

**Translanguaging and Young Muslim Children's
Negotiations of Intersectional Muslim Identities
in an English Reception Classroom:
A Linguistic Ethnographic Study**

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I, Sharifa Khalid Muhanna Al Battashi, confirm that the work presented in this thesis is my own. Where information has been derived from other sources, I confirm that this has been indicated in the thesis.

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Abstract

Young children's translanguaging between different languages is underexplored and often examined in relation to questions of learning and teaching. In contrast, this study examines young Muslim children's translanguaging in a London-based Islamic school. The context is one in which they and their teachers face contradictions about supporting language diversity, and public discourses and policies post 9/11, which regard practices related to Islam, including using Arabic, as suspicious. This study explores the interface of Muslim children's translanguaging and negotiations of intersectional Muslim identities in the school setting, set within this broader Islamophobic context.

Using a linguistic ethnographic approach informed by Bakhtinian heteroglossia, intersectionality and the social studies of childhood, this study examined young reception children's engagement with translanguaging in formal and informal activities across different spaces. I draw on participant observations, informal conversations, and video recorded social interactions.

I argue that young children translanguage in complex ways, shaped by institutional practices, broader social-historical discourses and language ideologies, creating dynamic language hierarchies. While Standard English dominated formal pedagogical spaces, Quranic Arabic was valued as the liturgical language of Islam. Similarly, while French was linked to social prestige, Urdu was viewed simultaneously as ethnic pride and a source of racialised mockery. Whereas the use of Somali was considered a source of deficiency and meaning-making for the Somali speaking children. I identify the common forms of translanguaging the children used in this setting depending on interlocutors, specific language ideologies and activities across space-time. Together,

translanguaging and these factors produce heterogenous translanguaging spaces. I contend that the children translanguage by using varieties of Arabic and English to imagine and negotiate idealised gendered, racialised and generationed Muslimness. Developing these analyses, I suggest that translanguaging is simultaneously used to suggest asserted Muslimness and for including or excluding certain children from idealised Muslimness using 'race', language and generation.

This study contributes to the academic conversations related to translanguaging, multilingualism, inclusions and exclusions in school settings and intersectionality as follows. I advance the complexity of translanguaging as an act of racialisation embedded within tension-filled contexts. I extend the concept of translanguaging spaces, highlighting how translanguaging shapes and is shaped by multiple activities and interlocutors across space-time. Further, I enrich intersectional analysis by offering insights into the complexity of young children's Muslim identities and how they interlink with different social categories such as 'race', gender, language and generation.

Impact Statement

The impetus for this study was the contradictions produced by discourses of supporting language diversity and discriminatory institutional practices and public policies infused with Islamophobia, both of which impact English Islamic primary schools. The nexus of these discourses resulted in ambivalences and suspicions around young Muslim children's use of multiple meaning-making practices from different languages and practices related to Islam. This study furthers our understanding of these multiple meaning-making practices that constitute the translanguaging practices of these children and have implications for their negotiations of complex Muslim identities in their everyday activities within the reception classroom.

The resulting research helps illuminate young children's translanguaging at academic, societal and educational levels. Regarding the academic level, this study contributes to advancing theoretical debates related to multilingualism, translanguaging and intersectionality. While the proliferating translanguaging literature considers children's translanguaging practices, young children's engagement with translanguaging in formal and informal activities in the reception classroom, especially in relation to identity negotiations, is relatively underexplored. By offering substantial insight into the interface of young reception children's translanguaging and Muslim identities, firstly, this thesis advances the recognition of the agency of young children to translanguage in complex ways, which results in producing complex implications. Translanguaging is one of the practices used by these children to verbalise, invoke and imagine broader social, political, historical and ideological meanings in tension-filled contexts. This study also offers detailed accounts of the ways in which young children mobilised translanguaging to include and exclude particular children from localised forms of

being a 'good' Muslim which enriches current academic conversations on multilingualism, inclusions and exclusions in school settings.

Secondly, this thesis extends the concept of 'translanguaging space' (Li, 2011b) into 'translanguaging spaces' to capture the ways in which translanguaging practices shape and are being shaped by social relations and the activities of interlocutors across space-time. Thirdly, the thesis enriches intersectional analyses of young children's identities by showing how translanguaging practices are used to negotiate Muslim identities in intersection with the social categories of gender, 'race', generation and language.

This study was conducted at a time characterised by the rise of Islamophobic sentiment and discriminatory school inspections rendering practices related to Islam, including the use of Arabic in English Islamic schools, suspect. On the societal level, it is hoped that this thesis creates new ways of thinking for the public about the everyday practices of Muslim children in Islamic schools. and helps to address the challenging problems of Islamophobia and religious racism in the broader British society by offering a way to understand everyday translanguaging practices for young Muslim children in the everyday context of their Muslim nursery school. The findings thus provide insights into the complexities of their Muslim identities that show the inadequacy of viewing them through the myopic lens of Islamophobia and perceived 'terrorist' threats. Such findings have implications for suggestions to senior leadership teams, early years, teachers, families and leaders of Muslim communities. Perhaps most important, the study offers a way for young Muslim children's perspectives to gain recognition in all their complexity.

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CHAPTER 1: Introduction

1.1. Introduction

“It was the first week of Ramadan, the Muslim holy month of fasting, and I was sitting with Amira¹, an Arabic speaking girl, and Aminat, a Somali speaking girl, in the writing corner of Elmer Class² as they engaged in a drawing activity. Aminat drew a mosque, and as she began to colour the picture, she recited to me the five daily prayers in Islam: the *fajer* (the dawn prayers in Arabic), the *dhuhur* (the midday prayers), the *asr* (the afternoon prayers), the *maghrib* (the sunset prayers) and the *ishaa* (the night time prayers). Aminat then drew a picture of herself with her mother in front of the mosque and asked me to help with colouring. As we chatted while we coloured, Aminat talked about how she enjoys going to the mosque with her family to do *salat* (prayer in Arabic). She paused to look at the drawing before telling me that I needed to add ‘rainbowy’ colours for the headscarves. “When I grow up, I’m gonna be a good *Muslimah* (Muslim female in Arabic) because I love Allah (God in Arabic)”, Aminat said. Amira then laughed at her and said, “you can’t talk Arabic”. This statement made Aminat resort to confirming that she does know the “Arabic of the *Quran* (the sacred text of Islam in Arabic)”. Amira, however, did not seem to be convinced and replied to Aminat, “you don’t know how to say *araby* (Arabic in the Arabic language)” [Amira emphasised the voiced fricative Arabic sound ʕ] concluding “you are not a Muslim like me” while pointing her right thumb to her chest. Aminat then became visibly upset and asked me to tell Amira that she is a ‘good’ Muslim because she knows many Quranic verses. Being an Arab Muslim, I felt distraught by Amira’s comments to Aminat. I told Amira that Prophet Mohammed says that everyone is equally the same and that being a religious Muslim is what matters to Allah. Amira replied to me matter-of-factly, insisting that one cannot be a ‘good’ Muslim if they do not know how to read Quran in Arabic” (Fieldnotes: 8/5/2019).

The above fieldnote excerpt demonstrates an example of what could be described as a typical everyday conversation occurring between the reception children of Elmer Class. In the highlighted interaction, Aminat and Amira appear to be translanguaging, which refers to the flexible use of meaning-making resources from multiple languages (García & Li, 2014) by using elements from English and Arabic. Strikingly, Aminat and Amira seem to have incorporated the use of translanguaging in their discussion about

¹ Pseudonyms for the children and the teachers are used throughout the thesis.

² A pseudonym which refers to the reception classroom in which this study took place.

who is a 'good' Muslim, in this instance, based on language. However, while Aminat stated that she is a 'good' Muslim citing her Quranic knowledge, Amira rebutted Aminat's statement by saying that she is not a 'good' Muslim because she is not a speaker of Arabic. The highlighted moment above raises a series of important questions: How do young reception children translanguage? How does their translanguageing relate to the context in which it occurs? Moreover, what possible relations might exist between translanguageing and Muslim identities in an Islamic school context? These are the questions this thesis seeks to address by foregrounding the translanguageing of a group of reception children in their everyday interactions with peers and teachers in an Islamic primary school setting.

I start introducing this thesis in this chapter, where I begin by reflecting on the moments which generated my interest to conduct this study. I then locate the thesis in relation to the existing academic literature on translanguageing and intersectional Muslim identities to present the rationale. I follow this brief literature review by detailing the aims and key research questions this thesis seeks to address. I then conclude the chapter with a brief overview mapping the subsequent thesis chapters.

1.2. Background: How it all started

The driving force behind this study stems from various professional and personal experiences and observations. The interest in young children's translanguageing emerged from my volunteering experience providing language support and my experience as an English language teacher in my home country. It also emerged from my observations and experiences of the rising climate of Islamophobia in the United Kingdom, which is constantly suspicious of using Arabic.

When I was an M.A student in applied linguistics in the United States in 2014, I volunteered to offer language support to a group of newly-arrived Arabic speaking children in a local elementary school. Being a proficient Arabic speaker, I helped these children understand their daily school tasks and homework.

At first, I provided support to a five-year-old named Hamad³, who had recently started kindergarten, the American equivalent of the reception class in the U.K. Both the school's ESL teacher, Ms. Murphy, and Hamad's kindergarten teacher, Mrs. Sanchez, voiced serious concerns that Hamad might find it hard to 'fit in' with the children in his class due to his 'inability' to speak English. By conducting observations in Hamad's kindergarten classroom, I saw that Hamad did not respond to his teacher whenever she assigned him tasks in English. Upon starting kindergarten, Hamad was a quiet child who said only a few words to me in Arabic whenever I helped him with some school tasks. I later learned he had three other siblings in the school, Malik, Yazeed and Maha, who were in third, fourth and sixth grades, respectively and were struggling with learning English while balancing homework and school testing requirements. Ms. Murphy thought it would be helpful for these children to get some group time for language support in Arabic and asked for my help. I spent mornings inside the kindergarten classroom twice a week with Hamad, followed by spending group time with him and his siblings at noons in Ms. Murphy's ESL classroom. As days passed, I saw how Hamad metamorphosised into a talkative child in fascinating ways. His English appeared to improve significantly. In his play activities, I have seen how he tended to use an anglicised version of his name, calling himself "Amad", which his teachers also used at school, perhaps due to phonetic convenience.

³ A pseudonym

Hamad corrected me every time I used the Arabic pronunciation of his name and used English to respond to me whenever I spoke to him in Arabic. Sometimes, I heard Hamad insert Arabic words and phrases in his English talk when I was nearby. I still remember how frustrated he was for being excluded from an activity where the children appeared to engage in 'monster play'. When we talked about it, he mentioned that he could not be an 'angry monster' because he does not know how to be 'angry in English'.

The situation was completely different when Hamad and I spent some time with his siblings in Ms. Murphy's room. Conversations were animated and included creative and simultaneous use of English and Arabic. Hamad, Maha and Yazeed very often poked fun at the handwriting of Malik. Hamad often used to upset Malik by describing him as 'writing and talking English' like '*badoos*', an ethnicised pejorative that means Bedouins in Saudi Arabic. I was fascinated by the flexible ways in which Hamad, despite his young age, appeared to use English and Arabic simultaneously in his talk.

Reflecting on the language use of Hamad and his siblings took me back in time to when I was an English teacher in Oman before 2014. My students similarly incorporated elements from multiple languages in their off-task talk during the time I allocated for collaborative tasks. Despite my efforts to maintain an atmosphere of 'English only' within the classroom as per the Omani English curriculum guidance requirements, I could hear my students discussing tasks in English while inserting words from Arabic, Balushi and Swahili. However, Hamad's simultaneous use of Arabic and English differed from my students. While my students used these flexible language practices to make sense of school tasks, Hamad used them for positioning his brother Malik as a 'Bedouin' who lacks English proficiency. Hamad's use of

translanguaging with his siblings led me to ask whether this flexible use of meaning-making resources occurs in other school settings in English-speaking countries.

My observations and experiences within the climate of rising Islamophobia in the British context strengthened my interest to explore possible relations between translanguaging and contexts. When I moved to the United Kingdom in 2016 to start my PhD, I was struck by the negative ways in which Islamophobia was linked to the use of Arabic, especially within the context of primary schools. Islamic schools were portrayed in media coverage and broader social discourses as Arabic speaking enclaves isolated from the broader society (Hussain & Read, 2015). Specifically, the suspicion of young Muslim children for using Arabic in their everyday interactions in mainstream schools caught my attention. I have read a report in which a young Muslim child in an Early Years English classroom was labelled as a 'cause of concern', referred to Social Services and anti-radicalisation program for saying the phrase, "Allahu Akbar" (Muslim Council of Britain, 2015), which as an Arabic speaking Muslim I knew it meant God is great which could be used as a mundane expression of exclamation or wonder.

When my son started reception in 2016, I encountered some expressions of implicit Islamophobia in his primary school. My son's reception class teacher viewed how he inserted Arabic words while speaking English as a sign of 'concern'. She informed me several times that his use of Arabic in the classroom is 'not allowed'. However, when a few children in that same reception classroom used Polish in their everyday interactions, their language use did not receive the same comments from the class teacher. Surprisingly, I learned that language support in Polish was provided for these children by the school, while my son was not offered any.

These professional experiences and personal observations provoked me to ask the following questions which formed the starting points of this study: How and in what ways do young children translanguage? How does the context shape the ways translanguageing is mobilised, interpreted and, in turn, affects encounters? How does the use of translanguageing relate to Muslim identities? Moreover, how can I understand the use of these practices as they occur in the everyday context of the school? I used these questions to guide my search across different bodies of academic literature, which I will discuss in the next section.

1.3. Locating the thesis in the relevant bodies of academic literature

Attempting to answer the questions I raised in the previous section, I began looking at the existing literature on translanguageing and intersectional Muslim identities. The use of meaning-making elements from Arabic by Aminat and Amira, such as “*Muslimah*” and “*araby*”, as I pointed out at the beginning of this chapter and Hamad’s use of “*badoos*” are all examples of complex blended multilingual constructions that characterise communication in linguistically diverse communities (Busch, 2012). The co-existence of multiple languages in linguistically diverse communities has resulted in people flexibly blending different semiotic elements from multiple languages to make sense of their multilingual worlds (García, 2009a). This flexible use does not conform to conventional grammatical and lexical rules of named languages (Blommaert, 2013). It extends the previously held rigid views on language as bounded entities characterised by fixed linguistic conventions (Blommaert & Rampton, 2016). According to this understanding, multilingual practices are viewed as parts of flexible repertoires where the languages spoken by multilinguals are integrated within a single system (García & Kleyn, 2016).

