were separate – physically, interactionally and sociolinguistically – from the mainstream schools they were located in. This significant seclusion of the base and its members from the mainstream school is an issue of importance, I argue, because of its relevance to the discussions – at theoretical, policy and practical levels – on the role of various types of relationships in (deaf) children's and young people's learning that is not limited to legitimate old-timers.

I begin the chapter by describing in Section 1 how the base staff, as core members of these base communities of the two bases, interpret 'full participation' differently from the mainstream school management through their differentiated discourse on 'progress'. I then present some instances that are representative of how the base staff approach teaching and learning within the base environment in Section 2. In doing so, I aim to highlight how the 'old-timer' - 'newcomer' interaction – similar to those between experienced mothers and their deaf children – is based on an attitude of cooperation and conviviality. Finally, as a consequence of the construction of the base as a specific type of 'collaborative place', I then demonstrate who is excluded from fully accessing the base and why.

Section 1: The diverging interpretations of 'progress' as an indicator of learning and increased participation

1.1 The social construction of deaf students as 'lagging behind' within a mainstream hearing school

At Appletree and Hallsbury alike, senior management and the base staff talked about the students' learning in terms of 'progress'. From the base staff's point of view, however, they defined its content and approached its measurement differently from that of the school management. As Mr. Sodhi put it, for the school management, "It's just purely 'Have they progressed on a level?'. And as much as the school tries to say it's not to do with levels, it's always about that. Because [levels] are the only way they're [students] measured." According to the Department for Education website, 'levels' are the 9-tiers of a standardized classification system that groups all educational qualifications obtainable within the UK (Great Britain, n.d.3). Students approaching the end of their secondary school education obtain their first qualifications recognized nationwide through sitting national exams such as GCSEs, BTEC or Functional Skills. Furthermore, to track that students continue progressing in an age-appropriate way throughout their primary and secondary education, the Department for Education has set its own minimum standards for all mainstream maintained secondary schools[56]. For example, in 2014 – the year of my fieldwork – the government expectation was that at least 40% of a secondary school's fourteen- to sixteen-year-old students should achieve five A*-C GCSE grades, including English and maths (DfE, 2016). Miss Collins had also highlighted that this meant that the younger students were given their own progressive annual targets as soon as they started formal schooling at the age of four. Schools expected that their students meet their annual targets and steadily advanced through the levels to ultimately reach the 'ideal' targets of five A*-C GCSEs by the time they left secondary school typically aged sixteen.

At Appletree and Hallsbury, this institutional expectation for 'progress' was also officially communicated to their students. At Appletree Primary School, as it was discussed in detail at

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[56] However, often those secondary schools not included in this category, such as trusts and academies, also follow these standards.

the end of Chapter Three for example, the message of 'progress' which included the setting and reaching individual targets was conveyed to the students during a school assembly. To recap, a member of the school management was encouraging his students to take a few minutes to discuss with a nearby partner what areas (sanctioned by its school community) they wanted to improve in by the end of the year. At Hallsbury Secondary School, on the other hand, the occasion where I witnessed how the school management communicated their expectations of progress to their Year 7 students felt more like a business meeting than a student assembly. One senior manager projected a spreadsheet on to the large whiteboard on stage, of which a section looked similar to my re-creation of it below in Figure 4:

Baseline	End of Year 7	End of Year 8	End of Year 9	Years 10 & 11 GCSE grades
4a	5b	6c	6a	B/A
4b	5c	5a	6b	B
4c	4a	5b	6c	C/B

Figure 4: Sample levels and sub-levels

The first column (far left) listed a sample of different sub-levels students had arrived at Hallsbury with which was their Year 6 level they had obtained upon graduating from primary school. The image above only covers the range within level 4, but in fact it extended from the highest sub-level of 6a to the lowest at 2c. This was considered their baseline from which they should advance. The subsequent three columns were divided by the three additional school years (Years 7, 8 and 9) leading to the students' final two years at secondary school when they were expected to begin to sit their GCSE exams. Every row showed the annual progress expected, with the baseline acting as the reference point. Students who had arrived at Hallsbury with a level of '4c', for example, were expected to progress two sub-levels up to '4a' (i.e. initially from 4c to 4b and then onto 4a) by the end of their first year, and so on, to consequently graduate, as depicted in the final column, with 'C' or 'B' GCSE grades.

Throughout the presentation, the senior manager did not engage with the students. As he switched from slide to slide with the touch of a button on a remote, he delegated targets to his quietly seated young audience. At times, I had to shift my attention away from the

presentation and look around the room to reassure myself that I was still at secondary school surrounded by eleven-year-olds.

Miss Collins had commented during our interview that for some of their deaf students

"I think the whole educational … way that we 'level' students is not good for our deaf students because they're expecting students to improve two sub-levels a year … That's not always going to be possible with our students … And you can't rush these things because, you know, you can't just escape the fact that they can't write a grammatically correct sentence [which] affects absolutely everything they do in this school – whatever subject." (Interview with Miss Collins, July 2014)

Furthermore, in acknowledgement of this dominant account of 'progress', some parents were demanding that the base staff ensured that their deaf children increased in their levels in compatible terms. To illustrate, Miss Collins moved on from her critique of the wider educational establishment, to add:

"and then there is the attitude of some parents: 'Well, they're in a school that's got a Deaf Resource Base. So why isn't my son or daughter improving quickly enough?' – and that would be the case after maybe six months! –, 'Well why aren't they able to read and write fluently now?', 'Why aren't they doing GCSEs?' … It's a problem because they don't understand that it's all gonna take a while." (Interview with Miss Collins, July 2014)

Parents of deaf children may have valid concerns about their child's ability to communicate in spoken and written English as well as achieving certain qualifications mainly for reasons linked to future employability and independence in adult life as they envision it being closely linked to becoming full members in the various relevant communities. To briefly reiterate what I have already highlighted in Chapter Two, as a mother of a deaf child, Hatice, for example, had concerns that Damla was at a disadvantaged in the job market for not being helped in becoming fluent and/or literate in English while still at school; and Melika longed for Aisha to have more friends but knew that her daughter struggled to keep up with

conversations in English and therefore for the most part withheld from going out and meeting new people. The National Deaf Children's Society has also reported over several years on the poorer performance by deaf students in achieving five A-C GCSEs compared to their hearing peers (NDCS, 2017b; NDCS, 2013).

The way Miss Collins talked about English 'literacy' as a fundamental precondition for accessing all other forms of academic knowledge and eventually proper grades which were implicated with social values beyond the school premises is an important point which I will return to in the next sub-section. First, however, I want to discuss how both schools' deaf students were collectively affected as members of the school community by the school management's understanding of 'progress' as an accumulation of learning events developed at a precise pace and measured in standardized grades.

Both at Appletree and Hallsbury, the deaf students' performance in mainstream subjects drew a picture of them as lagging behind when judged against both their hearing peers as well as fixed minimum standards measured through standardized exams, grades, and levels. During my separate interviews with Miss Collins and Mr. Sodhi, both agreed that although each deaf student arrived at the base with different academic abilities and needs, overall, they achieved lower levels and grades than their mainstream hearing peers. Miss Collins noted that "We have a huge span of ability in this base … There are students here who will end up in university. But there are students here who will still be struggling to read and write when they leave here and will need to spend another year in college catching up with their Functional Skills". Mr. Sodhi echoed this when he commented that

"Each deaf child is gonna come to us with a different background, a different kind of attainment and levels and requirements … We've had children in the past that have outperformed the mainstream … And then we've had some children leave … that, you know, … didn't get their [GCSE] English or maths. They had to learn kind of Entry Level English and maths which is below GCSE because … they just had different needs … So it's really needs-based. Generally speaking though, they don't perform as well as mainstream children" (Interview with Mr. Sodhi, February 2014)

When Mr. Sodhi mentioned that a cohort of former deaf students had "outperformed" its mainstream peers, he was referring to a rare occurrence in the school's history when this particular small group of deaf students had achieved a higher percentage of the national targets compared to their mainstream cohort's performance. In relation to deaf students' attainment levels, Miss Collins shared her reasoning: "it's going to be lower than average because of the literacy and the language delay … Our students have to work twice as hard as everybody else to achieve". To clarify, the 'language' and 'literacy' that Miss Collins was referring to here was that of oral (Standard) English.

Miss Ann too described a similar situation at Appletree Primary School. During the initial months of my volunteering at Appletree, Miss Ann would create brief moments of conversations throughout the day to explain how they worked as a base. On one such occasion, she asked me to follow her to one of the base's specialized classrooms. There, she brought out a 'special book' that belonged to one of the deaf students. Every Reception child had one. Their individual work such as writing samples and artwork were kept along with pictures of them engaging in different activities that were relevant to their 'annual targets'. In other words, the records functioned as tools for quantifying, measuring and recording individual progress. The base students' special books, however, had an additional feature. As Miss Ann flipped directly to the inside of the back cover of this large A3-sized black notebook, she reached for an even larger folded piece of paper. As she unfolded it, I could see a table covering the entirety of the white page. It listed the key areas of progress from birth to age five, also known as 'Early Years'. After clarifying that only deaf students had such individualized tables, she then pointed out the minute details that needed to be tracked when measuring progress in various areas of child development such as 'communication and language', 'personal, social and emotional development', and 'expressive arts and design' (Great Britain, n.d. 4). She explained how each level had to be broken down into "pivots" to establish evidence-based progress. As many four and five-year-old mainstream Reception students had already reached these levels, or would arrive at them much quicker, there was no need to assess them in a similar way. She instructed me to be on the lookout for any progress however small it may be when working with the Reception deaf students and to record them daily in their individualized books, referencing the appropriate pivots. She would then eventually use these evidences when writing up each student's annual report. She was

also keen to emphasize, however, how with deaf students "there will always be a gap. They will always have to catch up – not because of [issues linked to] intelligence but because of language". Again, what Miss Ann was referring to when she was talking about 'language' was oral English which was the dominant language of this school community.

The attitude that their deaf students were 'slower' at reaching similar competency levels in their developmental progress as their hearing peers was also adopted by the relatively newer base staff. Hussam, for example, who was in his second year at Appletree as a specialist TA, quickly became aware of the school management's expectations of its students. As a result, he was initially worried by the similar progress he thought his deaf students had to demonstrate. On one occasion, I was shadowing him during a regular reading lesson he held with Hakan, Jamal and Mahmoud in one of the base rooms. Hussam and I sat on one end of the child-sized double tables, facing the boys. He handed them each a picture book on 'Little Things'[57], and allowed them to get familiarized to it. I watched as the boys flipped through the pages independently, their glances shifting between the changing pictures of small toy vehicles on the right page and a single descriptive sentence in large black font on the left. All the sentences repeated the word 'little' in different ways: 'I have a little truck', then 'The toy ambulance is little', followed by 'The little red bus is mine'. As Mahmoud moved his index finger below each sentence, he said "I am". Jamal, who tended to copy Mahmoud, at times repeated "I am" after him despite being on a different page. Mahmoud also recognized and verbalized "is" correctly. Overall, all three boys made great use of the pictures and said aloud the names of the vehicles they saw on each page. Allowing the boys some more uninterrupted time before starting his guided reading, Hussam turned to me and commented on the base students in general: "Last year, when I saw where they were in terms of their reading level, I was stressed out. But now I am more relaxed. Their progress can be seen at the end of the year. But with some hearing children, you might see it at the end of the first term".

On the whole, all deaf students at Appletree and Hallsbury were receiving crucial and substantial support from their respective school's base as part of their formal education. Enabling equal opportunities for their participation in mainstream classroom activities that

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[57] The book title and the sample sentences are for illustration purposes only and are not the actual title or wordings taken from the book.

required the use of oral and written English was a major component of this support. Nonetheless, being perceived as continuously "catching up" to their mainstream hearing peers throughout their school careers in terms of their oral and written English competencies had social consequences for these base students. Apart from being grouped together as 'deaf students' or 'base students', there also appeared to be a degree of (self) perception amongst the Hallsbury base specifically that its students had a lower status amongst its teenage student population. For example, as previously described in Chapter Three, Tuncay wanted to be disassociated from the base and to be mainstreamed again. He did not want to be known as a student that needed support. He did not stay at the base during break times like most other base students. He also refused to wear his hearing aids and presented a different reason as to why he did not have them each time he was asked by a base staff. However, he couldn't avoid the fact that a member of the base staff accompanied him to all of his mainstream Art and Design classes. He appeared to be trying hard to fit in the mainstream school environment by distancing himself physically and relationally from the base.

This association of lower status to base students was not only a one-sided self-perception. It was also directly communicated to some deaf students by their hearing peers. I would like to share a part of a group conversation I had with three girls from the base to further illustrate this point. It was towards the end of the academic year, in July 2014, when I visited Hallsbury with the intention of interviewing some deaf students. The two TODs had granted me permission, with the condition that I could find the right time and some willing students. To my luck, Sumana, Rajni, and Friya's mainstream class was not taking place, so they were back at the base to hang out. As I explained to these three Year 9 girls how I wanted to talk to them in general about attending school, I trusted that our year-long amicable relationship would put them at an ease to express their honest opinions. We talked about many things, including friendships at school. I asked them if they were friends with their mainstream classmates. Rajni replied with a firm "No", explaining how "They are rude. They say I am stupid. I get angry at them and want to start a fight, but my friends stop me". Sumana patted her on the shoulder in support and solidarity as Ranji continued "Do you know where anger comes from? You know, from *Sheytan* (devil). You need to say some *Surah*s (chapters from the Quran)." This tight group of friends had many aspects of their identities in common. All three of them were thirteen-year old British deaf girls from Asian Muslim families. For the most part, they blended

in with the mainstream student body since Bengali Muslims made up one of the majority cultural groups of Hallsbury. Their deafness, however, made visible with hearing aids and the presence of LSAs that worked only with the girls, was reported by these girls as some of their hearing peers seeing them as having lower intelligence and thus lower status.

In short, when in the hearing world, base students were potentially perceived as having personal shortcomings. The school management expected that they demonstrate standardized academic performances that increased annually which, according to the base staff, many could not deliver while some deaf students suspected that some of their mainstream peers perceived additional support as a sign of weakness attributed to an inability to keep up with the pace. As such, deaf students' academic and social marginalization was perceived by the different members of the base to be justified at an institutional or a personal level by placing the fault on them as persons lacking the inner ability to learn quickly and independently.

I would like to present an alternative analysis of why deaf students did not appear to be benefitting from schooling to the degree that their hearing peers on average did. To do so, I would like to examine the interactions primarily between deaf students and their two sets of 'old-timers'. Firstly, I will look at hearing mainstream teachers as legitimate old-timers that deaf students are trying to learn from in a mainstream setting. I will then, in Section 2, move onto the base where its staff are positioned as the 'old-timers'. In doing so, I will focus on how participants' communication in such interactions play a part in particularly the (re)generation of the different meanings and structures attached to the interconnected social roles of 'old-timer' - 'newcomer' in these school and base communities of practice. For this analysis, I will use the social theories of communication developed by Bernstein (1972), which are the two communication codes – (a) restricted and (b) elaborated – and their corresponding educator-student[58] (or 'old-timer'-'newcomer') role systems – (i)'positional' and (ii) 'person-oriented'. According to Bernstein (1972), the "two codes, elaborated and restricted, are generated by a

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[58] In his development of these theories, Bernstein (1972) mainly focussed on the role systems between parents and children found in different types of families. He does, however, include the school among the "four major socializing agencies" in addition to the family, the peer group, and the workplace (Bernstein, 1972, p.479).

particular form of social relations. Indeed they are likely to be a realization of different social structures" (Bernstein, 1972, p.475).

In the mainstream classroom, the hearing teacher used a high register of Standard English as the (a) 'restricted code' when interacting with their class which included mainly hearing and a few deaf students. A restricted code is used "to express … familiarity … toward addressees or to indicate attitude (certainty about, sureness of, etc.) toward a message" (Gumperz, 1970, in Bernstein 1972, p.467). For example, both Burak's (discussed in Chapter Three) and Selma's (to be discussed in Section 2 of this chapter) science teachers typically talked at a fast pace, did not pause when their backs were turned to the class, and used technical and advanced words, all with the assumption that they would come across as being intelligible. In other words, they chose to behave in this manner, acting "selectively upon what is said, when it is said, and how it is said" which in their view was in accordance to who their audience was – discernible by their expectation that the class was ready to respond a question directed to them as part of their lecturing (Bernstein, 1972, p.473). Although the restricted code suited the common oral English-speaking student prototype of the school community, this type of instruction, nonetheless, was *not* in harmony with how most of Hallsbury's deaf students as well as EAL students such as Burak preferred to communicate.

Furthermore, I argue, the mainstream classroom was "positional" in its role system, with teachers adopting a 'unilateral' view on socialization, which was evident from the mainstream teachers' preference to conduct their lessons through mainly lecturing (Ibid., p.483). In addition, in a positional role system, the formal, ascribed statuses (i.e. 'teacher', 'student') of the group members take precedence and there is clear segregation between roles, with students/children being placed at a lower status than the teachers/adults (Ibid., p.482). Also, in a classroom where there is a positional role system in place, each student "takes over and responds to status requirements" (Ibid., p.484). For example, as I described in Chapter Three, along with the rest of her classmates, Molly, a hearing student, was also learning about her new role as a 'student' through instance such as when her teacher took away an item she was holding that was distracting her. She was learning to sit still and to quietly listen as well as to only to speak when asked if the teacher was talking. Overall, the positional role system of the school community which demanded their students to be able to keep up with the high register

oral English restricted code of the mainstream classroom was less engaging to its deaf students. In the 'collaborative places' of the home (described in Chapter One) and then the base (the topic of the next sub-section), they had learned through another communication code and a different social structure. As a result, their experience of a mainstream classroom was one of "cultural discontinuity based upon two radically different systems of communication" (Ibid., p.473). In other words, in line with the above analysis I argue that these deaf students' relation to the (high register) oral English restricted code reflects their relationship with its users; portraying more of the mainstream classroom's social hierarchy and the educational inequalities it generates than a diminished 'innate ability' to learn by some of its members. Growing up in environments that provided them with access to different communication codes than that of the dominant code of their mainstream schools, I suggest, deaf students of Appletree and Hallsbury had "adopt[ed] quite different social and intellectual orientations and procedures despite common potential" with their hearing peers (Ibid., p.474).

In Chapter Three, I described some of the features of a hearing/mainstream school environment and ethos that prevented the full participation of its deaf students. So far in this chapter, I have elaborated on the limits placed by the mainstream school from the perspective of 'codes of communication' and 'social role systems' as defined by Bernstein (1972). Looked at from this relational perspective, learning ceases to be the deaf student's individual responsibility, burdening them to adjust as closely as possible to the 'typical' student profile mainstream schools cater to in lieu of providing meaningful access to what it has to offer which is ideally available to all. Rather, as a relational process, learning becomes the sharing of knowledge as part of an affective, collaborative act of communication and mutual engagement. Furthermore, the "social character of learning" is not limited to the present moment of the classroom, but it encompasses much "broader forces shaping and being shaped by those more immediate relations", such as those formed in other spheres of identities as discussed in Chapter Three (Lave and Wenger, pages 48 and 55, respectively).

Returning to the point that most deaf students' overall academic learning was primarily influenced by their levels of (Standard) English fluency and literacy, therefore, it is important to examine the formal educational contexts at Appletree and Hallsbury in which deaf students

are learning spoken and written English. In line with the previous chapters where we looked at how deaf children's engagement with English was equally dependent on their hearing co-participants' skills and preferences as much as their own, then, it can be said that the mainstream classroom presented itself as a multicultural setting. With mainstream teachers and deaf students both characteristically acting as novices from the base and school communities' perspective, respectively, then, the use of the 'elaborated code', I suggest, would have been "more suitable for [their] cross-cultural communication" (Gumperz 1970, in Bernstein, 1972, p.467). In the elaborated code, where there is not a sense of belonging to a common group and a shared local background to which communication can rely on and refer to, the speakers feel compelled "to elaborate their meanings and make them both explicit and specific" (Bernstein, 1972, p.476). At Hallsbury, however, switching from their usual restricted (English) code to an elaborated (base English) code was a challenge for the mainstream teachers because many of them, as Miss Collins reported earlier, were systematically kept from becoming aware of the multimodal communication resources of their deaf students. As a result, they were not equipped to switch to an elaborated code as part of the delivery of their lessons which would have, to the benefit of their deaf students, "encourage[d] the speaker [teacher] to focus upon the experience of others [their deaf students] as different from [their] own" (Ibid., p.477). Ernst-Slavit and Wenger's (2006) analysis of school populations in the context of the U.S. also apply to the two London-based schools and their Deaf Resource Bases examined in this study as for them too "classrooms and schools are not static. The cultural contexts for each teacher in any school are distinct and in a constant state of flux, as new students and families enter and leave" (Ernst-Slavit and Wenger's, 2006, p.65). With this perspective in mind, therefore, all school staff could have been better supported to constantly self-educate themselves about the various communities their students belonged to.

The following sub-section will examine the process of learning to be English literate as situated and relational chains of events. As such, attention will be redrawn to the importance of hearing co-communicators' level of awareness to adjust the learning resources and their own bodies as tool to visualize content as well as to reconsider the way they interact with deaf students. Furthermore, their level of expertise to know when it is appropriate to switch

to a different mode or code of communication, providing alternative opportunities to learn new forms of literacies, will be highlighted.

1.2 'Schooled literacy' vs. 'situated literacies' and the bases as a 'collaborative place'

At Appletree and Hallsbury schools, the mainstream access to as well as demonstration of learning of officially sanctioned knowledge was carried out through Standard English. According to a statutory guidance published by the Department for Education, Standard English "is the variety of English which is used, with only minor variation, as a major world language. … The aim of the national curriculum is that everyone should be able to use Standard English as needed in writing and in relatively formal speaking" (Great Britain, 2013). Most of Appletree's and Hallsbury's deaf students' common experiences with spoken and written Standard English, therefore, played a major role in how and at what speed they were learning all their other subjects as well as how they demonstrated their learning. It was also this language variety of English that was implied by Miss Collins when she referred to some of her deaf students' inability to yet "write a grammatically correct sentence". Furthermore, under the introductory section of 'purpose of study' of the same document, it states that

> "English has a pre-eminent place in education and in society. A high-quality education in English will teach pupils to speak and write fluently so that they can communicate their ideas and emotions to others and through their reading and listening, others can communicate with them. … All the skills of language are essential to participating fully as a member of society; pupils, therefore, who do not learn to speak, read and write fluently and confidently are effectively disenfranchised." (DfE, 2014)

There are two hidden assumptions made by the above reasoning as to the importance of becoming fluent and literate in Standard English. Firstly, Standard English is discussed as the only means to communicate with others. Secondly, competence in Standard English is presented as the precondition to becoming a full member of a singular 'society' (envisioned as including institutions of official standing) and escaping marginalization. In other words, the notion of 'literacy', used as a tool in broader language politics, is reduced to mean "reading

and writing in the *dominant* language" (Rockhill, 1993, p.163, original emphasis). Furthermore, literacy is presented as "a basic prerequisite to equality [and] to individual success" (Ibid., p.162). It is well known, however, that in modern-day England residents of London are members of all sorts of different informal and formal communities of (language) practice that engage within and between each through English language varieties, various world languages and alternate means of communication other than or in addition to Standard English. Once Standard English use is contextualized as the appropriate language choice in certain formal institutional interactions, however, it becomes apparent that other types of social settings and social roles are excluded from this narrow view of literacy and social participation. As we re-examine "literacy as the possession of reading and writing skills that permit individuals to participate in their chosen life roles, whether they be family, community, citizenship, consumer, or occupational", it becomes more apparent that different literacies may be necessitated by people's multiple social roles (Hunter, 1987, cited in Ouane, 1992, p.72). Furthermore, these 'reading and writing skills', I argue, could be thought of as broader communicative skills captured by terms such as 'receptive' and 'productive' skills. As such, I agree with Wilson (2009) that with the expansion of the notion of 'text' beyond its representation of spoken language to that of a 'graphic form', the practices of 'reading' and 'writing' become inclusive of a vast array of visual texts such as various artefacts and the body (Wilson, 2009, pages 302-303).

To explore this notion of multiple literacies, I will compare the literacy practices of the school and base communities of Appletree and Hallsbury. I will demonstrate how the mainstream spaces are demarcated by the exclusive use of Standard English. Within each school's respective deaf bases, however, as more secluded, less formal locations, it is my intention to accentuate the various literacies – including schooled literacy – practiced there (and potentially on a wider scale) by those performing different social roles within them as a valued means to achieving fuller participation as imagined as being enjoyed in the wider 'society', as well as within other equally valued social organizations. These plural reconstructions of 'literacies' are socially learned group practices firmly located within their social contexts in which they are used (Street, 1993, p.7). Street (1993) names this the 'autonomous model' (Ibid., p.2). Furthermore, by linking the importance given to literacy in the official language through mass schooling as part of building national identities, Collins (1995) historically

locates this 'schooled literacy' not as the sole form of literacy that replaced widespread 'illiteracy', but rather as the dominant form of literacy that replaced "domestic, religious and workplace literacies" of, for example, the 18th and 19th century England (Collins, 1995, p.82). As such, he accounts for the distinctiveness of 'schooled literacy' as the "particular shaping and standardizing of scriptal practices" amongst many other past and present situated literacies (Ibid.). To illustrate, in his examination of the 'literacy events' within a London-based Moroccan community, Baynham (1993) includes the occasions involving 'text' but also "talk about text" (Baynham, 1993, p.294). His ethnographic work highlights how reading, writing and oral interaction were closely intertwined as a single social activity involving multilingual speakers of whom not all were fluent in the dominant language of the text.

From within this broad theoretical framework on literacy, I suggest that Appletree and Hallsbury's school communities adopted an approach to literacy with an "implicit value placed on alphabetic literacy" and a preoccupation with improving all their students' competence in Standard English both in its oral and written forms officially measured in standardized tests (Wright, 2015, p.185). To illustrate, I will look at how, as dual members of the school and base communities, the base staff engaged in such valued literacy practices to improve their deaf students' oral and written English skills.

During a morning break, for example, as the Reception students at Appletree were all outside playing, I spotted Jamal and Mahmoud at the cooking corner. Shazia, who was responsible to oversee them during this period, strategically positioned herself across from them and sat on a child-sized chair to ensure the boys could lipread her. Jamal and Mahmoud, on the other hand, were standing next to each other with their heads facing down, engaged in a game of 'cooking'. I approached close enough to observe their interaction but kept myself at a distance far enough as to not be considered a part of the conversation. I could see how Shazia used this informal opportunity to continue to expose the boys to oral English as well as to encourage them to use their own voice as part of a casual conversation. She started off by directing a question to Jamal using only her voice: "What did you do during your holiday Jamal?". Jamal looked up but had a blank expression on his face. Shazia continued, this time by further prompting for a response by giving out some options with her voice "Did you visit your family? Did you go to the park? Did you go shopping? (pauses) What did you do?"

simultaneously signing the questions using SSE. Jamal once again raised his head up from play with a similar blank look and said "Cooking". Shazia, without acknowledging his response, instead said "No.". She then repeated the exact same series of questions twice again, at the end of which there was a long pause and the same response from Jamal – "Cooking" – upon which Shazia ended the conversation with a harsh "No, you are not listening! (pause) Go on, continue playing", indicating that she had given up. She then switched to Mahmoud and began the same procedure. Shazia was quite capable of switching to a more visual form of communication with Jamal once she had realized that he was not fully engaged when oral English was used signaled by his unrelated response of 'cooking' which was what he was doing at that moment rather than over the weekend. She nonetheless persisted to communicate solely in oral English in order to work on Jamal's listening skills as a valued and expected component of the mainstream school's form of communication.

On another note, deaf students' written work was also thoroughly revised to conform with Standard English grammar rules. In one of Hallsbury's base rooms, Tuncay was working with one of his regular LSAs, Melanie, trying to catch up with his mainstream Art and Design homework. He had his sketchbook open in front of him on the table where he had just finished gluing his own artwork as his interpretation of a famous artist's style. He then had to write a description of his work underneath. As with most base students, he was encouraged by Melanie to first write a draft. The first line in Figure 5 below is my replication of what Tuncay initially wrote, followed by Melanie's corrections added onto it using a red marker:

colour Red makes me feell very angry. if I was in red dark room I will be very angry.

Figure 5: Sample literacy event

It was the corrected version that Tuncay copied into his sketchbook, which is what his mainstream teacher would have seen and taken into consideration as part of his official assessment.

As stated by Miss Collins, ensuring that their deaf students' English skills were "up to a standard even if it takes an extra couple of years to do" was a priority for the base team. She had added that "if a student, once they left here or left college, cannot fill out a form or apply for a job, then I would be worried … It is survival and independence as long as … they are able to fill out the appropriate forms for whatever they need to apply for, whether it's for a job or … driving licence, anything like that.". In her narrative, Miss Collins was extending the scope and value of 'schooled literacy' into her imagined relations between her deaf students upon graduation and the formal institutions of work and citizenship in the wider society where Standard English was the dominant language.

While as members of their respective mainstream schools of either Appletree or Hallsbury, both base staff were eager to improve their deaf students' comprehension and expression in Standard English with varied results on the one hand, they were also constructing new forms of literacy practices within their bases in which they were able to observe steadier student progress towards mastery. At Hallsbury, for example, in Mr. Sodhi's words, the exclusive emphasis on 'statistics' was "the way they look at it" – referring to the school management's view of progress and success. Furthermore, by describing the school management as 'they', he was clearly marking his distance from them and their beliefs. Instead, he strongly felt that he belonged to another smaller group existing within Hallsbury. As he stated on many occasions, he was a member of the base staff which was, on various grounds, different and separate from the mainstream school. The base staff demonstrated their difference daily through their alternative outlook on 'education' and its subsequent literacy practices which reflected their own collectively shared interpretation of what constituted learning and progress. He then continued to add "I think it's just the age we live in; it's what the government wants from education … Everyone's obsessed with levels and grades, and they pretend they're not but they are … There's a lot of pressure on [teachers] … What I consider real education [is] teaching people about *life."* In his reference to 'life', I suggest, Mr. Sodhi is verbalizing one side of the dilemma felt by the base staff which I have been illustrating throughout the relevant chapters. The other side of the dilemma was stated by Miss Collins earlier when she talked about wanting her deaf students to be able to communicate with formal institutions independently. In each case, there are two different sets of social roles being imagined as part of the likely future deaf-hearing interactions. In Miss Collins' narrative,

as I stated earlier, it is the deaf student's role as a 'citizen' or an 'employee' engaging with a government official or a potential employer. In Mr. Sodhi's account, however, which he elaborates below, the deaf students are imagined in their everyday lives, carrying out their daily informal activities as part of their family, peer group, and local community. As such, the more informal but also additional formal social roles that are brought to the forefront are those including being a member of a household, a sociable acquaintance and a customer. Perceived as being judged within such social contexts, Mr. Sodhi then continued to explain what he and his colleagues at the base considered success to be:

"We believe that our deaf children have got huge potential … but we'll measure that in a different way. So for us, we can have success which the school will look at and think 'That's not a success at all'. So, if we have people who can't speak and can't … communicate with people in year 7 and by Year 8 or 9 we've got them speaking in a sentence to another person, that's a huge success … I think it should be celebrated and valued, but how do you measure that? How do you say that to someone that looks at levels and grades and says 'Right, this child is getting a 'U' grade in GCSE[59], what are you doing?'. Whereas we know that they couldn't speak, they couldn't communicate but now they're able to function in a mainstream world – they're able to go in a shop and ask for something and be polite and have a conversation when they couldn't do that before." (Interview with Mr. Sodhi, February 2014)

Although Mr. Sodhi begins his description of what success means within the context of the base as a more general statement, I would like to make an important clarification regarding his following example which I consider to be specifically regarding the base students with additional disabilities. I base this on statements made by the base staff about some past and present base students having either formally identified or suspected additional disabilities, which were also noted in some of the student files I was given access to. I have also discussed this issue within the Introduction. Moreover, as Musyoka et al. (2016) report from a range of sources, "[t]he most prevalent additional disabilities among deaf students are learning disabilities, autism, intellectual disabilities, cerebral palsy, attention deficit disorders and

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[59] A 'U' grade, short for 'unclassified', means that the marks earned were too low to be awarded with one of the A*-G passing grades for GCSE.

emotional-behavioral disorders" (Musyoka et al. 2016, p.85). In Mr. Sodhi's abovementioned statement, for example, when he says "now they're able to function in a mainstream world", he is in fact referring to some and not all of the base students and what he captures when he uses the term 'function' in this situation, I believe, is not only the communicative aspect[60], but also the social skills associated with such daily interactions with un/familiar persons be it a shopkeeper or a fellow (deaf or hearing) peer at school. While remaining mindful of this contextualisation, what can be drawn from Mr. Sodhi's overall narrative on 'success' is the noticeable differentiation he draws between the base staff and the school management. He also outlines the base staff's subordinate position within this relation of power as he describes how they are depicted as not doing enough when judged against a value system that places 'schooled literacy' at the core of all formal learning. Shaped by his daily lived experiences with his deaf students, however, Mr. Sodhi was defiant. His response to a measurement system which was disconnected from these deaf students' actual common situation was to declare how "we know" both what's important for them to learn and how to go about teaching them. For the base staff, learning was 'situated' in the sense that deciding on the areas in which they would assist their students was centred on a perspective of them as 'whole persons' (Lave and Wenger, 2003).