The increased visibility of flexible repertoires, due to rapid mobility and globalisation, led to the emergence of a wide range of theoretical concepts such as flexible bilingualism (Creese & Blackledge, 2010), metrolingualism (Otsuji & Pennycook, 2010), code-meshing (Canagarajah, 2007, 2013) and translanguaging (García & Li, 2014). The rise of these concepts reflects the scholarly interest in examining the complexity and fluidity of the language practices used by multilinguals for meaning-making.

In this study, I use the concept of translanguaging (García & Li, 2014), which refers to the creative and flexible language practices of multilinguals they select from their repertoires for meaning-making and communication (Velasco & García, 2014). I consider using this concept highly pertinent to this thesis for the following reasons. Firstly, by extending the static view implied by using 'language' to embrace the concept of 'languaging', the use of translanguaging captures the dynamism and creativity of meaning-making practices of multilinguals in linguistically diverse settings (García & Wei, 2018). Secondly, the use of this concept suggests transcending the boundaries of "socially constructed language systems and structures" (Li, 2018, p. 26) implied by the prefix 'trans-'. In this way, translanguaging provides multilinguals with opportunities to engage various semiotic meaning-making resources and subjectivities (Li, 2018). As this flexible use continues, a 'translanguaging space' (Li, 2011b) emerges, offering a liminal social space for creativity and uniqueness (Li, 2018). By considering the affordances of translanguaging to transcend the fixed boundaries set by languages and their conventions of use, translanguaging has an illuminating potential to recognise how language practices operate to empower multilingual speakers and (re)produce inequitable social relations amongst them (Otheguy et al., 2015).

The moments from which this study germinated led me to be interested in examining young children's translanguaging in formal and informal activities across various spaces in the school setting. When I first explored the translanguaging literature at the start of my doctoral studies, I found a large volume of studies in this body of work primarily pedagogically oriented. These studies discuss the pedagogical uses of translanguaging in formal teaching events to promote language awareness, communication and performance amongst learners (for example Flores & García, 2013; García & Kano, 2014; Duarte, 2019; Meij et al., 2020; Yilmaz & de Jong, 2020). I found the discussions about the active and creative ways children interacted with their teachers and drew on their linguistic and cultural repertoires to make meaning useful to consider the possibility of children's active use of translanguaging for social positioning (Otheguy et al., 2015; Seltzer, 2017).

While many translanguaging studies have focused on teachers' actions to facilitate children's translanguaging, dynamic developments in this field have started to shine a light on children's translanguaging across different activities and spaces both stimulated by adults and beyond their gaze using different theoretical resources. I believe that this interest stems from García's (2009a) assertion that translanguaging is a system of meaning-making that children use to make sense of their worlds. Children's informal activities are one area that has received recent scholarly attention in the translanguaging literature. Some scholars have started to address questions of young children's agency in translanguaging by using resources from the sociology of childhood (for example Lourêiro & Neumann, 2020; Kirsch & Seele, 2020; Fashanu, 2021; Kirsch & Mortini, 2021). These studies offer enriching insights into the complex ways in which young children translanguage with each other during informal activities and spaces where teacher presence is limited. The study of Lourêiro and Neumann

(2020) is an example that highlights young children's agency in translanguaging in their everyday informal activities in an early childhood education setting. Lourêiro and Neumann argue that by their translanguaging, young preschool children maintain and challenge local classroom linguistic rules and language policies in the setting. They justify their focus on young children's translanguaging in informal play activities by arguing that children's agency manifests more in peer interactions. While I share with this recent work the interest to look at young children's translanguaging in different ways, I aim this study to dissolve this binary between the formal and informal by looking at young children's engagement with translanguaging in formal and informal activities across different spaces.

As questions of teaching, learning and educational outcomes dominate discussions on pedagogical translanguaging, I was interested in finding more about how young children engage with translanguaging formally and informally for purposes of social positioning. The relative absence of children, especially young ones, as active negotiators of identities using translanguaging was striking given their highlighted agency in pedagogical translanguaging studies. Children were shown to engage in active co-construction of meaning with their teachers (for example Bauer et al., 2017; Torpsten, 2017; Sanders-Smith & Dávila, 2019). This thesis builds on insights generated by the pedagogical translanguaging studies and recent studies on young children's informal translanguaging. I situate them within questions of identities, power and inequalities to examine how children mobilise translanguaging and power dynamics to negotiate unequal, intersectional Muslim identities.

When Hamad, the young child that I used to offer language support to in his American school, described the language skills of his older brother Malik as similar to that of "*badoos*", I had to think of different ways to conceptualise this use in relation to

identities. The translanguaging literature helped stimulate my thinking about translanguaging, power and the (re)production of unequal social relations.

In translanguaging theory, many discussions exist about the potential that translanguaging offers to translanguagers by questioning broader power relations. Theoretically, the concept of translanguaging emerged from a desire to recognise using learners' multilingual resources in the classroom, which were previously viewed negatively as a source of 'contamination' or denied altogether (Lewis et al., 2012). Recognising the act of translanguaging was seen to promote social justice by changing previously-held, negative attitudes about the use of multilingual practices in the classroom (García & Li, 2014). This recognition led to considering the linguistic resources translanguagers bring into the classroom as valuable and meaningful (Seltzer & García, 2020).

A large volume of empirical translanguaging studies has taken up this transformative potential. These studies examined how translanguaging is an act of social justice that leads to positive emancipatory effects such as opening spaces and identities for multilinguals. According to these studies, translanguaging is arguably viewed as a practice that flattens power relations, social, ideological and raciolinguistic hierarchies (García & Li, 2014). These effects range from recognising the meaning-making resources of multilinguals to offering them equal opportunities for participation and engagement (Seltzer & García, 2020) and improving the academic performance of multilingual school children (for example Mazak & Carroll, 2016; Johnson et al., 2019).

I did not consider Hamad's translanguaging by using "*badoos*" to his brother to produce a positive effect. I understood this word to invoke an embedded discourse of ethnic racism, which could create asymmetries in that particular situation. Hamad's

use of this instance of translanguaging is similar to how sociolinguistic research documented how children, including young ones, mobilise linguistic resources to negotiate identities and reproduce unequal social relations in their everyday interactions in school contexts (for example Rampton, 1995; Maybin, 2008; Karimzad & Catedral, 2018). At the start of my doctoral studies, limited work explored possible relations between translanguaging, identities, and inequalities. Given the proliferation of scholarly work in this field, recent developments in translanguaging research show that translanguaging is a complex social practice, not simply is an act of social justice but equally, one which can be used in the process of producing and reproducing unequal relations (E. Moore et al., 2020; Panagiotopoulou et al., 2020). García (2020, p. 21) acknowledges that as much as translanguaging is a transformative practice, it is equally “an instrument of oppression” used to reproduce inequalities by marginalising particular speakers. Recent translanguaging studies have highlighted how translanguaging interplays with language ideologies to produce and reproduce inequalities (P. Charalambous et al., 2016; Gynne, 2019; C. Charalambous et al., 2020). Strikingly, little is known in this work about how the translanguaging of young children in early years educational settings interplays with power dynamics to produce unequal relations.

The ways Aminat and Amira used translanguaging in their everyday interactions at the site of this study raise questions about the possible relations between translanguaging, power relations, ideological hierarchies and Muslim identities. Aminat’s exclusion from being the ‘good’ Muslim shows how translanguaging is actively used for identity negotiations which I found to be underexamined in the literature related to intersectional Muslim identities. In sociolinguistic and applied linguistic studies on children’s multilingual practices and religious identities, there is relatively limited work

exploring young children's mobilisations of translanguaging practices for the complex processes of exclusions and inclusions, especially in relation to Muslim identities.

The body of work on intersectional Muslim identities offers rich accounts of the multiplicity, complexity and relationality of Muslim identities by locating them in a broader context shaped by power structures and inequalities. This research gained momentum after the terrorist events of 9/11, which resulted in the generation of essentialising discourses about Muslims in western contexts (Mirza, 2013a). Focusing on adults, young people and children, many of these studies have highlighted how the intersectional dynamics of social categories such as race, gender and ethnicity dynamically shape Muslim identities, which in part sought to refute the essentialisation of Muslims in broader Islamophobic contexts (Siraj, 2011; Lynch, 2013; Hopkins, 2016; Soehl, 2018; Awan, 2018).

Sociolinguistic, applied linguistic and sociological research, which explores language and religion, examined children's active use of language amongst other resources and practices to construct and negotiate religious identities. This body of scholarly work emphasises how children, including young ones, are not only socialised into religion by adults but they engage with and make sense of religion in their everyday lives (for example Hemming & Madge, 2012; Lytra et al., 2016). This work foregrounds processes of religious identity construction and negotiations which entail complex interactions and navigations of social memberships, discursive and embodied practices, historical and moral narratives and linguistic repertoires (Gregory et al., 2013; Lytra et al., 2016; Souza, 2019).

A growing number of studies situated within this research explore children's use of Quranic Arabic as a liturgical language in relation to their religious identity construction

in a variety of contexts (for example García-Sánchez, 2016; Kenner et al., 2016; Rosowsky, 2017). I found that these studies brought the agency of Muslim children in using their language practices to the fore as they navigate discourses of racism which could be obscured by low expectations and assumptions about their educational attainment (for example, Moore, 2013; Kenner et al., 2016). Rosowsky (2017) argues that the active ways Muslim children use their linguistic repertoires to construct their religious identities are often invisible due to their perceived status as more prone to Islamist radicalisation than others. Exploring this literature further led me to see that the processes of negotiating religious identities and forging memberships through children's use of repertoires intersect with different identity dimensions in complex and contradictory ways (Owodally, 2016; Souza, 2016). As Lytra (2020) points out, these conflicts have been documented in a relatively small but emerging number of studies in this area of research. This is a burgeoning area of research that this thesis seeks to contribute to and extend by showcasing the tensions and contradictions involved in the processes of Muslim identity negotiations that the young reception children navigate.

To conclude, in this section, I have located this thesis in relation to the different areas of literature on translanguaging, intersectional Muslim identities and sociolinguistic research on religion and language. So far, I have argued that in translanguaging literature, there has been limited attention on how translanguaging is used by young children to produce unequal social relations that are especially related to Muslim identities. I have also argued that in studies on Muslim identities and those on language practices and religion, young children's use of multilingual practices for inclusions and exclusions to being a Muslim are relatively under-explored. Therefore, this study offers a timely exploration of how young reception children use and mobilise

relational translanguaging practices to produce and negotiate complex ways of being a Muslim in an English Islamic school setting.

1.4. Introducing the study

This thesis aims to add to the existing literature on translanguaging and Muslim identities by examining the interface of young Muslim children's translanguaging and intersectional Muslim identities in an Islamic school setting. It seeks to explore possible relations between translanguaging and spaces, power and local contextual meanings within the reception classroom to broader inequalities in the everyday world. It also aims to offer enriching insights about the particularity of translanguaging practices to the contexts in which they occur and their interplay with power and inequalities. This thesis seeks to provide a linguistic ethnographic account of young Muslim children's translanguaging across different classroom and school spaces in a London-based Islamic primary school considering the following research questions:

1. Do young children translanguage in their everyday classroom activities in the reception classroom? If so, how, when, where and with whom?
2. What are the implications of young children's translanguaging on the negotiations of unequal, intersectional Muslim identities?

To address these aims and questions, I use a linguistic ethnographic approach (Copland & Creese, 2015) to provide a detailed contextualised and socially-textured "thick description" (Geertz, 1973, p. 310) of the reception children's translanguaging. By choosing an Islamic primary school as a site for this study, this thesis seeks to examine the local meanings of young Muslim children's translanguaging in relation to different ways of being a Muslim. The location of Islamic primary schools within a broader Islamophobic context has continued to play a significant role in

decontextualising the young Muslim children's use of multiple languages in their everyday talk, especially that which uses elements from Arabic and English in school settings. Furthermore, the rise of Islamophobic sentiment has operated to portray an image of Islamic schools as isolated enclaves, negatively impacting children in popular, social and political discourses. Using a linguistic ethnographic approach, I seek to disrupt this fixed view of Islamic schools and the decontextualisation of Muslim children's translanguaging that Islamophobia causes. This methodological approach offers insights into the everyday processes that shape language encounters while detailing how language practices index and produce local and broader meanings (Creese, 2008; Wise & Noble, 2016).

Recent work on translanguaging has shown the potential, and the productivity of using resources from multiple disciplines to examine how translanguagers use translanguaging practices to (re)produce ideologies, identities, and spaces in their everyday activities (see for example edited collections by Mazzaferro, 2018; Moore et al., 2020). This work has generated insights into the complexity of translanguaging and its operations in the daily interactions of multilingual speakers. In this study, I follow the direction of these studies because I am interested in exploring young children's translanguaging in relation to questions of identities, power, and inequalities. Addressing the aims of this study required drawing on the use of different interdisciplinary resources from sociolinguistics, Bakhtinian thought and sociology.

Sociolinguistics is one of the informants of this study. I draw on theoretical and methodological insights from this scholarship to conceptualise and research translanguaging. Using a conceptualisation of translanguaging (García & Li, 2014) commonly used in sociolinguistics is important to understand translanguaging practices as fluid, meaning-making practices used by multilinguals in their everyday

activities. I also use the methodological approach of linguistic ethnography (Copland & Creese, 2015) to examine how the local and contextualised meanings of translanguaging practices relate to broader social relations and structures. To complexify my understanding of translanguaging, I use resources from Bakhtinian thought, namely that of heteroglossia (Bakhtin, 1981), which is based on the philosophy of Mikhail Bakhtin, to examine the complex stratification of ideological meanings associated with the different languages and languages varieties which form parts of children's repertoires.

As questions of identities, power and inequalities in this study are about how the local interactions of translanguagers relate to broader social relations, I draw on resources from sociology. I draw on intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1991) as a theoretical resource to augment my understanding of identities. I use this concept to examine how translanguaging is mobilised and power dynamics to produce and negotiate complex Muslim identities based on gender, generation, race, language and nationality.

1.5. Overview of thesis chapters

In this section, I provide an overview of the subsequent chapters of this thesis. Chapter 2 introduces young children's translanguaging and Muslim identities by reviewing the relevant areas of literature. The chapter outlines the key theoretical resources for this study, drawing on Bakhtinian heteroglossia, Massey's (2005) conceptualisation of space-time and power geometries, and ways of thinking about children and childhood advocated by the sociology of childhood and intersectionality. I discuss the potential of using these resources to inform understanding of young children's translanguaging as complex practices that interplay with different ideologies, meanings and power

relations across different social spaces. I also discuss how this understanding offers possibilities to consider using translanguaging for complex identity negotiations.

Chapter 3 explicates the linguistic ethnographic methodological approach, research design and the analytical framework I used in this study. It reintroduces the aims and research questions of this study to make a case for a linguistic ethnographic approach to research young children's translanguaging and intersectional Muslim identities. The chapter discusses the epistemological and ontological considerations on how to approach translanguaging. It also explains the ethical considerations and the power dynamics involved in fieldwork and interactions with research participants.

Exploring the context of the study is mapped into two chapters. Chapter 4 introduces the broader and local context of Westwood Primary⁴. The discussion in this chapter locates Westwood Primary within the broader context of English Islamic schools. While the increasing visibility of Islamic schools can be seen as a sign of social and religious diversity in the British context, these school sites do not occur in isolation from broader discourses of Islamophobia and racism. Within the policy context, Islamophobic discourses infuse educational policies and practices such as Prevent duty which purportedly targets Muslim children and considers them suspicious subjects prone to extremism and fundamentalism. Together, these contextual factors produce numerous ambivalences around promoting a Muslim identity while conforming to the requirements of British education and promoting school readiness. The chapter then introduces the local school context in which this study was conducted and the research participants.

⁴ A pseudonym which refers to the Islamic primary school in which this study was conducted.

Chapter 5 offers a detailed, contextualised account of the ideological context of this study. It presents an analytical exploration of the heteroglossic language ideological hierarchies in Elmer Class⁵ by examining the children's classroom interactions and translanguaging practices. The discussion shows that there are multiple competing language ideologies informing the translanguaging practices of the Elmer Class children. Particular ideologies associated with specific language varieties and languages tended to gain momentary hegemony in specific spaces and activities, thus creating heteroglossic language ideological hierarchies. Examining the linguistic ethnographic data led to identifying the following language ideologies promulgated by the interests and values of the interlocutors: (1) an ideology of standard English as the privileged language of schooling, (2) an ideology of Quranic Arabic as the language of religious practices and education, (3) an ideology of French as the language of social prestige, (4) an ideology of Urdu as a language of pride and racialised mockery and (5) an ideology of Somali as a source of meaning-making and deficiency.

Chapters 6 and 7 are organised according to the order of the two research questions of this study. Chapter 6 investigates how the Elmer Class children translanguaging across a range of activities and when, where and with whom these practices occur. This chapter argues for the multiplicity of translanguaging practices and translanguaging spaces formed in the context of language ideologies as they intersect with discourses and practices in different spaces. The chapter outlines the common forms of the reception children's translanguaging based on the salient forms identified in ethnographic observations and recorded interactions. By locating these translanguaging practices within specific space-time, the chapter describes the

⁵ A pseudonym used to refer to the reception classroom where the research took place.

multiple translanguaging spaces that create and are created by these translanguaging practices with a particular focus on the formal teaching space (carpet time), the play space, the lunch hall space and the liminal space of off-task talk. The discussion in this chapter seeks to contribute to the translanguaging literature by adding insights into the multiplicity of young children's translanguaging. It also contributes to this literature by elucidating Li's (2011a) concept of the 'translanguaging space' and offering an understanding of the 'translanguaging spaces' by paying attention to how activities, interlocutors, discourses as well as spatio-temporal factors create these spaces.

Chapter 7 examines how the Elmer Class children mobilise translanguaging, which draws on the different varieties of Arabic, namely Quranic Arabic and Moroccan Arabic, to negotiate intersectional Muslim identities. The chapter examines the centrality of translanguaging, creating imagined forms of idealised Muslimness in Westwood Primary based on the social categories of gender and generation. As the discussion shows, translanguaging becomes one of the core ways to verbalise power relations interlinked with these idealised forms of Muslimness to include, exclude and police Muslimness based on race, gender, and generation. The chapter also directs the attention to the complex implications of translanguaging practices, which produce an effect of asserting a collective Muslim identity in a broader Islamophobic context while simultaneously reproducing wider social inequalities by inclusions and exclusions to being the 'good' Muslim. The discussion presented in this chapter seeks to contribute to the translanguaging literature and the identity negotiation literature through the following: First, the chapter aims to advance the concept of translanguaging as an everyday social practice that is entangled within power relations in complex ways not only operating to empower individuals but also to reproduce

inequalities. Second, the chapter highlights that translanguaging plays a significant role in articulating the heterogeneity of Muslimness by showing how it intersects with other identity markers. Finally, this chapter seeks to add a new focus on applying an analytical approach to examine how other identity markers intersect with Muslimness by using an intersectional analysis.

Chapter 8 draws together the arguments I made in the preceding chapters by highlighting the active translanguaging of young children and its role as a meaning-making and world-making practice in creating heterogenous translanguaging spaces. The chapter discusses the contributions this study makes to the academic discussions of translanguaging and intersectionality. The chapter concludes by suggesting recommendations for teachers, school leaders, families and Muslim community leaders. It also offers possible suggestions for future research on young children's translanguaging.

To conclude, this chapter introduced this thesis, presented its rationale and located it within the relevant areas of literature. The next chapter will introduce the conceptual resources that I draw on to inform the understanding of young children's translanguaging and intersectional Muslim identities and the conceptual framework of this thesis.

CHAPTER 2: Young children's translanguaging and intersectional Muslim identities: a literature review

2.1. Introduction

The preceding chapter introduced the starting points of this thesis, its location within the academic literature and its focus. This chapter reviews the relevant literature that constitutes its underpinning directions. It outlines the key theoretical resources I draw on, which offer helpful ways in thinking about the concepts of translanguaging and Muslim identities that are central to this thesis.

In this study, I am interested in examining whether young reception Muslim children initiate translanguaging with each other in their informal classroom activities, how, when, where and with whom they do so. I also aim to examine the potential ways they might use translanguaging to negotiate and imagine intersectional Muslim identities. I use a conceptual framework drawing on Bakhtinian heteroglossia, intersectionality, and the social studies of childhood to provide a theoretical framework suitable for exploring young children's translanguaging in their everyday activities. My use of everyday to describe the translanguaging of young children within the reception classroom in this thesis stems from the focus of sociology on exploring the local meanings generated by daily routines and everyday practices in their social lives (Adler et al., 1987; Neal & Murji, 2015). I use the concept of translanguaging to shed light on the complex communicative and meaning-making practices inherent in linguistically diverse communities in metropolises such as London. I demonstrate that using Bakhtin's notion of heteroglossia (Bakhtin, 1981) to inform translanguaging highlights the stratification of meanings and contradictions produced by post 9/11

Islamophobic and anti-Muslim discourses, which implicitly underpin institutional policies and school inspection practices. Equally, I discuss how Massey's conceptualisations of space-time and power geometry offer new ways of understanding the heterogeneity of 'translanguaging spaces' by integrating space, time, activities, interlocutors and power relations to expand the metaphorical 'translanguaging space' (Li, 2011b). Drawing on the active ways young preschool children engage in pedagogical translanguaging, which are documented in the translanguaging literature, I use ways of thinking about children and childhood that are informed by the social studies of childhood to explore synergies that enable thinking about young children as active users of translanguaging in complex and relational ways. Since this study sets to research the interface between translanguaging and Muslim identity negotiations and imaginations, I draw on intersectionality to highlight the complexity of young children's Muslim identities and their location within a broader context of inequalities, Islamophobic discourses and policies suspicious of practices related to Islam, including the use of Arabic. I argue that using an intersectional approach that foregrounds generational analysis enables thinking about the active engagement of young children and how their translanguaging is laden with unequal power relations. Bringing together these theoretical resources helps to consider young Muslim children featured in this study as active translanguagers capable of using translanguaging to imagine and negotiate complex and intersecting idealised forms of being the 'good' Muslim within the reception classroom.

This discussion in this chapter consists of two main sections. First, I begin by discussing the concept of translanguaging. I outline the theoretical resources I draw on to offer an understanding of translanguaging practices, translanguaging spaces and young children as actively translanguaging across multiple school spaces, using

empirical evidence to support this use. Second, I discuss the conceptualisation of identities that I use throughout this thesis. I argue for using intersectionality as a theoretical resource to highlight the complex ways in which translanguaging, along with other sets of practices, can be used to imagine and negotiate intersecting Muslim identities. Furthermore, I argue for the need for an intersectional approach that incorporates generation as a social category that intersects with others. Finally, I conclude the chapter by indicating the implications of this discussion for the conceptual framework of this thesis.

2.2. Translanguaging

In this section, I provide a detailed exploration of the concept of translanguaging (García & Li, 2014; Li, 2018), which refers to the meaning-making practices that use various semiotic elements from multiple languages for communication and identity negotiations. In this thesis, I advocate a conceptualisation of young children's translanguaging as complex semiotic meaning-making practices that both shape and are shaped by broader meanings, ideologies, and social spaces. Considering the complexity of translanguaging practices and translanguaging spaces enriches the understanding of the implications of these practices not only to assert particular identities but to reproduce broader inequitable relations. While the development of translanguaging reflects an exciting period in language theorisations and taking into account its affordances to examine creative semiotic meaning-making practices of multilinguals, I point to the necessity of drawing on further conceptual resources. I suggest using a bricolage of conceptual resources which primarily draws on Bakhtin's theorisation of heteroglossia (Bakhtin, 1981), Massey's notions of space-time and power geometries (Massey, 2005), and ways of thinking about young children in the

social studies of childhood. Using these theoretical resources forms a conceptual framework that aims to conceptualise young children's translanguaging across different activities and spaces within a school setting. Additionally, the use of these resources aims to provide an understanding of the social implications of these practices and how they produce translanguaging spaces.

2.2.1. The rise of translanguaging

Interactions between people in linguistically diverse social contexts transcend the conventional boundaries of language to flexible meaning-making by drawing on many semiotic resources from multiple languages (Creese & Blackledge, 2015). These flexible semiotic practices have received much scholarly attention in sociolinguistic research which led to the rise of many theoretical concepts such as crossing (Rampton, 1995), dynamic bilingualism (García, 2009a), metrolingualism (Otsuji & Pennycook, 2010), codemeshing (Canagarajah, 2007), and translanguaging (García & Li, 2014). The rise of these concepts reflects significant changes in thinking about language and multilingualism. Significantly, the impetus for these changes in language theorisations lies in how the conditions of rapid mobility, linguistic change, and critiques of structuralism questioned the monolithic existence of languages as bounded entities (MacSwan, 2017). These concepts are commonly underpinned by the notion of the repertoire, which refers to the integrated system of broader ranges of linguistic and semiotic resources that multilingual speakers draw on. Based on the work of Gumperz (1964), the notion of the repertoire posits that interlocutors interact with different people differently. They make various choices that involve moving between different languages and dialects regardless of grammatical correctness, thus forming a 'verbal whole' or a repertoire. Gumperz argued for the presence of

commonly agreed social and grammatical conventions to ensure intelligibility despite asserting their constantly changing nature. Consequently, this contradiction prompted language research to extend the repertoire further to capture the dynamism and richness of multilingual practices as they occur in linguistically diverse communities, especially under the conditions of rapid mobility, globalisation and transnationalism (Busch, 2012, p. 3). The repertoire pushed for considering flexible and creative practices used by multilinguals beyond the constraints of “socially invented” or socially constructed languages associated with particular nation-states (García & Kleyn, 2016).

A rapid increase in theoretical concepts followed reconceptualising the notion of the repertoire. These concepts arguably sought to capture the fluidity of the semiotic meaning-making practices of multilinguals (Creese & Blackledge, 2010, 2015). Notably, these concepts share the aim to demonstrate how multilinguals in linguistically diverse settings draw on flexible repertoires by shuttling between multiple languages or creatively blending truncated utterances from different languages. A notable example of these concepts can be drawn from Rampton’s (1995) work on the concept of language crossing. In his study on youth’s language practices in an English multi-ethnic school, Rampton documents how a group of African-Caribbean and English youth used Panjabi and stylised Indian English in their everyday talk to express a sense of mixed ethnic and classed identities to resist racial stratification.

Similarly, Otsuji and Pennycook’s (2010) concept of metrolingualism is another notable example. Otsuji and Pennycook coined this concept to move beyond the simplicity implied by multilingualism to the fluidity ‘languages’ by which urban interlocuters “undo, queer and reconstitute their linguistic practices” to reject cultural

and ethnic essentialism (Otsuji & Pennycook, 2010, p. 424). While the concepts of crossing and metrolingualism appear to share similar interests in language practices, they differ significantly in their focus. Contrary to crossing, which examines the meanings embedded in the act of shifting from one linguistic variety to another, metrolingualism focuses on analysing and describing the flexibility of “everyday language practices” in urban centres as they emerge in interaction (Pennycook, 2017, p. 206). Moreover, the concept was criticised for using the prefix ‘metro-’ which has been contested for implying urban connotation limiting its use. Further, some language scholars argued that this concept did not sufficiently detail how the fluid practices used by multilinguals differ either in form or function (Jaspers & Madsen, 2019) and for focusing mainly on practices that are in a “state of construction and disarray in urban contexts” (García & Li, 2014).