It is at this point that I would like to consider the differences of the base educator-student relations from those of the mainstream discussed above. The base community of Hallsbury also employed a restricted base English code of communication amongst its members which signalled the presence of "shared identifications and affective empathy" as well as a "generalized … other" – the school community (Bernstein, 1972, pages 476-477). Further descriptions of the use of this restricted code of base English are given in Section 2. Their social role system, however, was one that was 'person-oriented' where the function of formal ascribed statuses of 'staff' and 'student' were reduced and each person's own achieved status and unique needs and strengths would be taken into consideration in orientating the social interactions (Ibid., pages 482-483). Furthermore, in a person-oriented classroom socialization is reciprocal, and decisions are in principle open to discussion (Ibid.).

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[60] Although in this context the communicative method referred to is speech, it must be noted that deaf people who use other communicative methods such as signing, gesturing, writing, etc. are also exemplars of communicating effectively at shops, restaurants, and all other aspects of daily interactions.

The alternative social structure of the base community translated into the base staff not limiting their scope of formal teaching within the base to mainstream curriculum subjects, and instead encompassing other forms of knowledge valued for their relevance to their respective students as whole persons. The base staff talked about these other forms of knowledge in different ways such as 'life skills', 'practical knowledge', 'independence' or 'ability to function in a mainstream world'. In comparison to mainstream objective directed towards 'schooled literacy', I will designate the term 'functional literacy' when talking about this other form of knowledge.

Within the broad literature on functional literacy, functionality takes upon a local meaning according to the interests of various actors located across different countries (Ouane, 1992). According to AQA (Assessment and Qualifications Alliance), an independent examination board for schools and colleges in England, for example, Functional Skills English Level 1 and 2 qualifications "aims to ensure students have good communication skills in reading, writing, speaking and listening. It assesses whether students can use these skills in everyday situations" (AQA, 2017). In addition, The Education and Training Foundation working within the further education and training sector states that "Being functional means … being able to apply knowledge and skills and respond appropriately to all sorts of real-life contexts … [and] being able to work out independently what to do" (The Education and Training Foundation, 2017). As part of a mainstream school with an oral approach to deaf education, Hallsbury's base staff still thought of 'functionality' within the context of communicating in oral English and independently participating in a hearing world. They, however, included a broader array of social relations than those formal situations prioritized by the school community. For example, Mr. Sodhi stressed the link between functionality and mainstream hearing society when he commented that their deaf students "don't really do great in terms of academic attainment here [at school] but they still go on and do something else … Where I measure success is if they're able to function in … a hearing world". When I asked him if he could further describe what he meant by 'function', he added that, for some of their deaf students – and presumably only those who had additional disabilities described earlier – this would entail learning "normal conventional habits, … even just … looking at someone, smiling, saying 'good morning' [because before] there would be no contact, nothing, no speaking, – that's for some

people; some of the deaf children, … they'll talk non-stop and do it very well". And for some other deaf students this 'functionality' may take another form: "There are some deaf children that … have got such little life experience. They can't even cut an apple …You'll take 'em to … cooking [class] and they are holding a knife back to front. So we're talking about someone that [doesn't] know how to do something practical for some reason or another … So we try and give our children life skills."

As such, as a person-oriented community, Hallsbury's base staff was responsive to their deaf students' non-academic learning trajectories of "newcomers-become-old-timers" (Lave and Wenger, 2003) which varied from person to person. They showed a great deal of flexibility, for example, when applying social control. To illustrate, when during a Functional Skills English lesson Tuncay suddenly decided to get up and walk out of the classroom mid-lesson, his LSAs Kimberly and Saiqa just allowed him some time and waited for him to return. They rationalized that he needed a 'breather' from the lesson as they knew that he was unsettled about being a base student. When he returned a few minutes later, he said he went to the water fountain as he felt hot which was acknowledged by his LSAs. In this sense, any individual appeals by students to the formal rules of the base classrooms were evaluated by the base staff by drawing in "interpersonal and intrapersonal components" to the situation at hand (Bernstein, 1972, p.487). Overall, however, the base staff at Hallsbury (as well as at Appletree, which I describe in Section 2) gave primacy to informally socialize with the totality of their deaf students. Mr. Sodhi explained how difficult it was for their deaf students to fully participate in many casual communication acts that hearing people did with ease as part of their everyday activities in the hearing world. For example, he explained how their deaf students had to concentrate really hard when listening to their mainstream teachers, which was tiring, and other activities like following informal group conversations was almost impossible. As a result,

> "they do miss quite a lot of stuff: social [and] in class, … They're gonna miss a lot of what's happening regardless of how hard they try. Part of what I feel is our job is to make sure they get what they're missing and we feel that's really important, even if it's just having a conversation. So I could be doing a lesson where it's just a conversation, just even socializing, that's still me educating them – having a conversation about an

incident which is what [a hearing] someone might be doing at break time or lunch time or just during a lesson informally … So I feel my primary role and my team's primary role is to make sure they're getting this or trying to kind of close that gap a little bit." (Interview with Mr. Sodhi, February 2014)

Hallsbury's base team utilized their contact time with some of their deaf students, then, to support them become old-timers in areas requiring different types of knowledge than that which the curriculum subjects entailed. In doing so, the base staff's application of a 'culturally responsive pedagogy' was apparent in their approach to deaf provision where, among other features, there was "a focus not only on academic success but also on social success in multiple cultural settings in schools and communities" (Ernst-Slavit and Wenger, 2006, p.65). To reiterate, they focussed on practical knowledge and skills linked to everyday life, such as the use of domestic tools, or introduced linguistic as well as embodied aspects of carrying out small talk as part of their more informal social roles. Similar to experienced hearing parents of deaf children and professionals specializing in the area of deafness, the base staff too were 'old-timers' in a base community, distinct from the majority of novice hearing people. They too were capable of 'switching' to also allow room for more informal and non-verbal means of self-expression in an attempt to accommodate and expand their deaf students' various communication competencies as they were anticipated to be required in multiple future social situations that were diverse in terms of social roles, communication codes and types of knowledge. Mr. Sodhi's willingness to dedicate a formal lesson time to talk about what's interested his students in the daily newspaper or Kimbery and Saiqa's ability to 'read' Tuncay's body language and allow him some time to calm down are demonstrative of the base staff's conscious diversions from the mainstream educational script. In doing so, they shaped their bases as 'collaborative places' apart from the rest of the mainstream hearing school. By building close relationships with them, the base staff demonstrated to their deaf students that not all relationships with hearing people had to result in frustration and low self-esteem due to a breakdown in communication.

Carrying out small talk in a safe and relaxed space, moreover, was directly linked to another area in which the base staff focussed on – that of emotions and identity. As Mr Sodhi put it, they helped their deaf students to "deal with their emotions and their frustration cuz inside

their head, there's all sorts going on that they struggle with daily … That's our job." He then continued:

"I think making a deaf child feel comfortable in their skin is one of our successes, because there's people that are really embarrassed of their deafness … [But] give them some time in this school and … some of these people [become] so proud of it, and they're celebrating it. We have one girl who just didn't want to wear her hearing aids, who did not want to wear a radio aid, just did not want to be identified as a deaf student. She wanted to be like the other people and now she's got a role within the school as an advocate for deaf people, like she's standing in front of assemblies proudly saying that 'I'm a deaf girl and I'm on the school council' … That's a huge success … Our children come with … a lot of issues and quite quickly they turn around into being proud of them[selves] being deaf and just getting on with stuff. It's one of our first roles that we try and achieve." (Interview with Mr. Sodhi, February 2014)

Although Mr. Sodhi is clearly proud of any contribution the base staff make in making their deaf students feel comfortable with who they are and have high-self-esteem in regards to their identities as deaf youth, more often than not there are multiple contributors to this valued outcome such as the influence of other deaf peers and/or deaf adults who act as role models in the community and on social media. Furthermore, this change of self-image can also be linked to the notion of 'affiliation cycle' – addressed in the Introduction – where deaf youth move between denying and accepting their deafness. From my observations of the deaf students in the base, for example, I could tell that those who enjoyed being there did so especially because they had their deaf friends. During a lunch break in the base, for example, when a group of girls were gathered together enjoying each other's company, I casually asked them what they felt about being in the base. Rajni replied by saying how she felt comfortable because she could communicate with the other deaf students "because they're deaf, innit?". When I asked about the staff, she then added "I understand them all just fine" but that some of them were "strict". On the other hand, Miss Collins presence was welcomed by all students. Mr. David was greeted with excited by a few female students, while others didn't want to or were hesitant to attend his lessons. Tuncay, on the other hand, didn't want to necessarily have any support.

In summary, then, the base staff – as members of both the school and base communities of practice – struggled daily to balance demands for quantitative results indicative of 'schooled literacy' among their base students while at the same time trying to broaden the curriculum of the base by incorporating learning opportunities to improve some of their deaf students' 'life skills' which were equally valued by the base staff but not so much by the school management. Furthermore, the base staff applied various strategies related to literacy teaching, described below, which also acted to further reinforce their difference from the mainstream school.

Section 2: Visual literacy practices of the bases

In this section, I will further demonstrate how the base, as a collaborative place, is distinguished from the mainstream hearing spaces of Appletree and Hallsbury by focusing on the particularly visual literacy practices employed by the base staff when interacting with their deaf students both formally and informally. Prior to describing such practices, however, I would like to further build on the notion of literacy learning as a relational and situational experience.

2.1 Personal relationships as boundaries of a collaborative place

Both base teams in Appletree and Hallsbury knew their deaf students quite well, beyond their behaviours and performances dictated by their single social role as 'students'. They knew their family background and their medical, rehabilitation and educational history. They were familiar with their hobbies and talents as well as their fears and challenges. When a new deaf student arrived at the base, the common practice by the base team was to become familiar with such personal information at a chronological and multi-dimensional level and to seek it where it was absent. For example, the base team at Hallsbury was eager to make use of my communicative repertoire – my Turkish language skills and cultural competence – to learn more about Tuncay's experiences at and prior to Hallsbury. As described in Chapter Three, for

example, Susan, the Speech and Language Therapist, learned more about the grammar of Turkish to better understand why Tuncay spoke English the way he did. Also, when Miss Collins wanted to get a more holistic picture on why Tuncay was frequently coming to school without his hearing aids, she asked me if I could call and talk to his mother who did not speak any English. As another example, when the Appletree pre-schoolers Zubeyde and Zeyneb became Reception students, the base team wanted to provide consistency of support. They therefore appointed Mary, who had worked with the pair in the school's nursery and thus had already built a relationship with them, to progress along with them into Reception. Furthermore, the low staff-student ratio (ranging from 1:1 to 1:4) meant that the staff could pay individual attention to each deaf student. This resulted in a different quality associated with the staff-student role system distinctive of that observed in the crowded mainstream classrooms. In the base, the staff were significantly more involved in the school lives of their deaf students which was aided by the spatial proximity between base staff and students. To illustrate, below I will provide ethnographic descriptions from Hallsbury comparing a mainstream class with one that was placed at its base.

While in a mainstream science class at Hallsbury which I attended to support Selma, a Year 7 deaf student, their teacher Mr. Wilson used up the first ten minutes of an hour-long lesson to get the class of almost thirty students to settle down. We were seated side-by-side at our own desk-for-two, behind the front row at the entry side to the classroom which had three rows of five desks each seating two students. I was there to provide clarifications if and when the information was not clear to Selma by periodically asking her if she needed me to do so, but also to mainly support her in completing the worksheet handed out by the teacher at the end of lesson related to the subject discussed by checking comprehension of the questions at hand and repeating information delivered in class in a more interactive and tailored way. Mr. Wilson indicated that he had little time and patience for dealing with behaviour that was attention seeking and thus disruptive. Those who did not act like a proper 'students' were given three verbal warnings while their names were jotted on the side of the whiteboard. Those who had three lines near their names were sent out. Any objections or attempt by students to explain the reasoning behind their behaviour were cut short. As a busy mainstream teacher, Mr. Wilson had no time for such discussions, and his judgement on matters related to in-class behaviour was non-negotiable and thus representative of a

'positional role system' described earlier (Bernstein, 1972). On one such incident when Sadiq, a hearing student, persisted in defending himself, Mr. Wilson responded by instructing one of the mainstream TAs to go and get Mr. Khatum and to then escort Sadiq outside. Mr. Khatum was a member of staff that was on pastoral duties and it was his job to work with 'disruptive' students like Sadiq out of class. Mr. Wilson, pressed to return to his didactic way of delivering the lesson where he had a lot of content to cover, couldn't pay individual attention to his many students. As the lesson began, he sped through the slides projected on the Interactive Whiteboard, occasionally turning to his class to get direct answers to his subject-related questions. As part of my observations of Selma's and the other two deaf students' behaviours in such mainstream lessons, I sensed a strong social, spatial and linguistic distancing created between them and their teacher. This, I suggest, inhibited these deaf students', alongside their hearing peers', active participation in the lesson as they chose to remain silent throughout it. They applied what I refer to as 'self-exclusion' strategies and acted as quiet, non-assertive, and non-demanding students. They did this, I argue, to avoid catching the teacher's attention which often resulted in a negative student experience reserved for the rowdy and the misbehaving who were publicly named and eventually got expelled from class.

Unlike in mainstream settings, however, once in the base, Selma and other deaf students were rather chatty, both amongst themselves and with the base staff. This relaxed atmosphere was partly enabled, I suggest, through the base staff's encouragement of their deaf students to participate in conversations and express themselves in ways that they were comfortable with evident, I argue, in the use of a base English as the restricted code during base staff-student interaction as well as in the translanguaging practices when several girls, for example, were chatting to each other while frequently giggling, hugging and making physical contact that signalled friendly support and a sense of unity as they put their hands on their friend's shoulder or when they stood with their arms linked. In a base where oral practices were distinctive features of its deaf educational provision, located within a mainstream school that promoted English monolingualism, then, the presence of everyday translanguaging is, I argue, significant. The use of base English as the restricted code that defined the base as an 'us', coupled with a person-oriented teaching style that was dialogical,

I argue, encouraged deaf students to be proactive to co-define the content of the discussions by demonstrating assertiveness, negotiation and active turn-taking.

To further illustrate, during a science lesson in one of Hallsbury's base rooms, Miss Collins was explaining to Tuncay, Taahir and Nimali how the circulatory system worked. I seated myself next to Nimali to support her one-on-one. At one stage Miss Collins projected an A4 paper onto the Interactive Whiteboard and said "Now let's talk about why smoking is bad for our health". The projection included an image of two teenagers refusing a cigarette offered to them, followed by several sentences below it listing reasons for why smoking was bad. Miss Collins continued to explain what happened in the body when a person smoked by talking about body parts such as 'lungs' and introducing new words such as 'addictive' and 'poisonous'. Shortly after Tuncay raised his hand and asked, "Miss, why are cigarettes so expensive?", and changed the course of the discussion. Miss Collins responded in length, talking about taxing and adding "you know your hearing aids, they are not free. They get paid by taxes by me, by Tanyel, by your father. And cigarettes have a high tax. Out of the £7, £5 is taxed". As the conversation carried on, Miss Collins eventually returned to the initial subject, making it more concrete by personalizing it. She asked Tuncay and Taahir if they had tried smoking before. As a base staff member who knew her students well, she was using her "knowledge of students' languages and cultural practices to make connections between students' worlds and the school curricula" (Ernst-Slavit and Wenger, 2006, p.65). In contrast to when she spoke to me as her hearing colleague, which could have been a statement uttered in haste or as a mumble while facing away, when addressing the boys, she would switch to base English and make sure to face them directly and to speak clearly. She carefully read their facial and bodily as well as verbal reactions, and by prompting them further she got a confession from Tuncay. He had tried it but did not like it. Tuncay then returned the question: "You smoke, don't you Miss?". He said how he knew that the reason for her going out of the school during break times was to smoke. Miss Collins could not deny what was already known, and thus with a smile, diverted the topic back to the financial cost of smoking instead. In the meantime, I was explaining what the boys and Miss Collins were talking about to Nimali using writing, drawing, gesture and BSL used at elementary and limited proficiencies by Nimali and myself, respectively. We were having our own discussion on the issue fed by points raised by Nimali. She, for example, gestured someone smoking a cigarette and then

pointed to a picture of children in the open book in front of us followed by gestures of coughing and someone using an inhaler to describe how the smoke could have a negative effect on children with asthma. Throughout the lesson, all three students negotiated the direction the discussions took by being active and assertive participants. This was enabled by, I suggest, the person-oriented role system of the base that was "continuously in the process of assimilating and accommodating the [communicatively] realized but different intentions, qualifications, and motives of its members" (Bernstein, 1972, p.484). Another example of the base staff's use of their relatively broad communicative repertoires to encourage deaf students to assert their presence is described in the example below from Appletree Primary School.

It was another reading lesson in the Appletree base room with Jamal, Mahmoud and Bilal. Mahmoud used a mixture of speech and signing when communicating, but his speech was not comprehensible to the novice hearing person. In other words, only those familiar with Mahmoud, such as his parents and professionals working with him over an extended period, could undoubtedly know what he meant the first time he said it. As a profoundly deaf young child, he had a different way of pronouncing English words compared to his hearing peers and he was still perfecting his signing in BSL. As it was the early days of my interaction with these deaf boys, I was still familiarizing myself with their communication preferences and had not yet developed the skills to effortlessly switch to understand them. As the reading session carried on, Miss Ann walked in. She had quickly stepped in to relay some information to Hussam. While she passed some paperwork to Hussam, though, she was interrupted by Mahmoud, who stood up from his chair, held Miss Ann's arm to get her to look at him, and in a very excited manner began explaining something to her. At first, I did not understand much of what he said and signed. I recognized a few words and signs like 'weekend', and 'DADDY' but I could not gather what he wanted to share so enthusiastically. Soon after Mahmoud addressed her, however, Miss Ann began to repeat back[61] what he was saying "Oh, so your daddy took you to Hassan's house over the weekend, did he? You played in the garden, digging? That's nice. There were two spades. Was there … A small one and a medium one? I see.". Miss Ann's presence as the embodiment of the base's person-centred ethos as well as

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[61] It is not uncommon for specialist staff to repeat in English what the deaf child has themselves expressed using signing, gesturing or speech for the purposes of increasing the deaf child's exposure to spoken English.

the overlapping communicative repertoires between her and Mahmoud, I suggest, compelled Mahmoud to act decisively and express himself.

What's more, as soon as Miss Ann 'translated' what Mahmoud had been saying into a mode that I – still a novice in Mahmoud's way of communication – could have access to, I began to appreciate Mahmoud and what he had to say. In fact, I felt like I too was relating to him on a personal level because my participant status had changed from being a 'bystander' to an 'audience', listening to moments from his life as he wanted to describe it (Goffman, 1981). If it wasn't for Miss Ann's acknowledgement of Mahmoud's capacity to express his thoughts and feelings as a co-communicator, my understanding of Mahmoud's narration – and thus of him – would be superficially extracted from his body language. This social and emotional distancing I initially strongly felt due to not knowing the deaf students personally, including not having the necessary levels of proficiency in all their communication preferences such as BSL and base English, gradually narrowed. I was becoming more competent in these restricted codes of base English and BSL and more included in the 'we' its use implied (Bernstein, 1972, p.476). As I learned more about how to switch and became more skilled in doing it, I began to feel more relaxed about communicating with the deaf students at both Appletree and Hallsbury, doing it for more extended periods. Equally, they were more comfortable conversing with me. For example, five-year-old Zubeyde had not talked to me at all during my first few weeks with them at Appletree. Gradually, however, as she determined that I could sign and that I kept coming back, she opened up. During a lunch break, I was sitting across from her. She suddenly waved her hand in front of me to get my attention. As I looked at her, she signed "I have Hello Kitty shoes, look!" and pointed to under the table. I bent down and saw her shoes. As we made eye contact again, I said how I liked them and we were both smiling. My ability to meet her communication preference provided Zubeyde the opportunity to initiate a conversation from which we began to construct a friendly relationship and could continue to learn from each other. What I had just begun to build with the deaf students, Miss Ann had already firmly established.

Going back to the interaction between Mahmoud and Miss Ann, Miss Ann's adopting her rich communicative repertoire to match Mahmoud's and the other deaf Reception students meant that she was able to create an intimate bond with them through translanguaging. What

Mahmoud was communicating were not dry pieces of information. As he talked about his weekend, he shared a bit of himself, who he was, and what he liked, generating feelings of intimacy, trust and belonging with those who listened. He also confirmed to those in the room that he was fully engaged and that he was active and motivated. As he communicated, he engaged "in the bodily and emotional gesture" of "projecting oneself towards the other" (Busch, 2017, p.351). The experience of such emotions, in turn, fostered an eagerness to recreate such moments that were hard to come by for a deaf child in a hearing world. As such, deaf students often actively seized rare opportunities, such as the one initiated by Mahmoud, to have a friendly chat with a fellow visual co-communicator, or even went further to transform moments of silent passivity into unmistakable animation, as when Hakan decided to take to the stage in class to publicly share what mattered to him. Within the temporal ordering of a school structured into informal and formal time where students were expected to mostly listen during the latter, the timing of such bursts of expression and outreaches of human connection by Mahmoud and Hakan might appear to be out of place. As students accustomed to the person-oriented deaf base role system, however, they might have chosen, I suggest, not to unconditionally opt-in to the classroom rule to sit quietly, and challenged it instead (Bernstein, 1972). They, for example, strategically carried out acts of invitations to expand their school's collaborative places. In these deaf students' experiences, there were not many experienced hearing people they could directly and sincerely connect with, and the few that they knew were not always around or available throughout the informal periods of the school day. As a result, I suggest, by re-living their experiences of bonding and excitement by standing up and confidently expressing themselves when they were expected to sit quietly like everyone else, Reception deaf students pushed against the boundaries of the 'formal time' and the 'mainstream space' to make more room for the more engaging, more inclusive collaborative place. In a way, they were asserting their preferred social interaction and social structure by introducing the base's person-oriented role system with its less stable statuses into the 'positional' mainstream classroom, causing "tension and role conflict" (Bernstein, 1972, p.479). Below is a further illustration of a situation where once again the boundaries of the hearing mainstream classroom are penetrated by the emergence of a collaborative place.

It was another Monday afternoon at Appletree Primary School and I was in with the Reception class. After Hussam temporarily left the classroom and I covered for him, Miss Lauren moved

on to the next activity, which was reading a story to the class as they all sat on their designated spots on the carpet. She asked who wanted to choose a book from the library, and chose one from amongst those who quietly raised their hands. When the story book arrived, Miss Lauren read its title, showed the front cover to the class, and started to read it aloud while holding the corresponding pages towards the students. I was sitting facing and slightly to Jamal and Mahmoud's right side, replacing Hussam's usual location. Miss Lauren had positioned herself on the small stage right in front of the boys. Up until this moment I was usually only an observer, and hadn't been an intermediary during any formal teaching. Hussam had unexpectedly left, and I was unsure as to what to do. Since I did not feel confident to translate the story into BSL or SSE and I was not sure of the boys' degree of access to the spoken word supplemented by the visual aids of the story book illustrations, I did not interfere much. My presence as a potential but not an active co-communicator, therefore, was potentially the reason why soon after the storytelling began Jamal disrupted his still posture, got my attention by softly waving his hand in front of me, and started a side conversation in BSL. His comfort in initiating this interaction, I argue, was derived from his knowledge that I understood signing which was his preferred way of expressing himself, and especially his emotions. He eagerly signed to me how his "mom left, went home" and that "daddy has a black car". His enthusiasm prevented me from cutting his account of events short and redirecting him to 'listen' to Miss Lauren who was still reading the story. In the first instance, it could appear as though I had an overwhelming impulse to respond to Jamal's request to be acknowledged as being co-present and his claim to be a participant – and what's more an active one – in a communication event similar to Miss Amy's reaction towards Hakan described earlier. When examined further, however, they are two very different types of social interactions. Hakan's delivery was more like 'self-talk', "addressing an absent other" as if performing a reversed mimicry of those many moments he was reduced to having only a mere presence in the classroom because of Miss Amy's (and other 'hearing novices') inability to switch to match Hakan's mode of communication (Goffman, 1981, p.79). Jamal and I, however, were at a more engaged level of co-presence during our conversation because I could understand him and appropriately join in. Although Jamal was eager to carry on, before long I tried to direct his attention back to Miss Lauren. I noticed that the class carried on uninterrupted by our visual side conversation. During the several minutes I was absorbed in Jamal's narrative, I felt a huge distance between 'us' as the two base community members,

and the rest of the hearing classroom, as if we were in parallel social spaces with no overlap, despite the intimate physical proximity. At this isolated moment, Jamal and I were experiencing a specific kind of collaborative place – a place where sound and speech had secondary value or was simply inconsequential, and where we were visual co-communicators of a deeply emotional and linguistically complex expression of personal story. Distanced from his mainstream teacher Miss Lauren's linguistic and bodily control over her students that maintained their attention on her, Jamal had simultaneously become more and more disengaged from what was going around him. Instead, he had coaxed me into teaming up with him in constructing a collaborative place in the midst of it all.

As a result of long-term and regular encounters occurring at close proximities in the relaxed settings of the two schools' bases, its staff and students forged intimate relationships. The base staff's holistic knowledge of their deaf students' personal histories allowed them to relate to each of them beyond their one-dimensional role as 'students' and instead saw them in their multi-dimensionality. Mr. Sodhi had commented that

"We do have strong relationships with the children … If they feel they need to talk to someone, I feel there is always a person within our team that they can say that to … I think we know our kids and we know when they are unhappy, and when they're happy. We see them every day, it's quite intensive, … real personal relationships … with our kids. So … when something is wrong, we'll just look at their face and know." (Interview with Mr. Sodhi, February 2014)

This was in stark contrast to most relationships deaf students formed with their mainstream staff and students. Mr. Sodhi provided this representative comparison when he said

"They [senior management] might not necessarily have that in-depth knowledge of that child … They wouldn't have the contact with the parents or reading their [the deaf students'] files in-depth and doing their reviews … They wouldn't know, like, [that when] this child had come [to school] he couldn't speak in year 7 …They may have … never come across this person apart from walk past them in the corridor." (Interview with Mr. Sodhi, February 2014)

Furthermore, the two base staff's concern for a personalized and diachronic understanding of their deaf students brought with it an awareness of the need to be flexible in their teaching styles and communication approaches. It is at this point that I would like to move onto the issue of detailing the visual literacy practices found in the two deaf bases.

2.2 Visual literacy events

In addition to the centrality of forming close and reliable staff-student relationships within the bases as a conscious effort by the base teams to support their students' learning, there existed another crucial means through which deaf students learned to master various forms of knowledge. When researching how deaf students became competent learners within a deaf school, Bagga-Gupta (2000) referred to how "Heath defined a *literacy event* as any action sequence that involved one or more human beings wherein the production and/or comprehension of print played a role. In [a deaf residential school] settings, then, we can think in terms of *visual literacy events* or *practices*" (Bagga-Gupta, 2000, p.98, original emphasis). It is my understanding that what is meant by 'print' is the reproduction of writing and images. I have already mentioned in Chapter Three that in Hallsbury's deaf base, social interaction primarily was carried out using base English. At Appletree, on the other hand, BSL was used alongside of base English. In this sub-section, I will look at how base English was (re)produced through visual literacy practices. I will give more emphasis to BSL as a prominent way of communication within the base in Chapter Five when I examine deaf students themselves as 'old-timers' with their own unique learning resources.

Given the right environmental conditions and relational circumstances, all current deaf students at Hallsbury (except for Nimali, to whom I return to in Chapter Five) could understand base English with ease. Especially in the soundproofed base rooms with just a few people present, for example, it was a lot easier for them to hear what people said when people were taking turns talking and also were facing them. Nonetheless, when they encountered a new word, the base staff knew to stop the lesson and dedicate some time to allowing their deaf students to practice the pronunciation of the new word. Simply hearing it

be repeated, for example, was not enough. To illustrate, during a Science class, Miss Collins was discussing genetics and inheritance. She then mentioned the word 'chromosome' and read the confusion on her students' faces. She then immediately turned to the whiteboard behind her and wrote 'crow-mo-zome', followed by the students' having a go at pronouncing it. This visualization method was used widely amongst the base staff at Hallsbury. As such, the whiteboards in the three base classrooms were a crucial element of formal lesson periods and were used extensively both for writing and drawing. Bagga-Gupta (2000) talks about 'literacy artefacts' and lists a few commonly used ones in the deaf school which was her field site. She mentions "a whiteboard and other modern literacy artefacts like overhead projector, TV, video, etc." (Bagga-Gupta, 2000, p.100), all of which are resources through which visual literacy is brought into the classroom. Similarly, at Hallsbury base rooms, LCD projectors and overhead projectors were both frequently used. Furthermore, unlike mainstream classrooms, in the base rooms pens, markers, pencils and scrap paper were placed on all tables in abundance and were frequently checked by the base staff to be restocked when necessary.

Furthermore, another widely used resource by both Appletree and Hallsbury base staff was their own faces. As Bagga-Gupta (2000) emphasises, "the medium, be it an oral or a sign language, is a crucial and inseparable part of such literacy practices" (Ibid., p.109). The base staff knew that their deaf students lipread them, and thus they knew to always make sure they faced their students when addressing them and that their lips were not covered, for example, by a book or a hand. This was a major difference between the base staff's interaction with their deaf students in comparison to their mainstream teachers. While Selma's mainstream Science teacher Mr. Wilson did make extensive use of the Interactive Whiteboard as part of his teaching, its effectiveness as a component of a literacy event in English was diminished as he frequently turned his back to the class, unaware that this bodily orientation had an almost momentary muting effect on the flow of his speech. The base staff, on the other hand, habitually paused what they were saying while writing on the board, to only resume when they once again faced their students.

These conventionalities in how the base staff made use of their own bodies as well as other classroom resources to adjust to the heightened visualization preferences of their audience is what made them 'experienced' adults or 'old-timers', actively contributing to the

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construction of a collaborative place with their deaf students. As such, in these collaborative places, communication was carried out in a 'high modal complexity' as various modalities such as speech, the face, the body, object and the environment were all intertwined in its production (Norris, 2004, in Kusters et al., 2017a, p.227). Finally, the distinction made in the bases between written literacy and speaking fluently, that the process of comprehending and producing 'print' as a literacy event could evolve separately from the act of mastering speech, meant that the base staff could devise alternative and more visualized methods to supporting their deaf students' English literacy as well as overall learning. Moreover, at an ideological level, through their conceptualization of English fluency and English literacy as culturally and not intrinsically linked social processes, I argue, they were challenging "the ethnocentrism, racism, and [ableism] inherent in literacy policies" which manifested itself in the English monolingualism practices of the two school's school communities (Rockhill, 1993, p.163). Instead of a substantial reliance, for example, on didactic teaching with an emphasis on students listening to the teacher's voice which was conventional in mainstream classes, the base team built on their students' visual strengths. As such, speech utterances by the base staff were additionally converted into base English, for example, by breaking it down into visually recognizable units in print or simultaneously accompany its perception through the hearing technologies with its appearance – albeit only as a supplement – on the lips. As such, the base team were advancing from the basis that their students shared a propensity to learn to communicate visually rather than expecting them to become masters of it solely through listening and speaking. In this sense, (language) learning and competence required the social cooperation of both deaf students and the base staff as co-communicators (Hoffman-Dilloway, 2011, p.298). Furthermore, despite this known quality amongst deaf students to engage more fully when visually stimulated, the base team did not implement a single, standardized approach to teaching within the base. The ethnographic anecdote below highlights how the base team approached knowledge transfer, including literacy, as an ultimately relational and contextualized social interaction.

It was time for another base session and Amanda, a base LSA, was supporting Selma and Raima in writing their book reviews for their mainstream English lesson. As the two girls were occupied with drafting their first few paragraphs, Amanda and I took the opportunity to get to know each other better. She asked me why I wanted to volunteer at their base, to which I

replied that I wanted to learn more about how deaf students learn. I followed up with my own question and asked what teaching methods they collectively used as a base that was different from mainstream teaching. My expectation was that she would list differences in their pedagogic tools that was systematic and widely applicable to their form of oral deaf education. To my surprise, she commented that "There is no one way. It depends on the individual needs". Her words were a strong reminder as to the paradoxically common yet highly individual sensorial experience of deafness and its related social, linguistic, educational histories. It also signalled, however, unlike mainstream classes which were tightly scrutinized by the relevant authorities to maintain close adherence to teaching standards, how the bases were for the most part forgotten destinations. As base staff, their teaching was largely ad hoc and isolated from the wide network of deaf education practitioners across the country. This had the double effect of strengthening their perception of being a close-knit team but also reinforcing their status and their specific ways of knowing as less important than mainstream GCSE classes. Furthermore, the focus on the deaf 'individual' rather than the 'collective', on the one hand, and an overall English monolingualism policy within the British educational system that has also been at the heart of debates on deaf education, on the other, has meant that a significant number of deaf people "often have to shift between using BSL and lip reading, while not feeling particularly confident in either" (Atkin et al., 2002, p.36). As such, to engage in practices of translanguaging that in effect do not give equal weight to BSL, although may create learning opportunities for deaf students where they are more included in their base, nonetheless cannot provide full access to and participation in potentially many other communities (Kusters et al., 2017b). Across this continuum of access and participation, then, deaf students of Appletree and Hallsbury, translanguaging practices moved them away from total exclusion while also kept them at bay from genuine experiencing quality inclusion.