Similarly, other concepts such as ‘bilingualism’, ‘multilingualism’ and ‘plurilingualism’ faced similar critiques for suggesting a priori assumptions about the separation of the meaning-making practices used by multilinguals from broader meanings, ideologies, and discourses (Blommaert, 2014). García and Li (2014) warned of the insufficiency of these concepts to address “the concept of language itself nor the power dynamics involved in these constructions” (García & Li, 2014, p. 38). These concepts disregard the complexity of these practices, which risks adopting a view akin to the contentious and highly critiqued notion of code-switching (Jaspers, 2018). Furthermore, these concepts received much criticism for their dismissal of the multimodality of language by primarily focusing on the linguistic aspects of language (Canagarajah, 2013). While I do not intend to provide an exhaustive review of the concepts coined to examine the language practices of multilinguals in this section, it is clear that these concepts overlap in their consideration of contemporary multilingual realities. However, it is

worth pointing out that these concepts have been met with varying contestations about their purposes. The tendency of these concepts to highlight the multiplicity of language practices has been highly debated (Auer, 2019). Blommaert (2014) argues that viewing the fluid meaning-making practices of multilinguals through the lens of multiplicity leads to disregarding the complexity of these practices. Nevertheless, the proliferation of these concepts signifies intensified scholarly responses seeking to capture the dynamism of multilingual practices in linguistically diverse settings. Most importantly, this growth has been a driving force for the emergence of new concepts, namely translanguaging, which have the capability “to cover adequately what we observe” regarding the complexity of the meaning-making practices of multilinguals in contemporary multilingual realities (Blommaert, 2013, p. 615).

The emergence of translanguaging was prompted by the necessity for a new concept that seeks to capture the dynamism and complexity of multilingual meaning-making practices as integrated repertoires rather than as separate language systems (Otheguy et al., 2015). Its emergence stemmed from inherent restrictions implied by antecedent concepts such as ‘bilingualism’ and ‘multilingualism’ which mainly stress the multiplicity of languages. Such concepts implied meanings about these meaning-making practices from separate language systems. By contrast, translanguaging considers the practices of multilingual speakers as features they select from an integrated system (García & Li, 2014). Additionally, the potential of translanguaging to explore the complexities of relations between linguistic diversity and inequalities due to its orientation towards social justice contributes to considering it as a suitable theoretical concept for this thesis (Flores & García, 2013). Together, these features make translanguaging a well-suited theoretical concept to explore young Muslim children’s meaning-making practices in this study. In the following section, I explain

the conceptualisation of translanguaging practices that I draw on in this thesis by using translanguaging theory.

2.2.2. Translanguaging practices

Translanguaging is a psycholinguistic and sociolinguistic theory that offers enriching insights into the flexible and complex meaning-making practices multilinguals use by drawing on elements from multiple languages (Kleyn & García, 2019). Translanguaging emerged as a development of the preliminary work of Cen Williams (1994) on a teaching approach in Welsh revitalisation programs. Williams originally used the Welsh word “*trawsieithu*” to refer to the pedagogical practices employed in Welsh bilingual classrooms where input was in one language and output was in another (Li & Zhu, 2013). According to this initial conceptualisation, the primary purpose of translanguaging was leveraging scholastic performance in both languages in that particular context (García & Li, 2014).

Translanguaging theory posits that multilingual speakers possess an integrated repertoire, an integrated system consisting of many semiotic features from the multiple languages they speak (Velasco & García, 2014). A dominant conceptualisation in the translanguaging literature considers translanguaging as a pedagogical practice used for teaching and learning purposes (Otheguy et al., 2015; Cenoz, 2019). In this thesis, I draw on a different conceptualisation of translanguaging as an everyday practice that occurs as a part of young children’s daily routines and activities within the school context (Martínez et al., 2015; Mazzaferro, 2018). As a practice, translanguaging refers to the dynamic processes of deploying elements from this integrated repertoire of multilinguals, thus moving beyond the conventional boundaries of languages to

make meaning and communicate (García & Li, 2014). Hence, translanguaging in this sense refers to children's use of their idiolect without regarding the conventional use of language (Otheguy et al., 2019).

Preliminary developments of translanguaging theory have emphasised differences between translanguaging practices and code-switching. Scholars asserted that translanguaging is not a practice whereby multilingual speakers merely shuttle between different languages (Vogel & García, 2017). There are two fundamental, distinguishing elements in the concept of translanguaging. Firstly, the use of 'linguaging' in this concept indicates that translanguaging is an ongoing activity understood as the 'doing' of language (Dahlberg & Bagga-Gupta, 2014) rather than a 'symbolic object' (Bourdieu, 1991) implied by language. The emphasis on linguaging is based on Maturana and Varela's (1980) work which argues that it is a continual process of producing meanings as interactions unfold (Lewis et al., 2012). In this sense, language is not simply something that someone has, but it is a practice that speakers constantly engage in (Daniel & Pacheco, 2016). Secondly, the transcending element, suggested by using the prefix 'trans-' in translanguaging, indicates how multilingual speakers use their entire semiotic repertoire to move beyond the conventional boundaries of named languages (García & Li, 2014). Elucidating the use of 'trans-', Li (2018) argues that using this prefix offers helpful ways to think about translanguaging as providing answers to important theoretical questions in language theorisations. He argues that 'trans-' not only captures the fluidity of linguaging practices but it demonstrates the ability of multilinguals to think about language in integrated ways rather than in compartmentalised, monolingual ways. In addition, the use of this prefix indicates transcending the linguistic aspects of language to include multimodal resources of meaning-making such as gesture, gaze and bodily

movements (Li & Ho, 2018). These two elements that distinguish translanguaging extend canonised conventions of named languages and additive tones implied by other concepts (Jaspers, 2018).

In a highly cited text on translanguaging theory, García and Li (2014) elucidate translanguaging and establish its uniqueness from similar concepts by arguing that it is:

“... a transdisciplinary lens that combines sociolinguistic and psycholinguistic perspectives to study the complex multimodal practices of multilingual interactions as social and cognitive acts able to transform not only semiotic systems and speaker subjectivities but also socio-political structures. Translanguaging works by generating trans-systems of semiosis and creating trans-spaces where new language practices, meaning-making, multimodal practices, subjectivities and social structures are dynamically generated in response to the complex interactions of the 21st century.” (2014, pp. 44–43)

In light of this definition, translanguaging differs from other descriptors used in language research for its transformation. Many conceptual discussions on translanguaging arguably distinguish this concept from similar neologisms by its commitment to promoting social justice. These discussions often refer to the transformative potential of translanguaging, which arose from recognising, legitimising, and valuing multilingual practices in educational settings to make meaning (Lewis et al., 2012b). This transformative potential equips multilinguals with capabilities to question implicit power relations associated with particular standard varieties (Vogel & García, 2017). According to this view, translanguaging is an act of social justice that not only can be used to promote social justice but to open up spaces and identities for multilinguals

In general terms, the notion of transformation of translanguaging is based on Scollon and Scollon's (2004) work on resemiotization, which discusses the possibility of redesigning actions with new and dynamic meanings (Li, 2011b). In translanguaging theory, resemiotization underpins the features of creativity and criticality, which characterise the transformative potential of translanguaging (Li, 2011b). Creativity refers to flouting conventional linguistic rules and crossing the boundaries of named languages to develop new forms, while criticality refers to how these forms can challenge and question prevailing social and linguistic norms (García & Li, 2014). Additionally, the notion of transformation in translanguaging mainly draws influence from the work of Ofelia García, which she bases on Mignolo's (2000) concept of languaging, which views transformation as a social and a political process key for instigating political action.

Many empirical studies have taken up the transformative potential of translanguaging by highlighting its positive and transformative effects. Some of these studies described how translanguaging challenges dominant language ideological hierarchies or releases positive subjectivities (E. Moore et al., 2020; Vallejo & Dooly, 2020). However, recent debates and developments in the translanguaging literature show that translanguaging can be implicated within power relations to produce inequalities and asymmetries (García, 2020).

As translanguaging became a well-researched concept in applied linguistic and sociolinguistic research, it has been employed in various ways: as a social practice, pedagogy or a theoretical approach (Creese & Blackledge, 2010; Flores & García, 2013). This use has instigated debates about the positive narrative about the transformative effects of translanguaging in many studies as responses to the

continuous redevelopments of elucidating the concept (Li, 2018). Some translanguaging scholars raised concerns about depicting translanguaging as a linguistic practice separated from ambivalences inherent in linguistically diverse settings (Creese et al., 2014). Block (2018) argues that the transformative potential of translanguaging does not necessarily lead to positive results or actions. He warns that the positive narrative of the effects of translanguaging could obfuscate how unequal power relations and broader social structures might impact the use of translanguaging. Jaspers (2018) contends that the translanguaging literature is rampant with claims about the transformative effects of translanguaging. He states that this presentation appears to overload translanguaging with much affirmative action, which he argues to be possibly influenced by Rousseauian ideas about education, where schools are viewed as sites of transformation and individual capability for action.

Recent work on translanguaging has started to highlight the complexities of using and employing translanguaging in educational settings due to contextual and ideological factors (for example Moore et al., 2020; Panagiotopoulou et al., 2020; Li & Lin, 2019). García (2020) argues that translanguaging might not achieve its transformative potential in specific spaces and contexts and could operate as a tool oppressing particular multilingual speakers. García observes that while employing a translanguaging pedagogy has been documented in the relevant literature as promoting inclusion and social justice, in other contexts, it played a significant role in silencing, minoritising and racialising multilingual speakers from particular linguistic and social backgrounds.

In order to understand how translanguaging operates as an act of racialisation in educational settings, raciolinguistics offers a helpful resource for exploring the

interplay of 'race', language and power relations in positioning some multilingual speakers from particular language and racial backgrounds as 'deficient' (for example Seltzer, 2017; Alim et al., 2016; Flores & Rosa, 2015). Bringing a raciolinguistic lens to translanguaging helps to interrogate how language ideologies of standardisation interact with assessments of the language use of particular individuals to invoke ideas about the (in)competence and linguistic deficiency of an entire racialised group (Rosa, 2016). Flores and Rosa (2015) argue that the deficiency of racialised groups is based on 'discourses of appropriateness' which view particular language varieties, especially standardised varieties, as the preferred mode of communication in a specific setting. Flores and Rosa (2015) further argue that broader racial ideologies become mapped onto language, creating raciolinguistic ideologies. They contend that these ideologies reinforce the linguistic 'inappropriateness' of racialised speakers even if they engage in language practices that would be described as 'normative' or 'innovative' by privileged white speakers. These raciolinguistic ideologies perpetuate the stigmatisation and deficiency of the language practices of racialised multilinguals which are reinforced and amplified by each other. These ideologies place more focus on "how these speakers are heard that leads to their stigmatization" (Seltzer, 2017, p. 91) which is primarily based on deficit framings and assumptions.

Recent work on translanguaging has started to shine a light on how translanguaging becomes a tool of racialisation by propagating raciolinguistic ideologies. Presiado and Frieson's (2021) study demonstrates how teachers' promotion of translanguaging, which emphasised standard varieties of English and Spanish in a dual language bilingual education classroom, was understood to racialise a group of African American girls. Despite the classroom being designated as a permissive space for translanguaging, the translanguaging of these girls which utilised elements of African

American English and Spanish was racialised as deficient. Presiado and Frieson argue that promoting this form of translanguaging which placed importance on standard varieties of English and Spanish led to its recognition pedagogically and informally. This promotion excluded these girls by marginalising their literacies and multilingual practices in spaces that supposedly promote flexible translanguaging practices. The study of Presiado and Frieson echoes the point raised by García (2020), discussed earlier, about the ways in which translanguaging comes to be treated as a tool of oppression by some teachers through recognising particular varieties. This recognition is understood to marginalise specific children which maps onto and amplifies racism. Presiado and Frieson's study offers useful insights into the ways in which translanguaging interplays with raciolinguistic ideologies to exclude racialised children by marginalising their creative practices and literacies. This study builds on this work, yet it seeks to show how young children themselves use translanguaging, amongst other practices, for purposes of inclusion, exclusion and racialisation as informed by raciolinguistic ideologies.

Presiado and Freison's study corresponds to insights from emerging ethnographic work on translanguaging (Giampieri, 2017; Huang, 2018; Poza, 2019a), which examined how translanguaging produces negative, racialising effects, unequal relations and exclusions. An example of these studies can be drawn from the study of Charalambous, Charalambous, Zembylas and Theodorou (2020), which was conducted in multiple Greek-Cypriot schools. Charalambous and colleagues argue that using Turkish in translanguaging interplays with historical meanings associated with conflict and insecurity and an ideology of Turkish as the language of the 'enemy'. They found that the use of translanguaging in that particular context results in the silencing of Turkish speaking children. Similarly, Knappik, Peschel, Hagi-Mead, Ayten

and Atanasoska (2020) point out that translanguaging in a German multilingual classroom produced adversary effects where learners of German became positioned relatively higher in a local language hierarchy based on immigratory status and negative assumptions about multilingualism.

Building on insights brought forward by these studies, translanguaging is not simply an act of social justice that opens up new spaces and positive identities for multilingual speakers based on recognising their meaning-making resources. It is equally involved in producing and reproducing inequalities and racialisation. Therefore, I build my study on this recent work on translanguaging and raciolinguistics to explore how young children use translanguaging to produce unequal relations by excluding particular children from being the 'good' Muslim.

Addressing these concerns and contestations about translanguaging practices, Blackledge and Creese (2014) called for employing Mikhail Bakhtin's notion of heteroglossia to examine how these practices include and produce social, historical, political and ideological meanings which are particular to specific contexts in the everyday. Following Blackledge and Creese (2014), I consider Bakhtinian heteroglossia a useful theoretical resource for this study because it enables a thorough understanding of how young children's translanguaging might operate in their informal interactions within the classroom. Since this study took place in the British capital London, I should note that its linguistic diversity should not be viewed as merely including a multiplicity of languages 'co-existing' together (Busch, 2014). This metropolitan context is rife with ambivalences around language. While some people welcome multilingualism in this city as a context that celebrates diversity, English as a Majority is prioritised politically, institutionally, and discursively, leading to

hierarchising languages. These ambivalences are exacerbated by the social, political and institutional consequences post 9/11 and post 7/7/2005, which spawned contradictions within the space of English Islamic primary schools. In the following subsection, I draw on Bakhtinian heteroglossia to enable the view of translanguaging as existing within tension-filled spaces characterised by stratified voices, meanings, and language ideologies (re)constructed at certain times and particular conditions.

2.2.3. A Bakhtinian heteroglossic lens to translanguaging

The Russian literary theorist Mikhail Bakhtin (Bakhtin, 1981) used the notion of heteroglossia to reference how multiple competing forces of voices, dialects, language varieties and contextual semiosis operate within tension-ridden spaces to stratify language in complex ways. This complex stratification centres on the socio-ideological aspects of language practices and layered voices achieved in social interactions in particular contexts (Vice, 1997; Madsen, 2014). Based on this definition, indexicality and tension-filled spaces and interactions are two distinguishing features of heteroglossia crucial to understanding translanguaging practices in this study.