In summary, through their willingness to demonstrate flexibility and collaboration in finding a means of communication that both they and their students were comfortable in, the base staff as a team created opportunities for their deaf students to participate in visual literacy events. As such, they familiarized themselves with academic subjects and skills such as Standard English, but also with what was deemed by the school management to be non-academic and thus less important forms of literacies. One such literacy, functional English, was about developing deaf students' competencies in conversing about their emotions,

identity and life in general. Overall, from the lens of quantified exam performances in which the medium of assessment was strictly Standard English, deaf students appeared to be failing. Within the deaf base of Hallsbury, however, this small group of staff knew that their deaf students were progressing in their learning and were indeed successful in mastering various forms of knowledge through principally multimodal communication. As a result, both the base staff's and the deaf students' experiences of teaching and learning, and of being an educator and a student, respectively, differed significantly from those found in the mainstream parts of the school. This, then, further emphasized the social and physical separation of the base from the mainstream. Their self-assured yet minority position was well highlighted by Mr. Sodhi when he commented that "If there was a different measure of success, that would be helpful … [When] you … work [hard] and then [the] success is not being recognized, it's just kind of deflating … [I wish that] what I'm saying [about progress] was enforced by the school like [if the school management said] … 'This child couldn't do this and now they can do that' [or], you know, 'Well done for working on that' … [But] that kind of stuff is not recognized."

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This discussion will continue in Chapter Five, where I will build on the notion of a 'collaborative place' by highlighting the crucial role that deaf peers themselves play in supporting their fellow deaf students' learning and participation in lessons. I also hope to strengthen the argument of the 'student as old-timers' notion by shifting the analytical attention to informal periods within the bases - such as break times - when deaf peers' interactions are least likely to be influenced by the presence of staff members. I will also examine how in the absence of collaboration, exclusionary actions impact deaf students learning and participation.

CHAPTER FIVE: Deaf students' visual 'funds of knowledge'

In Chapter Four I described how the deaf bases of Appletree and Hallsbury both had their own specific collaborative places distinct from the mainstream zones they were located within. I did this by focussing on the visualized teaching methods used within the base by the base staff and on how they intentionally maintained a close relationship with their deaf students. Overall, the base staff – as 'experienced' adults – shared bodies of knowledge that were different from the mainstream classroom practices carried out by mainstream teachers. In this chapter, the emphasis will be on the (visual) 'funds of knowledge' possessed by deaf students themselves and how in certain circumstances they perform as old-timers in which they impart their knowledge to their fellow peers who are still novices or indeed their base staff members in certain areas in which they remain inexperienced. The term 'funds of knowledge' has been developed within anthropological studies of lower-income immigrant households as a way to represent the specific learning resources of children that come from these families bring to their schools (Moll et al., 1992). For the purposes of this study, in continuation of the idea of perceiving deaf students as 'whole persons', I will use 'funds of knowledge' in its reference to "historically accumulated and culturally developed bodies of knowledge and skills essential for … individual functioning and well-being" of deaf children and youth (Ibid., p.133). Furthermore, "these funds of knowledge are the result of [deaf students'] lived experiences, including their social interaction, their participation in multiple … [communities of practice], and their varied language-related activities" (Esteban-Guitart and Moll, 2014, p.36).

Initially, I will describe how some deaf students have an embodied propensity to learn visually without the dominant input of school English. I suggest that by separating visual literacies such as the mastery of written English from oral literacies such as fluency in school English, the latter no longer stands as a prerequisite for the former. As such, I will look at what makes 'information' visual and how membership to a community of practice is threatened when communicative practices of its different members do not fully overlap. I will do this by drawing from the life experiences of profoundly deaf students, namely Nimali and Sahat as well as deaf adults – Nick, Max, and Greg – all of whom have had little to no meaningful

comprehension of spoken language throughout their lifetimes, and who at the time of my encounter with them primarily preferred to express themselves visually through BSL.

Section 1: Visual rhyme and being an exclusively visual learner

I was at Hallsbury and I was working with Nimali in the rather empty base. It was an unusual day in the sense that many deaf students were not around. They had joined their mainstream classmates on a field trip. As such, Kimberly and Saiqa had decided that the usual Functional Skills English classes would not take place. Instead, Nimali was encouraged to do independent reading. I followed her as she made her way to the school library. We began to look at the books which were shelved by level of difficulty in reading which corresponded to an age group. After browsing through the books designated for age 11's, Nimali, whose 15th birthday was approaching, quickly moved down the shelves catering to younger age groups. She passed by the 'age 9' and then 'age 8' books, to then stop and choose a detective book from the 'age 7' range. We then returned to the base and sat side by side at a table. As she read, she would ask me words that she did not know, which I'd explain through BSL and some acting, complemented by jotting down words that were similar or opposite in meaning. At times, I also asked her to explain to me in her own way what she thought a given sentence meant. During such an exercise, I drew Nimali's attention to a sentence that read "He continued to stare", to which Nimali hesitantly provided her own understanding of it in sign as "The boy started...?". At that point, I realized that Nimali was not familiar with the word 'stare', and she thought it might be 'start', which I knew she was familiar with from my previous work with her. This was because, I suggest, as a visual learner Nimali related to words from the way they were spelled out visually in writing. The fact that they did not have a strong phonetic likeness – a key feature of learning for hearing people – was irrelevant. From Nimali's perception, 'stare' and 'start' were a visually rhyming pair, with both words beginning with the core letter group 's-t-a-r'. This recognizable and thus meaningful preliminary visual cue, therefore, resulted in, I suggest, Nimali not noticing the different word endings and thus presuming that 'star-e' was in fact 'star-t'. Realizing that I could display this somewhat visually elusive difference to Nimali through visually enhancement, I emphasised the last letters in each word to her by writing them side by side and underlining the 'e' and the 't'. As such, the

type of 'funds of knowledge' that Nimali accumulated, consumed and drew on as meaningful and indeed useful for her had a visual cultural basis. Here I employ the term 'culture' similar to Esteban-Guitart and Moll's (2014) use as "practices and lived experiences, that is, what it is that people do, and what they say about what they do … [G]rounded in the processes of everyday life and daily activities, individuals consume and use funds of knowledge" (Ibid.).

This was not the first time, however, that I'd come across word recognition by deaf students based exclusively on the words' visual manifestations, completely detached from the way they sounded. Throughout my work with deaf students, I had been observing how especially profoundly deaf children's literacy experiences were unlike those of their hearing peers who were English users first, followed by reading and writing in it. The disassociation of the written word as a subsequent representation of the spoken word due to not experiencing the latter had meant that such deaf children had very different visual perceptions of written text. Similar to how Nimali engaged with the detective book above, deaf students could associate, for example, newly encountered written words, especially those which were more complex than the ones previously mastered, to those they already had incorporated into their communicative repertoires through a process based on their shared visual qualities. In what follows, I will be employing the term 'visual rhyme'[62] when describing these associations made between certain written words by profoundly deaf learners, such as in the next illustration.

My earlier and probably the most significant encounter with the use of visual rhyme came during my volunteer work with a charity that organized a youth club for college-aged deaf youth that met on a regular basis. At the time of my visits, all the youth were signers and the use of speech was institutionally discouraged. The youth club was mainly a time and place to socialize, but at times training on a range of issues was also provided. It was here that I met Sahat. During a training day, there was a small exercise to read a text and match them with the answers. When Sahat read a sentence that had the word 'America' in it, he pointed out to me how the word ending looked like 'rice'. I was at first confused. In all my personal

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[62] By 'visual rhyme' I mean words that partially share the same spelling and thus appear to visually resemble each other. For further explanations, see Peters (2000).

knowledge of the word 'America', including its pronunciation, I would never associate it with 'rice'. But then he showed it to me by breaking down the word into 'Ame-rica' and pointing to 'rica', he signed "Look, this bit is spelled like 'rice'". It took me a while to see what he saw. As I gradually switched off my dominant aural experience of the word and looked at it visually alone, I could see what he was referring to, and it made total sense. This moment also represented a breakthrough for me. It's effect on me was akin to a paradigm shift. I had finally felt that I had a genuine glimpse of what it was like to be profoundly deaf. I was beginning to tap into this visual fund of knowledge that profoundly deaf people shared through their common visual experiences of daily life which included engagement with printed text throughout their student lives and beyond. Sahat carried on telling me how finding these hidden patterns within longer English words helped him remember their correct spelling, which he had to demonstrate when, for example, taking his Functional Skills English writing exams back at college. I was also beginning to realize how in roles as TODs, specialist TAs, and other professionals within deaf education, learning to recognize visual rhyme could be part of the support provided to develop deaf students' various literacies. In doing so they would "be able to access the funds of knowledge of [deaf] students and their [visual] communities, … and implement culturally relevant [visual] instructional practices" (Ernst-Slavit and Wenger, 2006, p.65).

Regarding the commonality of this visual way of knowing, there were other instances where some deaf adult BSL users had also shared with me such occasions involving visual rhyme. Other than doing volunteer work with deaf students at the two schools during the daytime, I also met deaf adults who were predominantly signers at deaf social events taking place across London often during the evenings. One of these events was the monthly 'deaf pub' at a large pub in Central London. Deaf people as well as hearing people who were learning or were already fluent in BSL came from all over the city and across the country for a social night out to meet up with old friends and to potentially make new ones along the way. As the night progressed and the pub floor crowded to the point where there was little space left to walk, the few hearing groups that had arrived ignorant of such a gathering were soon surrounded by a myriad of hands cheerily moving around them. After I caught up with some friends I had met through other deaf events, I joined Aisha , my friend who, as she had self-defined, was an 'oral deaf' with a north African background and who was introduced, along with her

mother Melika, in the initial chapters. I had come to the pub with her. She was conversing with a group of three men. I was introduced to them, and we shared our names. As it usually went, everyone first fingerspelled[63] their name, and then shared their sign name[64]. Depending on the atmosphere, people could go on and share the story of how they got their sign name. On this occasion, I was about to learn how one of the men got his. He told me that his name was Nick. He had worked as a specialist TA at a residential school for deaf children for many years. Although he had now changed his job, he hung onto his sign name given to him by the school children. He told me how when he first started his specialist TA job, the children all came up to him and asked his name. When he fingerspelled N-I-C-K, all the children unanimously agreed that it looked like the well-known sports brand 'Nike'. His sign name, therefore, was declared to be the famous 'tick' symbol representing the Nike brand. Nick told me that he liked their ingenious correlation so much that he proudly accepted his new sign name.

In these three separate examples provided by Nimali, Sahat and Nick, who are unknown to each other, deaf children and youth demonstrate a typical way in which the spelling of English words are learned by visually identifying the recurrence of previously learned and often simpler written words or parts of them hiding within the more complex newer words. This visual patterning technique was effectively used as a memory aid by these deaf children and youth. What is important to emphasize is that the similarities observed between words are essentially visual, without aural interferences. As such, visual funds of knowledge "do not exist solely within the mind of the [deaf] individual, but rather they are distributed among persons, artifacts, activities, and settings" – all of which share a strong 'visual' quality (Esteban-Guitart and Moll, 2014, p.36).

On the other hand, for Burak, the 15-year-old hearing EAL student mentioned in Chapter Three, the development of his English literacy skills was strongly linked to his mother tongue

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[63] The BSL "fingerspelling system, or manual alphabet … is two-handed … and is a series of hand configurations representing the letters of the alphabet … It is used by signers for spelling English names and places, or words for which there is no equivalent sign." (Deuchar, 1984, p.8)
[64] Sign names, almost like nicknames, act as distinct visual references for persons usually based on their appearance or personal trait and can be formed of a brief combination of manual letters, signs, or gestures. For more information, see Metzger (2000).

– Turkish. When I met him, he was still a newcomer in relation to his spoken fluency and written literacy in English. Therefore, on days that I supported him one-on-one during his mainstream Science lessons, I made use of our shared competency in the Turkish language to support his understanding of English words and grammar. For instance, as it was relatively recently, that he started becoming exposed to many common English words on a daily basis, Burak still could not distinguish between some similar sounding ones. As a result, he could easily confuse a word he heard for the first time for a word he already knew. When the lesson included a quiz on climate change where students were required to write down answers to five questions in the form of full sentences, we had a discussion on what the questions meant and his answers to them in Turkish. As I was assisting him in translating his answers into English which were initially written in Turkish on a draft piece of paper, I used the word 'reach' in relation to rising temperatures. Hearing the word, Burak held back his pen away from the paper and asked me "*O 'zengin' değil mi?*" – "Isn't that 'rich'?". Burak knew that 'rich' did not fit within the context of our discussion, but he did not yet have a wide range of familiarity with English lexemes as part of his current communicative repertoire to infer or know for certain what I was saying. For Burak, 'reach' was like 'rich' at an aural level. Similarly, as we moved onto a longer writing exercise, Burak continued to write down words that he knew or simply guessed how it should be spelled based on how they sounded phonetically in Turkish. For example, when I said 'which' he wrote 'witch' and to my 'of' he jotted down 'ov'. I clarified the difference between the first set of words by proving their meanings in Turkish. As for 'of', which to Burak - who honed his literacy skills in a phonetic language[65] - could only have a written representation in the form of 'ov', I reiterated that in fact the conventional way to write it was with an 'f'.

Like Nimali, Sahat and the other abovementioned deaf children, Burak too had not made a clear and direct connection between school English and written English. For all, their previous sensorial learning in relation to literacy events, be it exclusively visual or visual-aural, were called upon as reliable funds of knowledge in their efforts to become increasingly more acquainted with written Standard English. In their individual yet parallel learning trajectories in becoming biliterate, funds of knowledge in the visual and Turkish domains were 'artefacts'

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[65] A phonetic language, for example Turkish, is when it is written as it is spoken and vice versa.

in the sense of "distributed semiotic resources that mediate human behaviour" such as learning a new language (Ibid.).

Other insights into how especially profoundly deaf people with significantly limited or no access to spoken language perceive spoken English and how visualization helped them become literate in it were provided to me by Max and Greg (whom I already discussed in the Introduction), two White men in their fifties whom I met during two separate visits to exclusive talks in BSL organized at well-known museums and galleries in London. Although as adults Max and Greg both preferred to communicate in BSL, all their compulsory education and early family life were predominantly oral. During my interview with Max, now in his fifties who went to an oral day school for deaf children for both primary and secondary education, he talked about how as a young child his mother provided him with an engaging resource that hugely aided his understanding and thus learning of written English. Below is his recount of learning to read English as a young schoolboy.

"I remember when I was young, I was excited about reading. When I was at primary school … I remember at the end of the day when I went back home my mother used to give me comic books to read. I was excited and looked forward to it. That's why every day when school finished, I wanted to rush back home … [I] ran inside and asked for my book. When I got it, I dashed upstairs to my room and opened it up with excitement and read it all with great curiosity. It was a wonderful support. You know comics have pictures, lots of small pictures lined side by side on the pages. You can look at them and enjoy them. But there are also speech bubbles, so when I read them, I might not know a word. I would then ask my parents and they would explain it to me[66]. As I gradually learned each word, I got hooked on reading. That's how I really started and was drawn to reading regularly. As I was learning more and more, I was gaining so much knowledge. That was the reason – comic books. That's why I think that's the best way to learn to read. It's brilliant … When I opened a book that only had text, dense text from top to bottom of the page, it was too much and also not interesting. I thought, 'Where are the pictures?'. I think if you have pictures with the words in the pictures linked to them, [it

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[66] Although Max's parents were advised not to sign to him, Max reported that his mother communicated with him using a combination of speech, lipreading, gestures and home signs.

supports understanding] … In real life, I see people talking to each other; I can't hear what they are talking about. But then I see the same in the pictures and that they are using these words [in speech bubbles] to communicate, and I understand." (Interview with Max, 5 June 2014)

Obviously, what's different in Max's experience in comparison to most of the deaf students of Appletree and Hallsbury was that he grew up in an English-speaking household. Therefore, his mother – as a native English speaker and presumably already literate in English but also equipped with the broader cultural knowledge of which comic books to purchase and from where – could support her deaf son's development of English literacy with relative ease. Nonetheless, "in its special relevance to teaching", the concept of funds of knowledge – such as the visualization practices at Max's household – puts "emphasis on strategic knowledge and related activities essential in [deaf people's everyday] functioning, development, and well-being" which can then be "incorporate[d] strategically into classrooms" as formal settings where deaf students typically face similar challenges in gaining English literacy (Moll et al., 1992, p.139). Greg's comments below will attest to this.

On the topic of 'deaf education', during my interview with him, Greg said that although he was not a teacher himself, he had the chance to be in schools and observe some instances where deaf children were being formally taught by hearing teachers. He shared with me many examples of how "small things" in the hearing teachers' ways of presenting information visually – be it the use of their own bodies or other visual artefact – if insufficient or inaccurate, had major consequences for deaf students' learning. Similar to Irene's mentioning of "small thing[s]" (in Chapter One) that made a huge difference for Aron's interaction with people, then, Greg too was sharing his knowledge of how to accommodate visual learners based on his own lifelong accumulation of personal experiences of being profoundly deaf. One example was regarding the teaching of the prepositions 'in' and 'on' commonly used in English but not in BSL, which is described below.