Explicating heteroglossia, Bakhtin (1981) posited that language is a living process that emerges and evolves from the interactions of specific speakers in a particular context (B. Francis, 2012). He countered fixed structuralist views that considered language as a set of rigid rules. Bakhtin argued that indexicality is an inherent feature of a heteroglossic view of languages. He explained that language represents or 'indexes' "specific points of view on the world, forms for conceptualising the world in words, specific world views, each characterised by its own objects, meanings and values" (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 91). In this sense, indexicality reflects the stratification of languages,

showing a social and ideological differentiation of languages in societies (Blackledge & Creese, 2014).

One of the main concepts which underpin Bakhtinian heteroglossia is language stratification which links language varieties to social relations and discourses (Huang, 2021). According to Lähteenmäki (2010), in this concept, Bakhtin was primarily concerned with the social rather than the linguistic nature of language stratification into different dialects and language varieties. Bakhtin (1981) argued that “language is stratified not only into linguistic dialects in the strictest sense of the word but also—and for us this is the essential point—into languages that are socio-ideological: languages of social groups, ‘professional’ and ‘generic’ languages, languages of generations and so forth” (Bakhtin 1981, p. 271). In light of this, stratification refers to the internally hierarchical differentiation of language into different socio-ideological varieties with differential value, status and indexical ideological associations (Blackledge & Creese, 2014).

According to Bakhtin (1981), language thus cannot be viewed as a neutral medium that reflects static meanings of reality (Holquist, 2002, p. 69). Bakhtin drew an example to illustrate that an utterance is not only what is said by using the simple word “well” in a conversation between two people. He asserted that even if we try to unpack the phonological, morphological and semantic features of this utterance, our understanding of what it means remains constrained. This lack of understanding is because we do not know the “extraverbal context” of this utterance, which consists of space and common knowledge amongst interlocutors (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 99). This exemplar highlights the critical relationship between social contexts and meanings, where contexts mediate the relationship between interlocutors and the world, leading

to an 'unending' chain of meanings produced and reworked through social interactions.

Blackledge and Creese (2014) contend that heteroglossia indicates the co-existence of competing ideologies, whether in a single language, different language varieties, or complex multilingual practices such as translanguaging. In this thesis, I use heteroglossia as a theoretical resource to explicate the tension-filled relations between the ideological meanings associated with different languages and language varieties that underpin translanguaging. Recognising the children's translanguaging practices in these ways aligns with Bakhtin's principle of stratification (Bakhtin, 1981).

As I shall explain in detail in Chapter 5, which examines the heteroglossic language ideologies in the site of this study, the local interactions of reception children in Elmer Class indicate and produce tensions between 'good' standard English and informal English on the one hand and between Quranic Arabic and vernacular Moroccan Arabic.

The study of Gynne (2019), which was conducted in a Swedish high school, is helpful to understand how heteroglossic language ideologies underpin the use of translanguaging practices. Gynne highlights that while Swedish education policies permit translanguaging for pedagogical purposes to enable meaning-making for 'newly-arrived students, it was restricted to using elements of English and Swedish only. Ideologies about specific languages such as Arabic, Dari and Somali as the languages of 'non-Swedish' immigrants restricted translanguaging using these languages. Similarly, the study by Charalambous, Charalambous and Zembylas (2016) demonstrates that translanguaging using Turkish produces negative historical

indexicalities and an ideology of Turkish as the language of the ‘enemy’ in the context of a multilingual Cypriot school. They show how during classroom interactions, Turkish speaking children avoided incorporating Turkish in their translanguaging since they did not want to express a sense of ‘being Turkish’ amongst their peers, who are mainly Greek-Cypriots. I find these studies helpful in showing how heteroglossic language ideologies circulating in these classrooms are deeply connected with translanguaging practices. While these studies are primarily concerned with examining the impact of these heteroglossic ideologies on either using or restricting translanguaging, I am interested in examining how the use of particular forms of translanguaging is related to specific language ideologies about some language varieties in the site of this study and how the use of translanguaging creates these language ideologies.

Central to a heteroglossic understanding of language is the state of struggle which characterises interactions: “the word encounters an alien word and cannot help encountering it in a living, tension-filled interaction” (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 279). In writing about the singularity of canonical language, Bakhtin described this tension in heteroglossia using a trope of a constant push and pull between centripetal and centrifugal forces. The ‘centripetal’ represents the pull towards the centre of the ‘unitary’ standard language, whereas the ‘centrifugal’ represents the direction towards disunification or decentralisation. Centripetal forces represent monoglossia which refers to dominant standard and official language forms, which reflect the interests of dominant social groups. By contrast, centrifugal forces constitute heteroglossia which refers to the resistance and challenge of dominant and privileged forms of language. Monoglossia, as Pietikäinen and Dufva (2014) argue, refers to the pressure toward normativity that constitutes a fundamental part of language use that does not necessarily have to be viewed as an oppressive force. Rosen (2015) states that

Bakhtin asserted the importance of monoglossia to ensure a degree of mutual intelligibility to make communication possible.

In this study, I integrate the concept of Bakhtinian heteroglossia with that of dialogism, another theoretical concept used by Bakhtin (1981). I justify this integration based on Bakhtin's assertion that language is heteroglossic and dialogic (Francis, 2012). Originally, Bakhtin used the concept of dialogism in relation to language use in literary genres and popular speech to recognise the multiplicity of voices and ideologies. By writing about dialogised heteroglossia in multiple locations, Bakhtin viewed the processes of heteroglossic interactions between centripetal and centrifugal forces as 'dialogised' since they are rarely free of each other and in a state of simultaneous interaction. According to this view, these forces cannot be seen to act dichotomously in a dual manner. Bakhtin considered dialogism an inherent feature of language where language practices, discourses, and ideologies are dynamic and constant interaction and struggle (Huang, 2021). Holquist (2002) explains that simultaneity is the underpinning principle of dialogism, which represents the view of existence as a shared event of being, that is constantly unfolding. I should note, however, that dialogism does not only suggest the presence of multiple languages or ideologies, but it also indicates a state of "struggle among the sociolinguistic views of language" (Vice, 1997, p. 56). Most importantly, Bakhtin maintains that the interaction between the centripetal and the centrifugal forces coincides. This interaction is contingent upon specific socio-political and historical circumstances, which could lead language in interaction to have new meanings open to new interpretations and the creation of new spaces.

Dialogised heteroglossia helps consider the simultaneous interactions between social, political, and ideological meanings that could shape and be produced by translanguaging practices. I find this notion productive in expanding the understanding of the transformative effects of translanguaging and translanguaging spaces. In relation to the transformation of translanguaging, I find Bakhtinian heteroglossia useful to offer a richer understanding of these effects rather than presenting them in the form of positive change. This understanding would help contribute to knowledge by adding to the complexities and tensions of using translanguaging across contexts as emancipatory yet producing inequalities (see Panagiotopoulou et al., 2020).

According to García and Li (2014), the transformative implications of translanguaging are vital features that distinguish this concept from similar concepts that examine multilingual practices. Transformation in the current theorisation of translanguaging is linked to change as a desired effect and as a matter of social justice (Jaspers, 2018). Recent work in translanguaging shines a light on how translanguaging might not be as transformative as many studies have previously demonstrated. The study by Kuhn and Neumann (2020) in a Swiss early childhood classroom is one prominent example. Kuhn and Neumann argue that translanguaging has dual effects and is influenced by two conflicting language ideologies in their study: an ideology of Swiss-German as the privileged language of schooling/communication and an ideology of French as a language of secondary status. They substantiate their argument by showing how the ideological preferences of teachers in the classroom primarily permit translanguaging, which draws on English and German only. Significantly, Kuhn and Neumann conclude that while translanguaging provides young children with opportunities for meaning-making, it contributes significantly to reproducing broader inequalities. I find this study illuminating because it highlights the potential of translanguaging to contribute to

perpetuating inequalities. I propose that integrating the concept of dialogised heteroglossia is important for this study to understand the implications of translanguaging beyond the dialectic of 'either/or'. This integration would help understand how translanguaging operates within an ambivalent context, such as the Islamic primary school where this study is located.

I argue that using Bakhtinian heteroglossia as a theoretical resource for this study is productive because it recognises that using elements from multiple languages is not done randomly, nor is it devoid of meanings particular to their context. Employing a heteroglossic lens enables recognising meanings and ideological references embedded within the use of a specific language or a particular language variety in translanguaging. Heteroglossia enables us to see how translanguaging is mediated by and is a part of producing language ideologies and specific group affiliations, possibly impacting its effects in complex ways. Using heteroglossia in translanguaging is helpful to extend the current understanding of the 'translanguaging space', which can be integrated with Massey's notions of space-time and power-geometries into 'translanguaging spaces'.

2.2.4. Towards 'translanguaging spaces': considering Massey's conceptualisation of space-time and power-geometries

Linguistic diversity in contemporary societies led to a significant increase in spaces where individuals interact with others from different social, cultural, religious and linguistic backgrounds. These interactions, which characterise multilingual realities, inspired the notion of the 'translanguaging space' (Li, 2011b) as a space that challenges social, historical norms and hierarchies by using translanguaging

practices. Li (2011b) proposed the 'translanguaging space' to highlight the dynamic and reciprocal interrelationship between translanguaging practices shaping and being shaped by social space. Li argues that the translanguaging space becomes the space for multilinguals to bring together their meaning-making practices to offer a "sense of connectedness" (Li, 2011b, p.1222). Li further explains that the translanguaging space emphasises uniqueness and cooperation where multilinguals bring together multiple histories, experiences, ideologies and beliefs into meaningfully coordinated performances (Li, 2011b, p.1223).

The 'translanguaging space' draws its theoretical influence from Homi Bhabha's (1994) post-colonial notion of the third space. Bhabha argues that cultures are mainly socially constructed and "constituted in relation to that otherness internal to their own symbol-forming activity" (Bhabha, 1994, p.210). According to Bhabha's understanding, cultures are in a constant process of 'translation', where continually unfolding processes lead to reinscribing identities and creating hybridity (1994, p.211). Bhabha elaborates further that this hybridity creates the 'third space' leading to new meanings that can "be appropriated, translated, rehistoricized, and read anew" (Bhabha, 1994, p.55). Bhabha's incorporation of hybridity in the third space notion has been met with criticisms. One of these criticisms is pointed out by Jaspers (2018), who argues that the use of hybridity in this theoretical concept suggests a reproduction of 'purer' cultures and places based on essentialised positions. Other scholars point out the binarising tendency of presenting hybridity in the notion of the third space as 'celebratory' and essentialism as negative (Lorente & Tupas, 2013). Such consideration could mask the role of hybridity in generating social inequalities by being exploited to advance a particular economic agenda (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999). Hence, in light of these debates, the hybridity of the third space might not be

transformative or emancipatory as it is often described in a large volume of translanguaging studies.

The idea of a third or liminal space between cultures and languages sustained much scholarly interest, leading many scholars to adopt this notion in different guises. Li (2018) draws on this notion in his conceptualisation of the translanguaging space building on the work of Soja (1996) to move away from the binarising tendencies of hybridity “to incorporate contemporary realities, where increased contact with people from diverse backgrounds, offers space for innovation and creativity” (Li, 2018, p.23). Translanguaging, in this sense, has a transformative potential that equips multilinguals with the ability to challenge conventional understandings of multilingual practices and engage with meaning-making practices by producing a translanguaging space. This process of producing the translanguaging space for and by translanguaging practices assigns translanguaging the unique characteristics of promoting social justice and advocating a linguistic, social justice agenda (Baynham, 2017).

In this study, I do not entirely dismiss the notion of the translanguaging space and its transformative potential. While I appreciate that Li (2011b, 2018) proposed this notion arising from concerns about the relatively limited attention towards incorporating multilingual practices in theoretical discussions about space (Hua et al., 2017), the translanguaging space in this conceptualisation uses space as a metaphor. This metaphorical use indicates that translanguaging creates an abstract, contextual space between languages where linguistic codes are integrated. In this study, I propose drawing on a conceptualisation of space based on (Massey 2005). I integrate with Bakhtinian heteroglossia to extend the translanguaging space into what I shall refer to in this thesis as ‘translanguaging spaces’. I aim to generate a new understanding of

translanguaging spaces, highlighting the interplay of the physical, social, relational, and temporal aspects of space that provide a complex understanding of translanguaging spaces.

Doreen Massey (2005) challenged dominant conceptualisations about space, which she described as perpetuating 'exclusivist' claims that she saw as attempts to fix space and identities. Massey questioned the presentation of under-represented social groups in these dominant concepts by focusing on how power dynamics impact the people's experiences and imaginations of spaces. She argued that how we think about space reflects how we view the world. To Massey, space "matters" because it has many social, political, and intellectual impacts (Massey, 2009, p. 16).

Massey based her conceptualisation of space on highlighting the interplay of relational and spatial relationships in its production. Space, as she argued, is characterised by the three interwoven features. Firstly, space is a product of interrelating social relations unfolding dynamically. According to this understanding, space is "constituted through interactions, from the immensity of the global to the intimately tiny" (Massey, 2005, p.9). Secondly, space is characterised by multiplicity and heterogeneity generated by new relations. Thirdly, space is seen as in a state of constantly under construction rather than as a fixed container. It is worth pointing out that Massey's ideas about space share similarities with the Bakhtinian concept of dialogised heteroglossia. According to Bakhtin, the interactions between the centripetal and the centrifugal forces of heteroglossia are dialogic; they are never-ending and opposed to fixation. As these interactions continue, new local languages emerge which are open to local interpretations. This understanding of space, which combines Massey's ideas of space and Bakhtin's heteroglossia, highlights spaces as processes of being made and

remade and has the potential to enrich the 'translanguaging space'. Straszer (2017) demonstrates that taking the social, the material and the contextual into consideration in examining translanguaging across different spaces in the preschool classroom recognises the multiplicity of translanguaging spaces. Straszer argues that particular language ideologies become salient in particular spaces. Some spaces foregrounded the use of Finnish and others encouraged incorporating Kurdish while using Swedish. While the author describes the school as Swedish-dominant, she presents this preschool classroom as consisting of multiple constellations of languages contingent upon space. I find this study helpful to stimulate thinking about the possible relations between translanguaging practices that use particular languages in addition to English and different spaces in the reception classroom at the site of this study.

Crucial to Massey is an understanding of space that considers space and time inextricably linked. Massey suggests that dominant understandings of space lack a consideration of temporality, which risks the fixedness of space and timeless identities. She posits that space should be understood as 'space-time' to counter the created dichotomous binary between space and time as distinct categories. While time was equated with change, movement and progress, space was associated with stasis (Massey, 1994). However, what Massey described as the "here" refers to a localised encounter of multiple individual trajectories that immediately disperse. Therefore, the 'here' becomes "irretrievably, here and now" (Massey, 2005, p.139).

Central to Massey's concept of space is what she refers to as 'power-geometries', highlighting the tightly intertwining relationships between space and power (Massey, 2009). This notion captures how multiple and multi-layered power relations both shape and are shaped by social spaces. Massey argues that power-geometries is a dual tool

that seeks to show that “space is imbued with power” and that power has a spatial dimension (2009, p.19). The notion of power-geometries does not perceive power as fixed. Massey saw power as “the social form of the relations and what goes on in these relations” (Rodgers, 2004, p. 284). In this sense, power is not understood as a dichotomised “monolithic order” consisting of those who have power and those who do not. Instead, it is seen as changing because people are placed across spaces differently based on social relations. When integrated into the concept of space-time, I find this notion helpful for this study to understand how social relations between interlocutors' translanguaging practices, including their embedded meanings and ideologies, interplay across multiple spaces within the reception classroom. This understanding enriches the notion of translanguaging space by considering the complex social relations and spatio-temporal configurations reciprocally shaped using translanguaging practices.

Along with Bakhtinian heteroglossia, Massey's concepts of space and power geometries (2005) are productive to extend the translanguaging space in this study. These concepts enable an understanding of the potential of translanguaging practices in shaping and being shaped by the multiple spaces in the reception classroom located in the Islamic primary school, i.e., the site of this study. Examining translanguaging in light of this theoretical concept has the potential to extend Li's notion of 'the translanguaging space' beyond the metaphorical and can ground 'translanguaging spaces' in relation to spatial, temporal, relational and metaphorical aspects of spaces within this classroom.

2.2.5. Young children as active translinguagers: using ideas from the sociology of childhood

The last decade has witnessed an increasing popularity of translinguaging in applied linguistics, sociolinguistics and education (Li & Ho, 2018). Much scholarly attention concerned itself primarily with translinguaging in education (for example Paulsrud et al., 2017; Straszer et al., 2020). In recent years, translinguaging research has witnessed an explosion of studies examining translinguaging in different contexts amongst different social groups using resources from various disciplines. One of these recent developments in translinguaging scholarship relates to researching young children's translinguaging practices in classroom activities in early childhood education settings (Axelrod, 2017; Axelrod & Cole, 2018; Poza, 2019b; Vaish, 2020).

The proliferation of pedagogical translinguaging studies shows that pedagogical translinguaging does not exhaust the various ways and spaces in which translinguaging occurs. Li and Lin (2019) argue that while translinguaging research in the last decade has shown the effectiveness of using pedagogical translinguaging in the multilingual classroom, more work is needed to explore how translinguaging interplays with discourses across different spaces in the classroom. The point raised by Li and Lin supports the need for this study to complicate existing work on young children's translinguaging. This study focuses on young reception children's translinguaging in formal and informal activities across different spaces in the early years classroom for identity negotiations. This focus highlights the need for new ways of thinking about children as active translinguagers who can use translinguaging in complex ways and respond to pedagogical interventions.

Translanguaging research has witnessed a proliferation of work examining translanguaging amongst different social groups using different disciplinary resources. Many studies examined young children's translanguaging in formal pedagogical activities (for example Poza, 2016; Andersen, 2017; Paulsrud et al., 2017; Flynn et al., 2019) and informal ones (for example Arreguín-Anderson et al., 2018; Torpsten, 2017) in the early childhood education classroom. One of the recent developments in translanguaging research is the emergence of studies that use ideas from the sociology of childhood to offer rich insights into the complex ways children translanguage (Kirsch & Seele, 2020; Lourêiro & Neumann, 2020; Kirsch & Mortini, 2021; Fashanu, 2021). This recent work has begun to address questions of young children's agency in relation to the complex productions of translanguaging and their entanglement with local language policies and ideologies. In my study, I build on this work because it supports my argument for the usefulness of using ways of thinking about children and childhood used in the sociology of childhood. These ways offer productive ways to think about young children's engagement with translanguaging across different classroom spaces, which aligns with how research on pedagogical translanguaging views children. Most importantly, I find these ways to complicate current thinking about young children's translanguaging as complex practices which can interplay with power dynamics to reproduce unequal relations and identities.

This study focuses on young children's s translanguaging across formal and informal spaces. I draw on ways of thinking about young children influenced by the sociology of childhood to consider the possibility of young reception children being viewed as active translanguagers who can translanguage for complex purposes in addition to language socialisation and linguistic development. I find that the ways of thinking about children and questioning assumptions about them in the sociology of childhood could

result in synergy with translanguaging studies. Work in the sociology of childhood has sought to counter dominant assumptions and views about children as “futuristic projects” (Qvortrup, 2009, p. 69), emphasising what the child *will be* rather than what the child *is*. Children, according to these assumptions, are mainly seen as ‘adults in the making’ (Thorne, 1993) who are waiting to become rational and competent as adults since childhood is assumed as a period of developing capabilities (Jenks, 1982; James & James, 2008; Buckingham, 2009). These ways reduce children to mere future ‘becomings’ (Uprichard, 2008). Notably, these dominant views, which reduce children to mere future ‘becomings’, reflect influences of developmental psychology and traditional models of socialisation (Walkerdine, 1999; James, 2009). Maybin (2009) maintains that incorporating these psychological frameworks has led to viewing children’s language practices as narrowly defined competencies in previous educational research using a ‘pedagogical gaze’. Significantly, this gaze marginalised the complex dimensions of children’s language practices. Translanguaging as a concept emerged to counter this marginalisation. García and Li (2014) argue that employing a translanguaging pedagogical approach in multilingual classrooms offers transformative potential that seeks to recognise and value the practices of multilingual children. This potential offers equal linguistic possibilities for children regardless of their language proficiency, national origin, ethnicity or race.

I find the view of young children as ‘beings’ (James & Prout, 1997) advocated by the social studies of childhood illuminating to help complexify the view of young children as translanguagers who can use these practices to negotiate multifaceted identities. The sociology of childhood views the ‘being’ child as capable of commenting, participating and influencing the situations they are part of (Corsaro, 2011). The view of children as ‘beings’ suggests that children are indeed a part of their social world and

that they are "...conceived as a person, as a status, a course of action... in sum as social actors" (James et al., 1998, p. 91). Moreover, this view recognises their ability to affect their world and participate in meaning-making within their mundane daily activities (James & James, 2004). Some studies on language practices have shown children to be meaning-makers in their everyday social lives. A notable example of these studies is the work of Orellana (2009) on children as language brokers. Orellana's work shows the usefulness of using ways of seeing and thinking about children based on the social studies of childhood, which demonstrated the agency of children as active participants in social processes. She argues that child language brokers actively use their developing and emergent language skills to support their families and "do things in the larger social world" (Orellana, 2009, p. 16).

Similarly, a growing body of ethnographic work examining children's language practices shows how children use language purposefully for many social reasons. While these studies do not draw on ways of thinking about children from the social studies of childhood explicitly, they include implicit views about the capability of children to use language meaningfully beyond the 'educational gaze' (Maybin, 2009). The work of Goodwin and Kyratzis (2007) offers rich insights into how children in school settings use language practices to create local social orders in their play activities. Goodwin and Kyratzis have shown how these children used language meaningfully to exclude and include particular activities using broader social discourses. Similarly, the work of Maybin (2008) explores how children used language practices in off-task conversations in a school setting. Her study showed the complexity of the language practices used by the children, which included a multitude of embedded ideologies, discourses and appropriated voices from the broader social

context. Maybin showcases the fluidity and richness of children's language practices which they creatively used to construct identities.

To conclude this section, I have offered an exploration of the concept of translanguaging and provided an overview of the theoretical resources that I use to conceptualise translanguaging practices, spaces and implications. In the subsequent section, I consider translanguaging as a means of complex meaning-making used for imagining and negotiating intersectional Muslim identities. I explain how I aim to use the concepts of intersectionality and generation to conceptualise young children's Muslim identities.

2.3. Young Children's Muslim identities: An intersectional approach

Multiple contested conceptualisations of identities exist in translanguaging and identity research which requires clarifying how identities are conceptualised in this thesis (Zhu, 2015). Some of these studies foreground identity rather than 'identities' (Blackledge & Creese, 2014; Langman, 2014). Others acknowledged the complexity and multiplicity of identities, while some studies considered identities as 'non-negotiable' and imposed from 'above' by powerful others (Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004; Huang, 2018). Therefore, this section explains the theoretical resources I draw on to understand young children's Muslim identities. I foreground the role of translanguaging practices in negotiating and imagining Muslim identities. I draw on intersectionality, poststructural and socio-cultural ways of thinking about identities to highlight their multiplicity, dynamism and relationality. I also incorporate the relational concept of generation (Alanen, 2011) to enrich intersectional analyses of young Muslim children's identities.

2.3.1. Understanding Muslim identities

I suggest that using ideas from the poststructural framework helps conceptualise Muslim identities in this study. These ideas help understand how language, power, and broader social and political discourses are implicated in the construction and negotiations of identities. According to the poststructural framework, “identities are constructed by and through language” (Baxter, 2016, p. 34). This understanding of identities is highly relevant to this study since I consider translanguaging one of the key practices young children use and mobilise to negotiate Muslim identities.

In general, identities are the ways a person “understands their relationship to the world and how that relationship is constructed across space and time, and how the person understands possibilities for the future” (Norton, 2013, p. 3). A poststructural understanding maintains that identities are constructed and negotiated using language practices. It considers language a site “where actual and possible forms of social organisation and their social and political consequences are defined and contested” (Weedon, 1997, p. 31). This framework recognises that power plays a significant role in forming and creating identities since they operate within dominant discourses (Zembylas, 2003). In this sense, power is understood to be discursively constructed in dynamic ways in social interactions.

This thesis also draws on a conceptualisation of identities as multiple and multifaceted, which arose from poststructural critiques. These critiques questioned the notions of singularity or ‘essence’, which view identity as singular and internally homogenous (Cannella et al., 2001; Alcoff, 2005). Poststructuralists rejected the essentialisation of identities since contested notions of singularity mainly drew influence from the positivist principle of ‘universal truth’, which regarded identities as stable biological

features. A poststructuralist perspective considers the interplay between language practices, broader discourses, power and identities to construct multiple ways of being.

I find the consideration of the multiplicity of identities to be particularly useful for examining Muslim identities. Considering the multiplicity of Muslim identities is timely in the current British context, influenced by anxieties and racism arising from Islamophobia post 9/11 and anti-immigratory sentiment post-Brexit. Modood (2009) contests the homogenous portrayal of British Muslims in social and popular discourses to possess:

“Some Muslims are devout but apolitical; some are political but do not see their politics as being ‘Islamic’ (indeed, they may even be anti-Islamic). Some identify more with a nationality of origin, such as Turkish; others with the nationality of settlement and perhaps citizenship, such as French. Some prioritise fundraising for mosques, others campaign against discrimination, unemployment or Zionism. For some, the Ayatollah Khomeini is a hero and Osama bin Laden an inspiration; for others, the same may be said of Kemal Ataturk or Margaret Thatcher, who created a swathe of Asian millionaires in Britain, brought in Arab capital and was one of the first to call for NATO action to protect Muslims in Kosovo. The category ‘Muslim’, then, is as internally diverse as ‘Christian’ or ‘Belgian’ or ‘middle class’, or any other category helpful in ordering our understanding of contemporary Europe; but just as diversity does not lead to an abandonment of social concepts in general, so with that of ‘Muslim’.” (2009, pp. 193–194)

Modood showcases the heterogeneous and diverse forms of being a Muslim in this excerpt. He argues that ‘Muslim’ is a complex social category that is no different from others. Religion only accounts for a single dimension of being a Muslim because “Islam may tell us only one part of how these people live and see the world” (Halliday, 1999, p. 897). Panjwani and Moulin-Stožek (2017) further call for the necessity to consider the multiplicity of Muslim identities. While they acknowledge the resurgence of recognising the role of religion as shaping and being shaped by broader discourses and social practices, they express concerns that Muslims are constantly ‘religified’ in

the academic literature. They argue that this 'religification', which refers to foregrounding religion, supplants other social categories such as race, ethnicity, nationality and gender, which are equally crucial for Muslim identities (Panjwani & Moulin-Stožek, 2017, p. 3). I find the point made by Panjwani and Moulin-Stožek (2017) in relation to Muslim identities supports using an intersectional approach in this study.

The arguments raised by Panjwani and Moulin-Stožek about the complex facets of Muslim identities reflect a central theme within recent work on intersectional Muslim identities (for example Archer, 2003; Hopkins, 2004; Franceschelli & O'Brien, 2015; Mirza & Meetoo, 2018; Hussain, 2019; Moraru, 2019). This work offers rich insights into the complexity of Muslim identities in response to problematic perceptions of homogenising and othering Muslims, especially in western contexts (Abbas, 2017). In this research, the identities of Muslim children and young people received growing attention in ways that have highlighted the significance and the value children ascribe to their religious identities and how these identities relate to their educational experiences (Scourfield et al., 2013; Shain, 2013; Gutierrez & Hopkins, 2015; Mac an Ghail & Haywood, 2017). In this work, little is known about how language interplays with power dynamics to forge complex exclusions and inclusions, especially by young children, to different forms of Muslimness.