Some of my filmed interviews with my deaf interlocutors took place at a pub located centrally in London. When Greg arrived, I straight away asked him what he would like to drink and brought our cups of tea before starting the interview. Because I wanted to ask a list of

questions to him within a limited time frame, Greg was kindly sharing his experiences with me through long and uninterrupted durations of signing. As a result, the teas were forgotten. When the topic of conversation switched to 'deaf education', he noted: "Like 'in' and 'on'. [Deaf] children get really confused by this. But make it visual (paused) …". He then quickly scanned his immediate vicinity and pulled his cup of tea closer to him and held onto it with his left hand. He then pointed at it with his right, and continued: "This is Monday." Next, extending his index and middle fingers of his right hand facing down which represented a standing person, he moved this 'person' from the table to the top of the cup. Entering a small episode of role playing, he then imitated a teacher addressing their deaf students and asking "When?", receiving the reply "*on* Monday" with an emphasis on 'on'. He concluded with the teacher satisfactorily stating "Good", as if confirming that the use of 'on' in relation to the days of the week was successfully understood by their deaf students. He then oriented himself towards the clear space on the table near the cup. He placed an imaginary box there by signing 'BOX' followed by the sign 'IN', simultaneously demonstrating that the hand could not go any further. The box was '*in* the way'. Greg finished his demonstrations by reiterating that it was "'on' Monday but 'in' the way – the deaf children would visually receive it right away … There is an immediate 'link', its quick.". He continued to add that "When teachers fingerspell it or write it on the board simply as a word – 'O-N' or 'I-N'– the deaf children go 'What's the difference between 'in' and 'on'?'" He explained how during his observations the hearing teachers did not use enhanced visualization techniques because "They don't have the time, they are stressed out, or because they are hearing".

Greg in a way was sharing with me his funds of knowledge that were fundamentally acquired through 'experiential learning' of being a deaf learner himself. According to Saddington (1992) "[e]xperiential learning is a process in which an experience is reflected upon and then translated into concepts which in turn become guidelines for new experiences" (Saddington, 1992, p.44). These wealth 'guidelines' owned by deaf adults – similar to Hallsbury's base staff developing teaching methods at an improvised and confined manner – however, were not then systematically incorporated into deaf educational provision through, for example, its recognition as culturally valued funds of knowledge and thus made part of training programs for those who wanted to be qualified as a TOD or employed as a specialist TA as part of a Deaf Resource Base.

Deaf adults like Max and Greg, I suggest, have accumulated a wealth of visual funds of knowledge derived from their own experiences of growing up profoundly deaf and thus relying on their visual perception and memory to support their experiences with the written word. As adults competent in both BSL and written English, therefore, they could potentially "play a pivotal role in the education of language minority [deaf] students" (Ernst-Slavit and Wenger, 2006, p.63). In this sense, many deaf adults stand as potential 'exemplars' who "are grounds and motivation for learning activity" as bilingual masters of visual literacies (Lave and Wenger, 2003, p.95). Most mainstreamed deaf students, however, do not get to meet many deaf adults as legitimate members of their school and base. At Hallsbury and Appletree, for example, I only knew of Mr. David who signed and did not use his voice, and Miss Beth, a TOD who both signed and used her voice as well as the school's deaf BSL Instructor, respectively. Furthermore, based on my conversations with deaf youth who were students in post-secondary education as well as deaf adults whom I was in contact with and some of whom, as part of my interview with them, had reflected on their first encounters with deaf adults when they were children, there was a similar pattern. These intergenerational interactions, it seemed, may have taken place at an after school social club run for deaf youth (often aged 12 – 18) by deaf adults from a deaf charity. Otherwise, it may have been at places that attracted deaf people of all ages but mainly deaf adults such as deaf clubs and other deaf events, once the youth became young adults and felt they had more time from being a student (often after finishing secondary school) and more freedom from their parents to go out and explore for themselves. Just like the many different ways in which the base staff supported their deaf students' learning through visualization, the potential support from 'old-timers' from other communities of practice, such as London's large deaf community, I suggest, "may not be recognized by those located in the 'legitimate' mainstream" (Ernst-Slavit and Wenger, 2006, p.65).

Delivered by hearing teachers inexperienced in supporting the learning of deaf students with inadequate resources to appropriately visualize information, subject knowledge could be misunderstood by or be confusing to deaf students. Without the prolonged exposure to spoken language that hearing students bring into the classroom as their own aural funds of knowledge and make use of when learning to become literate in English, deaf students also

need educational opportunities that are specifically designed as literacy events that build on their own prevailing – and often predominantly visual – funds of knowledge. Without any significant prior experiences with language through the medium of speech, rules regarding word association – such as when choosing the 'correct' preposition that goes with a given noun – appeared more strikingly arbitrary to deaf learners than to their accustomed hearing peers. As Greg had suggested, these linguistic conventions become more tangible when they were reinforced with visual links. For Max, for example, written English incorporated into panels of images helped him make sense of the speech acts of hearing people that he had only perceived visually as the movement of people's mouths. Through engaging with comic books, he could better understand the written word in associations to the pictures. He could also, however, make sense of what the many hearing people he was surrounded by in his everyday life were doing when they were moving their mouths and "talking to each other". Because in cartoons what came out of the illustrated people's mouths were visible and thus meaningful chains of words, Max could draw on this knowledge to figure out that the mouth movements, just like the speech bubbles, were there "to communicate."

Typically, hearing children without communication difficulties learn to speak their native language during their pre-school years by repeated interactions with it from the moment they are born. In Vouloumanos and Werker's (2007) study of infants, for example, they found "a bias for listening to speech" as opposed to complex non-speech stimuli, interpreted as "an adaptive advantage" that "facilitate[s] more in-depth processing and rapid learning of the specific attributes of the native language" (Vouloumanos and Werker, 2007, p.162). In cases where their native language is also the language of education, hearing children then go on to use their knowledge and experiences of spoken language to learn how to read and write in it, often coinciding to the period when they start formal schooling. However, for profoundly deaf Max and Greg, for example, as children the connection between the two, that the written word represented the spoken word, was less obvious. During our interview, Greg shared his own personal experiences of growing up and learning about the world around him as a profoundly deaf child:

"I grew up without sound, so I never relied on sound. Everyone was talking about music … Music means nothing to me. I know the names of famous musicians – Mozart,

Beethoven – … but I don't know what their music sounds like. I see. I notice them by what they look like – that's it. Others notice the famous sounds coming from the piano. I can't hear it ... [but] I can recognize their face immediately from a picture … So I receive … visual information: what they look like, what are they wearing, what is their face like … If I meet a person and they have a wig on or a big nose, I'll recognize them again from this visual memory as I will make a link. I will not use words." (Interview with Greg, 23 June 2014)

The written word had meaning as visual information which was clarified or enhanced through a direct association with other visualized expressions such as illustrations, gestures, demonstrations, pictures and signing and not in association with the spoken word or other sounds. Greg then continued to expand on how information could be presented visually when he mentioned his experiences of sharing his intellectual knowledge as a professional deaf adult working within the deaf community. He stated how when making presentations to deaf audiences in BSL, he would often use the visualization technique and how "when I was going to talk about [a historical character] … I would act his walking style, his posture, his facial expression so they will see someone who is [like him]. I would not say [his name] without any accompanying motion. I would say the name and simultaneously I would be acting it out to develop a visual image. The word is transformed into a visual image." Finally, returning to the issue of the access of knowledge by deaf children, Greg noted that this "depends on how much exposure to the world they have. [We] need to … open up their minds to the world via geography, the body, meeting people … [and seeing] how they behave, all of which is visual information, … so … [it] is retained in the mind."

'Visual information', therefore, could be presented in a range of ways – by using sign language, printed visual media and texts such as comic books, one's own body to act or demonstrate a concept, or by creating opportunities of exposure to different places and people. Furthermore, there are methods used specifically to visualize spoken language, such as SSE, Signed English, cued speech, and lip speaking or mouthing, just to list a few, some of which have already been discussed in the contexts of Appletree Primary School and Hallsbury Secondary School as well as when discussing the experience of hearing mothers of deaf children. In all instances, the producers of such information are catering to the recipients'

visual perceptiveness (through understanding the signs or symbols being produced and through lipreading the mouth movements) alongside their experiential knowledge of the spoken language that is being enhanced visually. As an important note, however, although lipreading spoken English could be considered a means of receiving visual communication, it was not the preferred or primary form of communication particularly for the deaf adult signers I had got to know as part of my fieldwork – at least not on its own. If a hearing person indicated that they could sign, then it was assumed that this would be the main mode of communication. Deaf people would lipread 'novice' hearing people who could not express themselves more visually. As Greg so explicitly describes, historically profoundly deaf students were obliged to resort to lipreading because it was often presented as the only way of receiving information as part of their education delivered by hearing adults:

My last school in secondary education was a grammar school so they taught most topics, biology, physics, chemistry … But most of the time we had speech therapy which was a waste of time. We wore a headphone and a microphone. It was just noise that gave me a headache. When I wore my hearing aids I would develop a headache. That's why I never want them now. I think it's not natural … Before at my time they didn't know much about deafness so they had the hearing aids, the 'Cued system' – worthless. It was such a waste of time, hours and hours of making sounds. When I look back I get depressed. (He demonstrates the sounds they were taught) 'k', 'm', it was phonetics, which I was clueless about. I used to pretend to understand. I used to try to speak unknowing what I was saying, but I couldn't do it, so I had to pretend because it was such a waste of time. Same with the hearing aids tests: … The audiologists sat behind me, and when they moved the knob which gradually increased the volume, I used to raise my hand up. They would get surprised and say 'You could hear that?' but in fact I could see their arm move up and down when they switched the sound on and off. I could see the reflection in the glass. I bluffed my way through lots of things. I had to survive. I could see that they were pleased when I indicated that I could understand, but in fact I didn't hear anything. That's why I now lipread well. I couldn't use signing at school, so I had no other way but to struggle and try to understand the lips. I've strained my eyes so much through the years that currently I'm wearing glasses. Let me tell you, lipreading is hard work. People sometimes say to me 'You lipread very well'. I resent

that comment because I had to lipread, *I had to*, I had no other option. It's bloody hard work, lots of misunderstandings. Signing is smooth, its relaxed. It's like oxygen. Watching it is like breathing. Lipreading is not natural. You become quiet because it's hard work. Sign language has opened a new world to me. I can understand. Before I wanted to say something, but it was too hard so I would not bother saying it. I would silence myself. I had so much that I wanted to express but I pushed it all back down – I remember that. I had instants when I wanted to share something and then I would think 'Don't bother to say it because they won't understand you.'. With signing, I can say anything I like. It's a shame that I learned sign language later in life. (Interview with Greg, 23 June 2014)

Greg's formal educational experiences of overemphasized aural-oral training and a total disregard to signing at an institutional level is a widely-reported phenomenon in the international literature on the histories of deaf education, the adult deaf community and sign languages (Meath-Lang, 1998; Emerton, 1998; Searl and Johnston, 1998; Deuchar, 1984; Higgins, 1980; Winefield, 1987; Lane, 1992; Kyle and Woll, 1991; Ladd, 2011; Lee, 2006) . There are parallels in Greg's narrative in how lipreading pushed him to be quiet and Hakan's 'shyness' by his mainstream Reception teacher, rather than a situational response. As part of my literature review on deaf people's educational experiences prior to embarking on my own fieldwork, I had become aware of many deaf people's accounts, primarily from the UK and USA, describing their treatment by their hearing teachers as human rights abuses (Ladd, 2011; Lee, 2006). As a result, I was very mindful that I too could observe a similar trend of having the oral method of communication potentially being imposed upon the deaf students at Appletree and Hallsbury. As such, I had made it one of my priorities to pay close attention to how these two cohorts of deaf children and youth reacted to different forms of communication presented to them within the bases and how they might have shown that they preferred speaking over signing or vice versa. During my time at these two school bases, I indeed observed many incidences that supported an ethos of prioritizing school English over other, more visual, ways of communication. I also witnessed, however, how the majority of hearing base staff working with deaf students at these schools for the most part displayed a common-sense approach to switching to a mode that was primarily more visual, including the use of BSL, when it was apparent that a particular deaf child was having little to no meaningful

access to spoken language. This willingness to be flexible and responsive to the communication needs of their mainly profoundly deaf students was in part an institutionalized behaviour at Appletree Primary School where a Total Communication approach was used and where most of the base staff had a working knowledge of BSL or SSE and used it frequently when communicating with their deaf students. As we shall see in the next section, however, at Hallsbury Secondary School, as previously described, the base ethos was centred on primarily an oral education at least principally which they also brought to the forefront when describing their Deaf Resource Base to parents of deaf students visiting as prospective students, as a rule and as previously described, typically deaf students admitted to the base had a sensorial capability to listen to and to speak English.

Section 2: Nimali's exclusively visual 'funds of knowledge' and her exclusion from the dominant collaborative place of the base

When I first introduced Nimali, aged 14, as a member of the base at Hallsbury Secondary School in Chapter One, I had mentioned how her arrival and the base staff's early realization that she in fact could not access spoken language in a meaningful way took most base team off-guard. The team were experienced and skilled in augmenting the visual component of school English when communicating with their deaf students by, for example, using base English as described in detail in chapters Three and Four. They had insufficient experience, however, to allow them to gain the appropriate funds of knowledge that an exclusively visual means of communication required in order to be able to more fully engage with Nimali. Both Miss Collins and Mr. Sodhi had told me how they did not know much BSL, and how they were only required to learn basic BSL as part of their training to become a TOD. Although they had both been practicing TODs for many years, since they were always placed at schools with oral deaf educational provision, they never had the chance or motivation to practice or improve their BSL. The enrolment of a profoundly deaf student such as Nimali who was not an 'oral deaf', was more of an act of kindness towards a desperate mother than a standard procedural outcome, therefore, meant that Nimali was out-of-place from the start. The base team were not familiar with the aspects of Nimali's communication repertoire that she made use of when at the base which was exclusively visual such as writing, drawing, signing, gesturing, facial

expressions. At the time of her arrival, for example, she had heavily relied mostly on idiosyncratic modes of visual communication such as drawing as well as writing. When in class or during breaks, I would often see her watchful eyes scanning everyone and everything around her, eager to work out what was going on at any given moment. Gradually, she became increasingly more receptive and expressive in BSL.

Most LSAs, on the other hand, did not know BSL at all. As a fluent BSL user qualified to Level 6 as part of her previous career path working in the deaf community, Maya was an exception amongst the LSA group. She hardly worked with Nimali though[67]. Another fluent signer was Mr. David, but he only saw Nimali for an hour every week as part of the BSL lessons he delivered at the school. Preferring a type of communication medium that prioritized sight at the expense of sound placed Nimali apart from the rest of the base students. She was indefinitely positioned as a newcomer in relation to her mastery of base English which was the established common language amongst the base staff and the rest of its deaf students. Hallsbury's base was a collaborative place for most of its deaf students but not – at least fully – for Nimali. As a community of practice, Hallsbury's base had a structuring of access that prevented Nimali's 'legitimate peripheral participation' (Lave and Wenger, 2003, p.103). By limiting its scope of visualized communication to base English under a philosophy of inclusion through mainstreaming, and to then admit a deaf student like Nimali who had no meaningful access to school English or base English resulted in a selection process that inevitably resulted in her "sequestration" (Ibid., p.100). Miss Collins was not fully aware of Nimali's existing communicative repertoire at the time of agreeing to admit her through her own discretion. Nonetheless, during her time in the base – which was most of the school day – I had not observed much effort on behalf of the base team to make Nimali 'legitimately peripheral' in the sense that she was often "not given productive access to activity in the community of practitioners" (Ibid., p.104). As the role of a 'base student' required the mastery of base English, not being able to easily understand this English language variety jeopardized Nimali's participation in the base activities. During periods when the base staff tried to relay information to her, therefore, Nimali used various tactics to reassure them that she was

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[67] I do not know as a matter of certainty why Maya did not work with Nimali more frequently, but it could be that Maya was placed to support deaf students in the mainstream classroom while Nimali would join Tuncay and Taahir who were supported by Kimberly and Saiqa.

indeed listening and understanding. She, for example, nodded a lot. But the staff remained doubtful that their message was being understood as Nimali often had a blank expression on the occasions she was spoken to. In return, the base staff members reacted in two very different manners. They either try to expand their own communicative repertoires to meet Nimali's communication preferences which required a lot of additional one-on-one time and mutual effort, which I illustrate below, or they generally refrained from addressing her, with the latter reaction being more common.

The exception was set by Kimberly. As a base staff, she pursued alternative and more visual communication methods in order to directly engage with Nimali. She was Nimali's key base staff and she had Nimali frequently during Functional Skills English classes. Below is an excerpt from my field notes describing the twosome's routine interaction.