The relative absence of young children in the work that explores intersectional Muslim identities is striking, given its enriching insights into the complexities of being a Muslim. By contrast, a growing body of sociolinguistic and applied linguistic work on language and religious identities offers enriching insights into children's use of multilingual resources in relation to their religious identities (Rosowsky, 2010; Auleear Owodally, 2011; L. C. Moore, 2013; Lytra et al., 2016; Kenner et al., 2016). This work focuses on

the ways children used multilingual practices to construct and negotiate their religious identities by engaging with faith literacies across various spaces such as homes, supplementary schools and mainstream schools. Lytra (2020) points out that religious identity negotiations and construction processes are filled with tensions and contradictions and intersect with other identity dimensions in complex ways. She directs readers' attention to the limited yet growing number of studies that address how children draw on their repertoires to navigate these tensions. A case in point is the study of Auleear Owodally (2016) which showcases how a Muslim child navigated a contradictory multi-faith context in Mauritius. Auleear Owodally argues that specific spaces inform and sometimes constrain how children use their flexible meaning-making resources to construct their religious identities. She further argues that children creatively negotiate tensions related to their religious identities by compartmentalizing their identities to particular spaces. In her study, she provides an example of how the Arabic pronunciation of Joseph as *Yousoff* was used by her child to express being a knowledgeable Mauritian Muslim capable of using elements from Quranic Arabic and Mauritian Creole while discussing the religious story of Joseph. However, in the Catholic school setting the child attended, the Arabic spelling became less pronounced and her Muslim identity less expressed. Therefore, to navigate the tensions associated with her presence in a multi-faith context, the child compartmentalised her identities as a Mauritian Muslim in the Madrassah context and secular in the Catholic school setting.

The study of Auleear Owodally (2016) shows one of the ways in which children draw on their repertoires to navigate tensions and contradictions associated with their religious identities across different spaces. The study of Lytra and Ilankuberan (2020) illustrates another way in which children creatively navigated tensions related to their

ethnic religious identities. Lytra and Ilankuberan (2020) show that Sri Lankan children in a London context negotiated their religious belonging by appropriating or adapting a gendered religious practice related to their being Tamil Hindus to fit the context of their secular British school. The authors argue that these negotiations are impacted by the dynamics of space which play a significant role in shaping and constraining religious practices and expressions of religious identities.

The insights generated by sociolinguistic and applied linguistic work on children's language practices and religious identities are useful for this thesis. I build on this work to foreground the creative ways in which children use their repertoires to navigate moments of struggle related to their Muslim identities. While I appreciate how these studies offer insights into how young children actively draw on their repertoires to make sense of their religious identities and navigate contradictions, there seems to be little known about how children use these practices to create complex forms of religious identities, which may be exclusionary as well as inclusionary. Therefore, I build on intersectional Muslim identities research and sociolinguistic work on children's language practices and religious identities to explore how young reception children mobilise translanguaging to negotiate intersecting Muslim identities. I set out from the perspective that negotiating Muslim identities may be riddled with power and inequality as with any other form of identity negotiation.

The translanguaging literature has witnessed an emerging interest in examining relations between translanguaging practices and identities (Li & Zhu, 2013). However, I found these studies to primarily foreground singular identities such as ethnic identities (Li, 2014), transnational identities (Kim, 2018) and racialised identities (Seltzer, 2017). A limited number of translanguaging studies explore its uses in relation to intersectional identities (Nagashima & Lawrence, 2020). This limited focus calls for a

theoretical resource such as intersectionality to open up a new line of investigation in translanguaging research to explore the operation of translanguaging practices with power dynamics to constitute multiply linked social categories. In the following discussion, I explain the usefulness of intersectionality as a theoretical resource to enrich the understanding of young children's Muslim identities, social structures of power, privilege, and inequalities.

The direction towards adopting an intersectional approach to identity grew out of the focus of identity research in the social sciences on singular identity dimensions without considering how they interrelate. This singularity has resulted in relatively limited attention to addressing the interdimensional and nuanced differences in identities. In the case of translanguaging research, Block and Corona (2016) call for the necessity of implementing an intersectional approach that connects translanguaging with multiple social categories of identities in an effective synthesis.

Crenshaw (1989) coined the concept of intersectionality as a response to the inadequacy of addressing the experiences of women of colour in feminist and anti-racist research. Crenshaw argues that these women's experiences were primarily marginalised by focusing on singular discourses of discrimination based on either gender or race (Collins & Bilge, 2020). While Crenshaw was credited for this concept, and it has been seen to constitute a 'buzzword' (K. Davis, 2008), some feminist scholars argued that intersectionality is not entirely new. The origins of this concept can be traced to the speech of Sojourner Truth, "Ain't I a woman?" which questioned the essentialisation of the category of "woman" and its consequences (Brah & Phoenix, 2004; Konstantoni & Emejulu, 2017). As the concept of intersectionality has gained increasing popularity across many research areas (Phoenix & Pattynama,

2006), it is described as “the most important theoretical contribution of women’s studies” (McCall, 2005, p. 1771).

As a theoretical concept, intersectionality refers to the interrelated complexities of “the simultaneously interacting effects of gender, race, class, sexual orientation, national origin and other categories of difference”, which create ‘intersections’ of various forms of privilege or difference (Bassel & Emejulu, 2010, p. 518). Intersectionality highlights social categories of difference in individual lives, social practices, institutional arrangements and ideologies as key to the analysis. This approach is primarily concerned with people’s positions in terms of multiple axes of difference instead of collapsing them into a single social category such as ‘Muslim’. This consideration avoids the risk of essentialising difference or creating distinctly homogenous social groups. The usefulness of employing an intersectional approach is explained by Davis (2008):

“Intersectionality initiates a process of discovery, alerting us to the fact that the world around us is always more complicated and contradictory than we ever could have anticipated ... it encourages complexity, stimulates creativity, and avoids premature closure” (2008, p.79)

The affordances of intersectionality are helpful to understanding the complexity of Muslim identities, which are documented in a growing body of scholarly work (for example Jaspal & Coyle, 2010; Abdel-Fattah, 2016; Zainal, 2018; Karaman & Christian, 2020). The work of Mirza (2013a) shines a light on the usefulness of using intersectionality to demonstrate the complexity of the Muslim identities of British professional women in the Islamophobic context of Britain. Mirza examines how race, ethnicity, and gender interplay to shape a group of professional women’s Muslim identities. Mirza argues that the women in her study used modest dress, the hijab, religious piety, ethnic food and speech styles to articulate an agentive feminine Muslim

identity that resisted the gendered, raced and classed discourses of inequalities they face in their everyday lives. Similarly, I am interested in this study to examine how the translanguaging of young reception children interplays with gender, modesty, and piety to create and negotiate intersecting Muslim identities, including young girls' gendered identities in the reception classroom.

Using an intersectional approach has offered ways of understanding how religion could intersect with race (Mirza, 2013b; Selod, 2018). The aftermath of 9/11 in the U.S and 7/7 in the U.K have increased racism against Muslims. The rise of hostility and racism created a state of suspicion of Muslims and practices related to Islam, including using Arabic (Selod, 2019). Furthermore, the aftermath of these events led popular imaginations to depict British Muslims as a homogenous social group who speaks Arabic and possess limited proficiency in English, a link that was highlighted to make Muslims 'more prone' to fundamentalist terrorism (Rosowsky, 2018).

This thesis uses an intersectional approach to conceptualise the Muslim identities of young reception children to examine how religion intersects with other social categories such as 'race', language, gender and generation. While the translanguaging literature emphasises the potential of translanguaging to disrupt the racialisation of multilinguals in particular settings (García & Li, 2014; Flores, 2019), there is a growing number of translanguaging studies which emerged from contentions associated with using translanguaging as an act of racialisation as I have pointed in the previous section (García, 2020). While a nascent line of work in translanguaging explores how translanguaging practices are used for racialisation in various settings, limited work explores the use of translanguaging for racialisation in relation to Muslim identities.

It is important to explain how racism and processes of racialisation are conceptualised in this thesis. 'Race' must be defined to ground the understanding of these concepts. It is generally understood as a social construct based on problematic, perceived ideas, material or embodied markers of difference used for social stratification and oppression (Meer & Nayak, 2015). The use of the inverted commas highlights its status as a 'fictional (racist) socially constructed' (Burman, 2013, p. 234). There is a general agreement amongst social scientists that racism refers to the multiple processes of social differentiation based on ideologies and practices that normalise and produce unequal power relations. These differentiation processes are directed at specific social groups using the categories of national origin, religious or racial differences. One form of racism is Islamophobia which refers to the differentiation of Muslims based on perceived or material markers of Muslimness such as language, forms of dress and religious practices (Kundnani, 2007).

The understanding of racialisation I use in this thesis is based on the conceptualisation put forward by Omi and Winant (1994) but situated within a raciolinguistic lens that is used in recent sociolinguistic work on raciolinguistics. As discussed in section 2.2.2, I draw on raciolinguistics as a resource to understand how translanguaging operates as an act of racialisation by unpacking raciolinguistic ideologies that conflate particular multilingual speakers with deficiency and linguistic inappropriateness.

According to a raciolinguistic understanding, racialisation refers to how race as an ideological dimension of human differentiation is imagined, produced and reified through language practices (Flores & Rosa, 2015; Alim et al., 2016). Key to the dynamics of discrimination and racialisation are raciolinguistic ideologies. These ideologies are the sets of beliefs that map broader social and racial discourses onto language, thus rendering specific individuals' language practices deficient and

incomplete (Flores & Rosa, 2015). An example of racialisation through language is when some individuals are constructed as linguistically inferior due to perceived features. For example, some British Muslims, especially women, are racialised as not speaking English (Moosavi, 2015).

Blackledge (2006) argues that language practices, just as other practices operate to racialize specific speakers, especially within contexts often characterised by linguistic diversity. Blackledge maintains the existence of dominant discourses, such as English as the language of the majority and the language of 'Britishness', which operate to racialize British Muslims in relation to language practices. Speaking languages other than English is seen as a 'metaphor' for racial difference. Recent work on translanguaging has started to shed light on how translanguaging is used to racialise particular social groups. The work of Tebaldi (2019) shows different ways in which translanguaging was used as an act of racialisation. Tebaldi examines how a group of white nationalists used translanguaging, especially that which drew on elements of English and mock Spanish, to construct a sense of 'ordinary' whiteness that racialised Spanish speakers as the 'bad hombres'.

The ways in which translanguaging is used as an act of racialisation is an example of how the discourses of racism permeate social lives and language practices, and they do not necessarily include 'blatant' acts of aggression and discrimination. These discourses can operate as 'subtle acts' since they involve mundane ideas, attitudes and ideologies (Van Dijk, 1993, p. 5). In this sense, translanguaging practices are not immune from becoming racializing practices.

Using an intersectional approach in this study emphasises the importance of specificity of social, political, spatial, temporal and discursive contexts to show how the everyday

microaggressions of racism are experienced intersectionally. Mirza and Meeto (2018) point to the importance of considering schools in Islamophobic times as significant sites saturated by complex discourses of racialisation that intersect with gender, race, class, sexuality and religion. Considering these elements is relevant for this study since the current broader context of English Islamic schools is infused with a complex interplay of discourses.

Many debates in intersectional scholarship discussed identity politics, social categories and operationalising intersectionality in analysis. Regarding identity politics, debates emerged about whether identities can be considered catalysts of activism and social change (Cooper, 2015). While many scholars influenced by post-modern, poststructuralist and feminist ways of thinking agree on the non-essentialist nature of identities, some express varying degrees of contention about whether identities need to be viewed as temporarily fixed to resist the oppression of specific social groups. These debates have posed many questions about which adequate ways to frame intersecting social categories and which social categories have more importance than others. Some of the debates transpired in the small, growing work on translanguaging, which uses intersectionality. For example, Block and Corona (2014) call for the necessity of adopting a “class-based” intersectional approach in examining translanguaging. Block and Corona justify their approach by arguing that social class is more important in the lives of the multilingual Latino youth they studied than ‘race’, gender and ethnicity. Perhaps, the focus of Block and Corona on social class could be explained in light of the situated importance of social categories (Yuval-Davis, 2006, 2017). Indeed, some social categories can be more important for a particular group of people; however, their importance depends on specific circumstances and contexts.

An interesting point was raised by Bilge (2010) about intersectional analyses of feminine Muslim identities, which could be helpful in this thesis. Bilge argues for using an intersectional approach that takes into account different social categories as to what constitutes agency or subordination in relation to Muslim femininities. Ascribed meanings to modest Muslim dress, especially the hijab, and other practices related to religious observance vary significantly. She explains that Western national imaginaries usually frame modest Muslim dress and the hijab as a sign of subordination, positioning Muslim women as victims of “oppressive patriarchal culture” (Bilge, 2010, p. 10). In contrast, Muslim women viewed modest dress as highly valuable and idealised, which they mobilised to assert their feminine Muslim identities.

Bilge’s point about how some Muslim females value modest dress can be linked to Connell’s (1987) work on multiple femininities and gendered ideals. Connell’s (1987) work on gender can be insightful in this regard. Connell’s work on the notion of emphasised femininity underscores the existence of multiple femininities operating within a socially constructed hierarchy. Emphasised femininity, Connell argues, is based on social expectations about what constitutes gendered ideals. Using this concept is helpful to consider that multiple feminine Muslim identities cannot be equated to ‘Western’ femininities. Furthermore, it can consider how modesty and religiosity bind with social and religious ideals about honour, respectability, and the ultra ‘feminine’ female amongst Muslims (Siraj, 2011).

In the following subsection, I demonstrate the need for an intersectional analytical approach that considers generation as a social category for its relevance to young Muslim children’s identities.

2.3.2. Considering generation as a social category in intersectionality

Thus far, I have argued for using an intersectional approach to conceptualise these identities. The relevance of using this approach lies in its potential in accounting for the complexity of Muslim identities by highlighting how multiple social categories such as 'race', gender, nationality, social class, and language interplay to shape these identities. In this subsection, I explain how incorporating the social category of generation in the intersectional analysis is helpful to consider the nuances and complexities of young children's identities. The rationale for this analysis is based on the notable absence of generation and generational inequalities in intersectional scholarship and the limited focus of considering intersectionality in examining children's identities in childhood studies (Mukherjee, 2020). This limited focus could perhaps be attributed to assumptions about young children as innocent and pre-social who are not yet capable of engaging with broader discourses of inequalities from their wider communities (Vandenbroeck, 2007). Therefore, following Konstantoni and Emejulu's (2017) call for incorporating intersectional analyses to examine the complexity of children's identities, I incorporate the concept of generation in the intersectional analysis I use in this study.