It was another Functional Skills English lesson in the base with Nimali, Tuncay and Taahir. There was a relaxed atmosphere as Kimberly and Saiqa walked in and allowed the group to have a short break between lessons. Kimberly sat down at the desk nearest to the whiteboard with her back towards it, with Nimali to her right. Nimali looked prepared to begin, with her notebook and pencil already set out on the desk. I was already seated near Nimali, currently also across from Kimberly, having been with Nimali in the previous Science lesson. Before the lesson began, Kimberly approached Nimali in a casual way, making sure they established eye contact, and asked her in spoken English what she had for dinner last night. Met with Nimali's blank expression, she then quickly grabbed a blank piece of paper and a pen from the stationary box on the desk, drew a big circle in the middle to represent an empty plate and wrote above it her question: "What did you eat for dinner last night?". She then passed the paper and pen in front of Nimali, prompting her to either write or draw her meal. Nimali, smiling, picked up the pen and began drawing a chicken drumstick. Kimberly acknowledged it orally and in writing – "Chicken" – and pointed to the still empty parts of the plate accompanied by an inquisitive look on her face, prompting Nimali to keep drawing the other things she ate. Nimali paused. There was one other thing she had eaten but she did not know how to draw or write about it. Her body and face projected her frustration of wanting to describe it but not knowing how to. After a brief moment

of contemplation, she put the pen down as if she had given up trying. Moving on, Kimberly commented to Nimali that she looked tired. LSAs often chatted with their deaf students about their life out of school in order to discern how family life, such as insufficient sleep, impacted on their level of participation at school. Although shaking her head and smiling as if to convey a friendly disagreement, Nimali then picked up the pen and wrote on the paper at her disposal a capitalized 'NO!!!!'. (Excerpt from field notes, 6 November 2013)

Seeing what she had written which was in stark contrast to her body language took me by surprise. At that moment, I came to realize that writing for Nimali stood as one of her preferred modes of communication. Having been exposed to mainly oral settings at school and at home which were purposefully deprived of sign language and biologically cut off from the spoken, as co-communicators, Nimali's and Kimberly's language resources did not fully correspond which meant that they had a conversation that was less fluent, causing frustration. In other words, by coming to Hallsbury, was faced with new communicative "expectations of the new school environment" (Busch, 2017). The night she had her chicken with a complimentary side, for example, she could not have heard her mother mention the name of the dish. Accessing conversations taking place around them that are not addressed to them – also known as incidental learning – is an important form of language and knowledge learning for children (McLeod and McDade, 2011). Deaf children growing up in hearing families lack access to this fundamental learning experience. Nimali also once said to me that she never cooked at home. If she did not participate in the cooking process or had not seen it being cook, then she might have had, as the base team had noted, limited 'life skills' or as Greg had discussed, insufficient 'exposure to the world' to build on her funds of knowledge as communicative resources contributing to her ability to self-express. On the other hand, Nimali may have had a native dish that she was unsure how to describe to a person who she presumed was not familiar with Indian culture and cuisine. On the flip side, Kimberly's potential lack of such cultural knowledge may have meant that she could not encourage Nimali to try to describe the dish by providing some selection of dishes familiar to someone with Nimali's heritage. In the end, without a shared means of meaningful communication, Nimali and her co-communicator Kimberly struggled to converse about even the most basic and mundane of subjects.

What Nimali knew had been derived from her observations of what people did as a participant in these various communities of, for example, home and the base. As such, in agreement with both Lave and Wenger (2003) and the central anthropological method of 'participant observation'[68], Nimali's 'observations' were key to her effective learning and participation in her respective communities of practice, separate from what she was expected to learn or do, for example, in her formal role as a 'student'. Furthermore, through her drawings – not only of the drumstick but on many other occasions during lesson time as 'answers' to questions related to teaching mainly relayed in base English – Nimali had demonstrated two important aspects of learning seen as relational and situated in communities of practices. Firstly, that learning can take place even when the instruction is not delivered in the most appropriate way and is only partly accessible (Lave and Wenger, 2003, p.30). Secondly, as in Nimali's experience, there could be a considerable distance between knowledge provided through instruction within the various communities of practice a learner belongs to and their own 'everyday' or 'active' knowledge of circumstances specific to them (Ibid., p.48). From this perspective, going back to the anecdote above, Nimali's interaction with Kimberly should not be interpreted as 'she doesn't know' or 'she cannot express herself', but instead should be understood as a demonstration of Nimali's own personal way of knowing and communicating and therefore making "the culture of practice" her own that is not conventional and thus not shared by many (Ibid., p.95). In conclusion, Nimali's use of her lower levels of proficiency in written English as well as drawing, gesturing, facial expressions and pointing to objects around her to express what she thought and felt was a process that was unfamiliar and therefore demanding for her base audience. Hence, although Nimali was physically present at the base during a lesson or a social gathering taking over a break period, for the most part of the school day she was mostly not acknowledged or included into the group conversations. To further illustrate, below are two excerpts from the field demonstrating how the base staff often did not fully include Nimali in their lessons. The first one is from a Functional Skills English session, followed by a Science lesson.

During today's Functional Skills English lesson Saiqa and Kimberly were preparing Tuncay, Nimali and Taahir for a mock assessment. After a brief review of the topic

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[68] I would like to thank my thesis supervisor, Dr. Peggy Froerer, for making the suggestion for this theoretical connection.

entailing reading advertisements as sources of information, the three students were handed out their mock exam papers. Saiqa guided them through the story of two friends wanting to go on a holiday trip. As the text gradually led to the advert itself, Saiqa announced that at this point they would work on their own, starting by reading the advert and then moving on to answer the subsequent questions. After a few minutes into the mock test, Tuncay raised his hand and got Saiqa's attention. With permission to speak being granted, he said "Miss, question 5 is not right. It talks about Fred. Who is Fred? You only talked about Leo and Henry in the story.". Taahir quickly concurred. Neither of them could associate this third person to the story. Saiqa quickly looked at her own copy of the question and glimpsed back at the text. She then agreed: "You're right. I forgot to talk about that part of the story", followed by her decision to amend the question to fit in with the storyline they were familiar with. She instructed the two boys to cross out Fred and write Henry instead, and to answer the question in this new form. During this whole time, Nimali was busy going back and forth between the advertisement, the text and the questions. As her head lowered down, she was unable to see the commotion taking place at the other end of the table. Once Saiqa had given instructions to Tuncay and Taahir to make the necessary name changes, I asked her if I should explain what had happened to Nimali and to amend her question as well. After a moment of consideration while examining Nimali's engrossed state, Saiqa calmly replied: "No, it's okay, leave hers as it is.". (Excerpt from field notes, 6 November 2013)

In this small classroom at the base, with only three deaf students accompanied by an equal number of staff members (including myself), we were all in very close physical proximity to each other. Gathered around a large table, however, the medium of social discourse that emerged between group members inadvertently kept Nimali out of it momentarily. Additionally, the conscious refusal to switch mediums to extend the newly generated information to Nimali as a way of drawing her back into and reinstituting her synchrony with the group further solidified the social divide, giving it a sense of permanency. The way Hallsbury's base was structured, with the small spaces of the base rooms combined with the high teacher-student ratio encouraging intimacy and convivial conversations between all its members, had created a status levelling effect. In addition, the use of 'base English' was an important marker of their 'base culture' different from, for example, the mainstream, with

"important social meanings for intercommunity communication" within the base (Blom and Gumperz, 1972, p.418). It acted as a "signal of distinctness" thus disassociated those who did not use it from the base community (Ibid., p.433). This shared sociolinguistic value, however, also had implications for the base's 'assimilative capacity' as a community of practice to integrate newcomers (Barth, 1972, p.463). Because Nimali could not take part in the open and casual discussions within the base, and was not fully proficient as a 'base English' user, she could not communicate to the rest that she shared this aspect of the base's cultural practice and identity (Blom and Gumperz, 1972, p.417). She thus remained at the boundaries of the base community, which failed to fully include her and to therefore move in the direction of 'assimilative growth' (Barth, 1972, p.464). In the next example, the collaborative effort between Nimali and I to keep up with the lesson is once again undermined by a member of the base staff.

Today's science lesson was on genetic factors and health. Miss Collins began to talk about the subject, drawing images of the DNA and speaking unhurriedly while always facing Tuncay and Taahir so as to retain their attention. Soon after she began to talk, I turned to Nimali and began to explain what was being said by using our usual pen and paper to draw diagrams and exchanging key words such as 'inherit' and 'generation', supplemented by signing. Not long into the lecture, Miss Collins turned towards us, had a quick look at what we were doing and then said to me "Don't worry about that. It's just too hard to explain". (Excerpt from field notes, 11 December 2013)

Unable and unwilling to switch, at this moment it seemed as though Miss Collins had completely given up on including Nimali in her lessons herself. She had projected, I argue, her own personal reservations about directly communicating with a deaf student who was not an 'oral deaf' onto Nimali. Miss Collins, for example, held low expectations regarding Nimali's ability to learn, as if indicating an imagined correlation between oral language skills and cognitive ability, and had significantly withdrawn her educational investment in Nimali by denying her the relational aspect of classroom learning. She had found it to be sufficient that Nimali kept herself busy by reading the handouts and answering printed questions. I disregarded Miss Collins' advice not to even try to explain the subject to Nimali. As far as I was concerned, I was in a privileged position as the base volunteer with an abundance of time

and willingness to work with Nimali on a one-to-one basis. I was ready to explore new avenues of communication that would enable me to facilitate Nimali's fuller engagement in the lesson and ultimately what remained to be her formal education. Here, I suggest, Miss Collins' behaviour towards Nimali evident in her language use – 'don't worry about that' – was a subtle expression of the unyielding and unaccommodating dominant language ideology prevalent at Hallsbury: English monolingualism. In her position of power as a teacher (both in the base but more importantly as part of the mainstream school), Miss Collins addressed me in English. She had equal power over both me (a temporary and volunteer LSA) and Nimali because as an old-timer she had control over classroom resources of which language use was one of them (Lave and Wenger, 2003, p.37). Her non-accommodating attitude, therefore, was an example of "a set of meta-level structural linguistic features indicat[ing] what kind of speech is occurring (or ought to occur)" in the base classrooms (Mertz, 1998, p.151). Furthermore, I argue that this was a positional strategy on behalf of Miss Collins due to the conflict Nimali's novel 'newcomer' position was a representative of, that is, a threat to the continuity of the base as a distinct community of practice (Lave and Wenger, 2003, p.115).

Furthermore, these two examples demonstrate how all types of classroom teaching and learning are interactional, including the so-called one-way lecture which is often taken as the quintessential didactic form of teaching. As a two-way exchange, the teacher who is conveying information is simultaneously picking up cues from her students in confirmation that they are in fact following her. Through Miss Collins' act of communicating with her two students through a shared medium, she creates a relationship with Tuncay and Taahir. Equally, deterred by the personal effort initially required to establish a novel medium of exchange, Miss Collins' choice not to address Nimali prevented the formation of a cordial relationship based on affinity (Swanwick et al., 2016). As a concrete example of the relational nature of learning, the failed relationship between Miss Collins and Nimali demonstrate how not all methods of visualization used in deaf education are equally effective for all deaf learners (Lave and Wenger, 2003, p.76). Furthermore, it illustrates, I suggest, how learning, as a situated aspect of social practice, "involves the construction of identities" within the "possibilities enabled by these systems of relations" (Ibid., p.53). While Nimali was gaining a new identity as being more of a 'signer' rather than an 'oral deaf' student, Miss Collins was also being reminded – through her interactions with Nimali, but also Mr. David – that although

she was a TOD, she was in fact a specific kind of TOD that could engage with oral deaf students with ease but less so with those who were exclusively visual learners or BSL users.

Nimali was also frequently left out of conversations during more informal interactions between herself and her peers who all chose to stay in the base – their collaborative place – during in-between lesson breaks and lunch periods. Below are two brief excerpts from my field notes highlighting the severity of the social isolation Nimali faced when the medium of socialization continued to be dominated by base and school English users who were inexperienced in interacting with deaf peers who were not 'oral deaf' and therefore unaware of the inclusiveness of adapting their communication repertoires when Nimali was present. This first section was written the night of the event being described.

Today, as usual, I was socializing with Nimali during a short ten-minute break in the well-lit base classroom. We talked about how she was playing basketball at school and how she enjoyed watching cricket. I mouthed the words while we both signed, wrote, gestured, mimicked and used our facial expression. Then Maya (the LSA that was also a fluent signer) walked in and joined us, adding in BSL how there was also the option to play badminton at school. At one point, however, Maya and I dropped our visualized communication ways and instead switched to spoken English when addressing each other, leaving Nimali out of the rest of the discussion as a result. It is only just now as I'm writing up my notes that I'm realizing how my subconscious decision to switch to spoken English could have impacted on Nimali's sense of group inclusion up until that point and then how it might have been severed in an instance. As a hearing person, it's so easy to create this feeling of exclusion in someone who, because of their deafness, cannot overhear what is being said amongst other group members. Nimali did not show her dissatisfaction or any indication that she was being left out either. I need to be more deaf aware[69]. (Excerpt from field notes, 27 November 2013)

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[69] To be deaf aware, as it was used in the contexts that I frequented where there was a strong deaf presence, meant to be respectful of the different communicational preferences of each individual deaf person I was interacting with in order not to disadvantage them in terms of accessing the exchange of information (be it formal or informal).

While the above extract illustrated how I behaved like an inexperienced hearing person, contributing to the social exclusion of a deaf person, the extract below demonstrates how I took upon the role of a bilingual hearing ally and used my communicative repertoire to enable a rapport to be built between deaf peers who typically used different modes of communication.

Nimali and I remained in the classroom after our Science lesson. We were soon joined by other deaf students – Rajni, Sumana and Sabina – who were eager to catch up on each other's news in base English. Because the room was not too big, we were standing right next to them. I knew that I could carry on chatting to Nimali myself, but I was also conscious that Nimali might be interested in hanging out with the girls more. Neither Nimali nor the girls, however, were approaching each other. For any direct communication to happen, the three girls had to be willing and ready to get out of their comfort zone and, for example, sign, gesture or write a lot more. At that moment, I took the initiative to informally interpret between them, conveying questions and answers from Nimali to the girls and vice versa, without being directly involved in the conversation myself. As I imagined, they were curious about each other's personal lives and ended up having a meaningful convivial exchange. I could only hope that they continue to interact when I'm not around. (Excerpt from field notes, 12 March 2014)

The differences in communicative repertoires amongst the base staff and students had impacted on their group cohesion, splitting up the base members along different language modalities. As such, Hallsbury's deaf base was not experienced as a collaborative place equally by its different members. For most, it was realized only when their co-communicator was also using base English and for Nimali only when her interlocutor or mediator was using BSL, writing, or gesturing. As such, with the absence of a single shared language or the fluid switching between multiple languages by all of its members, therefore, there was little mixing of the base's split groups of co-communicators. Despite her relative marginality within the formal and informal interactions taking place in the base, however, Nimali eagerly wanted to express herself. For this, she needed an audience, and more specifically an audience with the time and willingness to be flexible, to act collaboratively and to be ready to learn together. Besides Kimberly, I was one of her few persistent communicative collaborators.

Miss Collins was teaching a Science lesson to Tuncay, Taahir and Nimali. This time the topic was the human body and its circulatory system. As I entered the class, I quickly sat next to Nimali as I knew she would make use of my support the most. She followed Miss Collins' face and lips closely and looked at the whiteboard whenever Miss Collins' wrote or drew something. I was under the impression that regardless of the radio aids she was missing out on most of what was being discussed through listening and lipreading. She, however, at times indicated to me that she understood and wanted to answer questions posed by Miss Collins in relation to the subject. She provided her answers – which were always directed to me and never to Miss Collins – either by writing it on the corner of the whiteboard dedicated for the use of the two of us, or by pointing to the answer on the sheet of paper with the relevant text or even by trying to sign it to me. (Excerpt from field notes, 6 November 2013)

In conclusion, looked at from the framework that learning is relational, Nimali's degree of involvement changed depending on who she was learning with. In comparison, for example, to times when Nimali was in class with the base staff that had a more disengaged attitude to working with her, Nimali had greater learning opportunities to actively explore the subject matter when she was with Kimberly, Mr. David, or myself who acted as her collaborative co-communicators. Furthermore, her growing visual literacy in BSL mainly supported by Mr. David became a crucial new fund of knowledge that she could exploit when expressing herself both in her more formal role as a 'student' and as part of her other social roles at school such as peer or a friend.

Other than the speed by which Nimali was picking up BSL, there existed two other areas in which Nimali clearly demonstrated her competencies which she again could resort to as crucial funds of knowledge that could also to be linked to visualized self-expressions. These were her talent in drawing and her competency in using graphic communication technologies, such as the software used to edit digital photos. Her skills in drawing were quickly recognized by the base team. As part of Functional Skills English lessons, for example, Kimberly and Saiqa encouraged Nimali, Tuncay and Taahir to communicate their comprehension of a text in several ways. At times, they would, answer a list of questions related to a given scenario in

written English. Another way to demonstrate their understanding of a storyline was through creating their own storyboards. Saiqa had commented that this was done to "visualize the story" which might have originally been only in plain text or with few illustrations. When the day came where three students were presenting their final versions of their storyboards, Nimali's depiction of the sequence of events in her authentic drawing style was noticed and praised by Kimberly and Saiqa immediately, their feelings communicated to Nimali mainly through facial expressions and gestures such as thumbs up. They exchanged between themselves how Nimali drew well and maybe they should make Miss Collins aware too who could share with her mainstream Art and Design teacher.

Nimali's aptitude in navigating the computer program for digital photo editing, on the other hand, was spotted by her peer, Tuncay.

During another incident, this time in mainstream Art and Design lesson, the teacher initially briefed the class as to what she expected them to do next as part of their abstract collage projects. I tried to sign what the teacher was saying to Nimali. She nodded in agreement and looked ready to get started. All students then moved over to the section of the large classroom where the state-of-the-art computers were located. Nimali and Tuncay chose computers near each other, and I pulled up a chair and sat in between them, slightly removed as to be easily accessible to both in case they wanted to approach me. As I watched Nimali effortlessly navigate the numerous tabs and functions of the software, I could tell that she was confident in using it independently. She was carrying on with her photography project as requested, paying close attention to the final composition of her work. In the meantime, Tuncay had hardly managed to open the program and once he did he seemed distracted, physically at a distance from the computer desk. Then Donna, the LSA who often supported Tuncay, came by and prompted Tuncay to get some work done after which she left to attend to another task. Tuncay then turned to Nimali and gestured to her to come. He was asking for Nimali's help. Although Tuncay preferred to speak to Nimali and ask brief questions such as 'Where?' and 'How?', they both pointed to the screen to communicate with each other about the use of the software. Nimali also used the mouse and keyboard to demonstrate the relevant steps and checked that Tuncay could then repeat them,

intervening when it was not correct by gestures or by taking over the mouse again. In the end, they managed to get Tuncay back on track with his work. (Excerpt from field notes, 16 January 2014)

Nimali's visual communication competencies were acknowledged by the base team and her peers alike, which also demonstrates at a theoretical level "the importance of near-peers in the circulation of knowledgeable skills" in communities of practice (Lave and Wenger, 2003, p.57). Her visual literacy tools by which she confidently expressed herself visually, however, were not adopted by the rest of the base, denying these funds of knowledge any form of legitimacy. In terms of their encouragement of Nimali to develop her visual skills, the responses were varied. As far as I could observed the base team did not quite pick up on Nimali's interest and competence in information technology as an avenue to improving her literacy in it and therefore expand her communicative repertoire[70]. In terms of Nimali learning BSL, on the other hand, the base staff's acknowledgement that Nimali did not have the sensory capacity to receive and thus produce speech coupled by their consensus that she needed to develop means to engage in meaningful communication led them to asserting more firmly than they would with their other students that Nimali attends weekly BSL lessons held at the base and taught by Mr. David. This, however, was more likely seen as a potential resource to form future relationships once she had left Hallsbury and its base. As previously pointed out in Chapter One, Miss Collins' awareness that I had some knowledge of BSL was also a key reason why she had assigned me to work with Nimali. The school's Speech and Language Therapist, Susan, had also agreed with Miss Collins that Nimali had to learn BSL even though Nimali had initially stated her dislike towards signing. During a break session, Susan had told me how in her opinion if she saw that a deaf student she worked with needed to learn BSL because their sensation of sound was not sufficient to endow them with a spoken language, she would strongly recommend that they were exposed to BSL through courses or by attending age-appropriate deaf community events despite opposition from parents or the student themselves. She then shared with me how a few years back she had done exactly this, and while her deaf student protested attending BSL classes at first, later the same deaf alumnus had thanked Susan tremendously for her persistence in this regard. "She told me

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[70] I would like to thank Dr. Annelies Kusters for pointing this out (personal communication).

how she is much happier now; how she has many deaf friends and loves using sign language",
Susan had reported. This alumnus, it appeared, had found a place where she felt she belonged
as a fellow deaf BSL user within the wider deaf community and as a member of an adult deaf
peer group. In Nimali's case, however, although she was rapidly learning BSL which would
eventually give her access to significant deaf communities in London, within Hallsbury's base,
she – like BSL – was still considerably marginalized both as a result of her own attitude
towards BSL but also the base's language practices that prioritised English monolingualism.
Furthermore, Susan's above attitude to language learning paths for deaf students where BSL
is offered when the is a 'need', I argue, is yet another expression of the language ideology
prevalent British deaf education where one must make a choice between English and
BSL/home language. Discussing the role of linguistic ideologies, Busch (2017) states how "by
being repeatedly allocated to already established identity categories […] reduces
heterogeneous and ambiguous elements to either-or categories" and in turn demanding
loyalties, affiliations as well as imposing exclusions (Busch, 2017, p.347)

As part of my interview with Miss Collins, I had asked her what changes she would like to see
in deaf education. One of her comments was related to the use of BSL in schools:

> "I would like to see a BSL GCSE course here, for all the students, not just the deaf
> students, [offered] … as a language [option]. I mean it is an official[71] language, so why
> not? … That would give them [deaf students] a GCSE. It would also give them a little bit
> of a status in the school as well cuz you know, obviously a vast majority of our [deaf]
> students can do some sign so if they were to have a, you know, a GCSE course, it would
> be one-upmanship on some of the other students".

The low status of BSL at Hallsbury and, by association, of being a deaf student resonated with
what Greg had said about the broader societal view towards BSL: "I know a lot of my hard of
hearing peers … say they don't want to learn sign language … It's that attitude to signing,
looking down at signing as something 'stupid', it still persists".

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[71] The reference here is to the official recognition of BSL as a natural language by UK government in 2003. As it
stands, however, BSL is not yet recognized as an official language of the UK.

In conclusion, the base as a community of practice presents itself as the locus of contradictions. On the one hand, the base staff display strong collaborative attitudes towards developing novel visual funds of knowledge as a means of increasing their students' participation and learning. On the other hand, particularly with Nimali, they show reluctance to incorporate her into the base community despite her contributions to the learning of her peers and a strong desire to conform and belong. Described as Lave and Wenger (2003) as the "continuity – displacement contradiction" constitutive of all learning, the dilemma personalized in Miss Collins' simultaneous inclusion and exclusion of Nimali reflects the "different ways in which old-timers and newcomers establish and maintain identities" (Lave and Wenger, 2003, p.115). To reiterate, on the one hand, Miss Collins displayed inclusive behavior towards Nimali when initially admitting her to the school and then ensuring she was learning BSL from Mr. David as well as being receptive to the use of different (although ad hoc and experimental) use of modalities other than those prevalent in an 'oral' base by other staff when working with her. On the other hand, by not engaging with her directly during lessons and by censoring some information from being conveyed to Nimali, Miss Collins was being exclusionary. As an old-timer, Miss Collins strives for continuity of the base as a community of practice which she has been co-producing over the many years, and in this sense she requires deaf students of a certain type ('oral deaf') joining the base. But she is equally threatened by the prospects of change inherent in engaging with Nimali because it requires innovative approaches to communication. Nimali, on the other hand, is eager to participate in the social world of the base, but faced with a mostly inaccessible language and distanced members, she is also in search of new opportunities and ways to "establish [her] own identity" in a transformed practice that, for example, incorporates more BSL but also the creative arts (such as drawing and graphic design) which are her competencies that will truly support her learning and participation.

CONCLUSION

I started this study by introducing two young women – Nimali and Damla – who, despite both being profoundly deaf as it is biologically defined, had very different self-conceptions and group memberships, both informed by and regardless of their deafness. This study further explored the multiplicity of experiences and identities owned, ascribed or achieved by a selection of mothers of deaf children, as well as a separate student group of deaf children and youth and their specialist school staff. Each chapter observed their respective experiences and movements between various communities which were located in different places such as their home, neighbourhood, school, city and their distant homelands.

Nimali, for example, perceived herself to be an 'oral deaf' person until she arrived in London and started attending Hallsbury's oral base. There, she was known as the student who was more of a 'signer'. Tuncay, on the other hand, had not thought of himself as being deaf until he was placed in the same base. According to him, yes, he had a hearing problem, but he was nonetheless 'hearing'. In fact, as a new arrival to the UK, he seemed to act more 'hearing' when he spoke in Turkish than in English. Hakan, at Appletree Primary School, was taken to be a shy student by his hearing mainstream teacher, Miss Lauren, while the base staff all agreed that he was quite outgoing and chatty. On the other hand, with the birth of her first child Aron, Irena experienced a change of self-perception from her taken-for-granted 'hearing' status to accepting that she was an inexperienced hearing mother of a deaf child to gradually becoming an experienced mother of a deaf child. She also perceived her son Aron as being part of a wider disabled community and later on part of the British Deaf community, along with having a shared membership in the Polish cultural, linguistic and religious communities. As such, this study has contributed to the growing body of literature that highlights the diversity of deaf individual and collective experiences (Kusters et al., 2017b; Washabaugh, 1981; Cockayne, 2003; Monaghan et al. 2003).

As we also saw throughout this study, in this process of shifting places and thus entering new relationships, mainly with hearing adults, deaf children were presented with different learning opportunities. These included developing their communicative repertoires through the addition of new resources in multiple modalities, a process that enables them to enter

new communities. By entering these institutional communities as 'newcomers', they also positioned themselves in social interactions with 'old-timers' - such as their mother and the base staff who are familiar adults - that favoured communication modes that did not always overlap. In order to progress in their membership in any given community, therefore, deaf children and youth had to learn from these 'old-timers'. Due to the relational nature of all participation and learning, however, often their mothers, specialist teachers and support staff themselves were re-positioned as newcomers. Acceptance of this positionality, then, demonstrated by their willingness to engage in communicative collaboration with deaf children and youth, enabled them to mutually construct 'collaborative places' as sites of inclusion. These inclusive strategies varied from increasing the visualization of their expressions, to drawing in from multiple modalities when communicating, to repositioning their bodies to make it more accessible to these deaf children and youth's observant eyes, to, finally, incorporating certain assistive objects to the communicative environment as well as rearranging it, depending on the communication preferences and repertoires of their co-collaborators. While all of these strategies may have appeared to be trivial to those who had not engaged with deaf people before, they nonetheless served to increase the feeling of co-presence between interlocutors and provided opportunities for fuller participation as valued community members. These collaborative places of the home and the school base, moreover, were often intimate, personal and engaging, where deaf children and youth were seen not only as a 'deaf child' or a 'deaf student', but were recognized as 'whole persons' with multiple identities, personal preferences, and the desire and skill to contribute to the decisions influencing the shaping of their own futures.

The various mainstream and specialist spaces that deaf children and youth navigated on a daily basis were part of a wider network of communities, each operating through varying ideological beliefs and practices. One such crucial ideology was that of English monolingualism. This was manifested in institutional practices such as when Irena, who was from a Polish background and not yet fully proficient in English, was advised to speak only English to her son, Aron. Gloria, on the other hand, felt compelled to choose an oral provision for her son Matthew because the possibility of true bilingualism was not clearly communicated to her by professionals that were working with her as part of an early intervention effort. In both Appletree Primary School and Hallsbury Secondary School,

furthermore, the official language policy was English monolingualism. Neither school, for example, formed partnerships with the wider Black and ethnic minority communities that most of the students came from, nor did they work with London's deaf community to inform their educational practices. This policy was reflected in base staff's practices as a dilemma of both overvaluing English proficiency and literacy as the mandatory path to success, and simultaneously developing alternative literacy events and life experiences that were relevant to their multilingual and multicultural deaf students. At a more institutional level, the senior management's disregard for the work carried out in the bases, coupled with the base team's at times ad hoc practices that seemed isolated from the wider networks of practitioners in deaf education outside the school, reinforced the notion that their students were in fact failing.

Within this context, this study both adds to and challenges current academic studies – such as that of Powers (2002) and Kusters et al. (2015) – as well as educational policies and practices that promote sign bilingualism (as the combined use of the national spoken and sign languages) as the most inclusive approach to deaf education. As this study demonstrates, the sample study of deaf children and youth discussed in the preceding pages were all exposed to at least three languages as a reflection of their diverse group memberships. As such, an emphasis on fostering rich communicative repertoires early on - not only for deaf children themselves but also their hearing peers, mainstream and specialist teaching staff as well as family and community members - would be an approach that is more in line with valuing diversity and therefore ensuring fuller participation and quality of inclusion of deaf children and youth not only within one or two groups they 'should' belong to, but rather within all that they are currently part of or could in the future potentially choose to enter.

From the alternative approach provided by notions such as translanguaging (Swanwick et al., 2016; Kusters et al., 2017b; Busch, 2017; Holmström et al., 2015) and communities of practice (Lave and Wenger 2003), however, where the relational and situated nature of learning and participation are foregrounded, deaf children and youth's communicative sensitivities, rich communicative resources and own funds of knowledge were highlighted. From such a perspective, it becomes more obvious that these deaf children and youth's potential to become full participants and 'old-timers' in the various communities they affiliated with was

therefore curtailed by language ideologies and practices that did not value linguistic and cultural diversity. In mainstream settings, therefore, deaf children and youth were offered partial participation at best, and often faced marginalisation or exclusion.

In view of these research findings, this study has contributed to the existing social research and theory on a number of grounds. Firstly, with a focus on the relationships deaf children and youth formed with adults, it has looked at the processes and practices involved in the social construction of 'childhood' (James, A. and Prout, A., 1997; Garrett, P. B. and Baquedano-López, P., 2002; Levine, R. A., 2007; Froerer, P., 2009; Wyness, 2012; Sobo, E., 2015). It raises further questions on the cohesion of the parent-child dyad in line with the works of Powers (2002), Doherty (2012a), and Kusters et al. (2015). In doing so, it also raises questions on the weight that parental views should be given in critical decisions that affect deaf children's development of crucial communicative skills as well as their broader educational and social experiences – particularly in light of the degree of information, support and experiences they are systematically presented with once their child is known to be deaf.

With an emphasis on the ethnography of communication, the important role played by language in the reproduction and demise of communities and boundary making has also been demonstrated. Furthermore, the study expanded on the notion of 'communities of practice' (Lave and Wenger 2003) by paying particular attention to processes of entering any given community of practice prior to becoming a legitimate peripheral participant, thus highlighting issues related to access and (self-)exclusion. Additionally, by approaching the 'old-timer'-'newcomer' dyad critically and guided by research findings, it has expanded on the relation of power inherent in such relationships and strengthened their situated quality by pointing at both fleeting moments of role reversal as well as to the prolonged periods of remaining a newcomer. Moreover, by concentrating on the learning potential of communities of practice from a communicative perspective, the significance of having a shared means of communication when accessing such communities was emphasised.

Secondly, supported by concepts such as translanguaging and communicative repertoires, this study has contributed to the expanding literature on the language learning trajectories of deaf children growing up in multilingual and multicultural contexts. By examining the current

dominant language policies in (deaf) education in Britain today, namely English monolingualism, it has revealed the challenges faced by deaf children (and deaf and hearing adults familiar to deaf children) in trying to support deaf children's holistic (language) development in disjointed and at times haphazard ways. As such, by shining a spotlight on some of the dynamics related to deaf children growing up in hearing families and attending mainstream schools amongst a small sample of London-based deaf children and youth and those familiar to them, this study has contributed to the debates on what it means to have an inclusive practice and to enable fuller participation within a broadly shared educational ethos of promoting deaf children's achievement of their 'full potential' within present-day Britain. As such, it contributes to the argument put forth by Powers (2002) that inclusion is not necessarily achieved in a place-specific approach, since deaf students, also highlighted by this study, can be socially excluded amidst being physically present in mainstream settings. Rather, this study corroborates Powers' (2002) suggestion that the existence (or lack of thereof) of a school-wide ethos of valuing diversity - seen in practices of deaf-hearing collaboration such as teacher flexibility, continued on-the-job training of specialist staff, the presence of deaf role models, as well as the availability of opportunities to both have positive deaf-deaf peer and deaf-hearing peer interactions - are better measures of inclusive practices in the context of deaf education. However, on the point of the presence of deaf role models, again as taken from the multicultural backgrounds of deaf children and youth presented in this study, I suggest that the diversity amongst such deaf role models in terms of gender, ethnic background and communication preferences, to list but a few, should be considered since such encounters have been shown (by Powers, 2002, for example) to directly impact deaf children and youths' positive self-image and motivation.

By way of conclusion, it is important to point out that there are a number of different research areas that remain unexplored within the thesis, as they went beyond the scope of this study. Three such areas, therefore, would represent particularly fruitful extensions to this study and make for especially rich avenues for future anthropological research. One obvious avenue of investigation is to follow deaf children and youths' movements and examine how their educational experiences inform their future aspirations regarding further education and employment. Equally, the way in which deaf children and youth socialize differently in the course of young adulthood is another area of interest, which had been hinted at during my

placement in the field. Finally, a more focussed look at how social categories such as ethnicity, religion, gender, and class impact on deaf children, youths' and adults' lived experiences would provide an invaluable insight into the multiplicity of deaf identities.

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