As a starting point, I explain the rationale for incorporating the social category of generation, which is the social construction of age. Considering generation stems from some gaps of knowledge that I have identified in the relevant areas of literature. Despite the long-standing interest of the social studies of childhood in the complexity and multiplicity of children's identities and inequalities (Connolly, 1998; Van Ausdale & Feagin, 2002; Morrow & Connolly, 2006), the focus tended to be mainly directed on generation as a distinct social category. In the emerging scholarship about children's

intersectional identities, much focus highlighted the intersections of particular social categories such as 'race', gender, sexuality and ethnicity (Konstantoni et al., 2017). A notable example of these studies is the work of Isik-Erkan (2014) on the Muslim identities of Turkish-American children in an American school. Isik-Erkan argues that the elementary school children in her study negotiated a Muslim-American identity that either rendered the religious dimension or the national dimensions visible or invisible based on the context and activities they interacted in. However, little is known about the intersectional identities of young children under the age of six years old (Warming, 2011; Kustatscher, 2017). Several studies have offered illuminating insights into how children and young people actively use multiple languages and literacies for meaning-making related to their religious identities (Moulin, 2015; Lytra et al., 2016). In this work, the religious identities of children and youth are presented as centring around religion and shaped by multiple intersecting social categories such as 'race', gender, ethnicity, and nationality. In contrast, generation as a social category remains strikingly absent.

In this thesis, I draw on a relational understanding of generation based on the work of Alanen (2011). To Alanen, generation does not indicate the meaning implied by the "common-sense everyday meanings" (Alanen, 2009, p. 159) or age. Based on her explication, generation does not refer to a 'function of age' or an indication of biological immaturity. Alanen views age as a socially constructed category forged by social relations and by which 'the child' is constructed in relation to 'the adult'. According to these reciprocal relations, childhood and adulthood are seen as elements of the generational social order rather than stages of life (Alanen, 2011).

The concept of generation recognises that 'the child' as a social category is constructed in difference from 'the adult' by power relations. The assertion that

generation is a relational concept aligns with a relational understanding of identities. Rosen (2016) maintains that while adult-child relations are often characterised by power differentials that position children as a marginalised social group, such understanding creates a simplistic dichotomy between children and adults, obscuring the differences between children. Rosen thus calls for the necessity to understand how generationing intersects with other social processes such as gendering and racialisation.

As I shall explain in Chapter 7, the Muslim identities of the young children in Elmer Class, the reception classroom in which this study takes place, were generationed differently. While the 'good' Muslim child was imagined as religiously knowledgeable and 'adult-like', adult-child interaction positioned the Muslim child as an incomplete religious subject due to age, cognitive and biological immaturity. These differences in generationed Muslim identities support the assertion held by the social studies of childhood that childhood is indeed socially constructed (Alanen, 2011).

2.3.3. Identity processes: a focus on negotiations and imaginations

In this thesis, I draw conceptualisations of identities as socially constructed derived from sociocultural ways of thinking (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005). This consideration recognises that identities are open to negotiations and contestations. Pavlenko and Blackledge (2004) argue that the negotiation of identities can be understood as an interplay of "reflective positioning, self-representations and interactive positioning" (Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004, p.20), where social actors engage in interactive processes to position themselves and others. In this sense, highlighting the negotiations of identities emphasises the relationality of identities as constructed in

relation to difference through power relations. This is because identities involve defining who we are in relation to who we are not (Rattansi & Phoenix, 2005).

The ethnographic study of Moinian (2009) offers insights drawing on the social studies of childhood into how children agentively use language practices to negotiate ethnic and religious identities. Moinian argues that the Iranian Swedish children in her study used language to challenge their position as either 'Swedish', 'Iranian' or 'Muslim'. She states that these children made assertions in their talk to construct a global identity for themselves as human beings. Moinian discusses that these assertions served to challenge essentialised the monolithic ethnic and religious identities fixed upon them by the broader Swedish society. This study is useful to consider how young children negotiate Muslim identities by using translanguaging practices.

Identity negotiations are linked with power relations. In translanguaging research, Block (2018) voices some caveats about how translanguaging is presented in many empirical studies. Block argues that a theme of translanguaging as transformative figures prominently in the proliferating translanguaging literature. Critiquing this 'recognition-based' transformation (Block, 2018, p. 251), Block cautions that this representation disregards how translanguaging practices and translanguagers operate within nexuses of power relations. Concurring with Block, I believe that identity negotiations and translanguaging are embedded within complex power relations. A study by Poza (2019) is illuminating in this regard. Poza highlights how translanguaging practices dynamically interplay with power relations in the identity negotiations of Latinx Spanish speaking children. He directs attention to how these children translanguaged using mock Spanish to impose and take up racialising stereotypes about Latinx and Mexican immigrants, thus reproducing social hierarchies.

Since identities are about who we are and who we are not, they can be seen as a matter of “boundary processes” (Jenkins, 2008, p. 128). Boundaries are found in people’s social interactions, and they are an essential aspect of identity negotiations. Processes of boundary marking are based on how individuals position themselves with others (Gewirtz & Cribb, 2008). These processes entail inclusions and exclusions that are constantly dynamic and situational because, in defining who we are, we are also separating ourselves from who we are not. In this sense, identities depend on classifications or categorisations, which play an important role in realising their group identities. For example, to talk about a particular group identity, members of that group need to have something in common that accepts the essence of religion or language and could be a collective project of creating something in common. These similarities can range from real, imagined, trivial or important, and even strong or weak. Nevertheless, it should be noted that recognising these similarities invokes a sense of differentiation which means that “logically, inclusions entail exclusion” (Jenkins, 2008, p. 102).

Having explained that this study draws on understanding Muslim identities as multiple and dynamically constructed through social interactions and negotiations, I draw on Norton’s (2001) concept of identity imagination. Imagining identities refers to how identities are constructed based on desired memberships, aspired ideals and expectations that are socially constructed “under the circumstances existing already, given and transmitted from the past” (Panjwani, 2017, p. 72). Norton (2001) conceptualises this theoretical concept using Anderson’s (1991) notion of ‘imagined communities’. In his work, Anderson describes how nations are imagined and lived in the minds of their members “who will never know most of their fellow members, meet them, or even hear them” (1991, p. 6). Imaginations operate to create affiliations and

identifications that extend time and space to create new images of the world and ourselves (Wenger, 2008). Imagined identities may be a “reconstruction of past communities and historically constituted relationships”, which could offer future possibilities for better identity options (Norton & Costa, 2018, p. 100). These desired ways of being or memberships have been argued to impact identity (Kanno & Norton, 2003; Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004). As Norton (2001) argues, these imaginations seek to increase the social actors’ “value within the social world,” which reflects an investment in the ‘quest’ for these identities (Norton, 2001, p. 166). Current research on Muslim identities has highlighted the imaginations or idealisations that intertwine with construction and negotiation processes. For example, Dwyer’s (1999) work directs attention to how the imaginations of young Muslim women interplay with constructions and contestations of their gendered Muslim identities. She argues that these women challenged their racialised belonging to the broader community as ‘Asians’ to assert their Muslim identities through evoking their belonging to an imagined, global Muslim *ummah* (community in Arabic).

As I have mentioned previously, intersectional identities include inclusionary and exclusionary practices since they are about who we are not, as much as they are about who we are. Identities are also about the ideals we imagine and aspire for ourselves and others. This concept of imagination helps understand how Muslim identities relate to embedded sets of complex ideals in identity negotiation processes. Jaspal and Coyle (2010) demonstrate that the British Asian youth in their study drew on multilingual practices, which primarily foreground Arabic as the language of Islam to construct a Muslim identity. They argue that employing Arabic in this way is undergirded by imagined idealisations of Muslims as speaking Arabic since it is the language of the Quran. These imagined idealisations interplay with identity

negotiations to produce 'authentic' or 'inauthentic' Muslimness. This work has the potential to further how translanguaging operates with imagination in identity negotiations, which adds another layer of complexity to the role of translanguaging.

2.4. Conclusion and implications for the conceptual framework

In concluding this chapter, it is helpful to consider some implications arising from the discussion presented so far. In the first section of this chapter, I provided a detailed exploration of the concept of translanguaging, which I use to explicate young children's semiotic meaning-making practices which draw on elements from multiple languages. In this thesis, translanguaging is conceptualised as a practice that young reception children engage in their daily classroom routines and activities. It is also viewed as an everyday practice that includes and produces particular social, political, historical and ideological meanings using a Bakhtinian heteroglossic lens. Furthermore, translanguaging is understood as a practice that shapes and is shaped by social, spatial, material, relational, and contextual aspects of spaces. This understanding is helpful to advance the complexity of young children's translanguaging in producing multiple translanguaging spaces. This understanding helps to 'open translanguaging up' (Pennycook, 2017). Pennycook argues that the translanguaging scholarship should consider translanguaging using 'an expanded version of language' to encompass those semiotic resources used for meaning-making beyond the linguistic. I argue that the conceptualisation of translanguaging should include expanded use of broader meanings and ideological references related to different life trajectories of interlocutors. Hence, translanguaging is not merely a simple moment in a single, isolated space (Duchêne & Heller, 2012).

Considering young children as active translanguagers in this study aligns with the active ways in which research on pedagogical translanguaging showed young children to engage in these practices. Using ways of thinking about young children advocated by the sociology of childhood offers useful synergies to explore further possibilities about the capability of young children in engaging with translanguaging in formal and informal activities. I believe that thinking about young children in these ways helps overcome the assumed constraints of language barriers linked to the biological immaturity of young children. Focusing on young children as a somewhat marginalised social group speaks to an important question posed in the language, translanguaging and identity research agenda “how, where, why and by whom the social order is quietly reproduced or voiceful challenged?” (Blommaert & Rampton, 2016, p. 26).

In the second section, I explored the concept of identities and explained the resources that I use to understand Muslim identities as multiple, relational, and dynamic. In this thesis, I consider translanguaging one of the key practices used to imagine and negotiate idealised forms of Muslim identities. I discussed how using intersectionality as a theoretical resource opens up new ways to consider the complexity of children’s Muslim identities by using a relational understanding of generation.

In this study, I combine the use of multiple theoretical resources: a heteroglossic lens to understand translanguaging practices, socio-spatial relations in creating translanguaging spaces and an intersectional approach to examine Muslim identities. I find these resources well-suited to explain how Muslim identities are imagined and negotiated using translanguaging. I suggest that Bakhtin’s concept of dialogised heteroglossia enriches an intersectional analysis of these practices and identities, especially in considering their social implications. Bilge (2010) points to how studies on gendered Muslim identities have tended to present the social implications of these

identity negotiations using a dialectic of either-or. She argues that the use of this dialectic delimits intersectional analyses. Thus, the principle of simultaneity of dialogised heteroglossia is helpful to account for this shortcoming. Using these proposed theoretical resources altogether, I believe that this thesis will open up new ways of thinking about translanguaging, young children's Muslim identities and their interplay with broader contradictory meanings in Islamic primary schools.

Having presented the literature review and the theoretical resources that I draw on in this chapter, in Chapter 3, I discuss the methodological approach and the analytical framework used in this study.

CHAPTER 3: Methodology

3.1. Introduction

In the previous chapter, I reviewed the concepts of translanguaging and Muslim identities, outlining the theoretical resources that inform the conceptual framework of this study. I introduce in this chapter the methodological approach and the research design I used in this study, justifying the methodological decisions I took.

I begin this chapter by stating the aims and questions this study seeks to address. I then outline the epistemological and ontological perspectives which frame this study. I use an epistemological approach informed by ideas from social constructionism, poststructuralism and feminist epistemologies of situated knowledges, issues of power and inequalities whilst considering the complexity of social realities. Given my focus on if, how, and with what implications young children translanguage, I make the case that linguistic ethnography provides an important approach as it gives deep attention to language practices embedded in everyday contexts. I follow this by explaining how the site of this study, which is an Islamic primary school, was chosen and how I gained and negotiated access to it. I then provide an account of my research design which used participant observations, informal conversations, and video-recorded observations of social interactions. I follow this by explaining the analytical framework I used to analyse translanguaging. Since fieldwork in a primary school with young children requires the centrality of ethics, I discuss the ethical considerations that underpinned my fieldwork and interactions with the research participants. I explain the critical issues of informed consent, confidentiality and anonymity. While considering the formal aspects of institutional ethics, I explain the Bakhtinian answerable ethical

approach (Bakhtin, 1993; Albon & Rosen, 2014), which informed my reflexive stance. I also draw particular attention to my roles in the field and the challenges I faced.

3.2. Introducing the research aims and research questions

To shape this study, I began by examining different research areas on translanguaging in multilingual classrooms and sociological studies of young children's everyday activities and identities in early childhood education settings. These research areas utilised various methodological approaches, such as different ethnographic approaches, including linguistic ethnography and case studies. I was interested in how the social studies of childhood drew on ethnographic methodological approaches to offer rich insights into the minutiae of children's mundane interactions, which vividly demonstrate the microcosmic preschool worlds. I was particularly drawn by the study of Mindy Blaise (2005), which focused on how young nursery children used language to navigate normative gender discourses to construct their gender identities. Blaise used the analytical framework of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) in her ethnographic study, which generated new knowledge about how young children contribute to the social construction of gender in their everyday lives. This study stimulated my interest in an ethnographic approach that foregrounds young children's translanguaging practices within a detailed, thick description of their everyday activities. The study by Janet Maybin (2008) inspired me to identify linguistic ethnography as a suitable methodological approach for my study. Maybin (2008) used linguistic ethnography to highlight the embeddedness of children's language practices within the institutional and social context of the school.

This linguistic ethnographic study aims to explore the complexity and richness of young reception children's translanguaging in Elmer Class⁶ and across Westwood Primary⁷. It also aims to examine how these children translanguage to navigate multiple competing meanings and Muslim identities in relation to broader social references and inequalities. I intend to realise this aim by addressing the following research questions:

Research Question 1: do young children translanguage in their activities in the reception classroom? If so, how, when, where, and with whom does this translanguaging occur?

Research Question 2: what are the implications of these translanguaging practices for imagining and negotiating unequal intersectional Muslim identities?

To answer these questions requires a well-equipped research design for understanding translanguaging as a complex and local social phenomenon within the context of the Islamic school of Westwood Primary. This need can be realised by taking particular epistemological and ontological decisions on how to approach translanguaging and Muslim identities in this thesis. It can also be realised by adopting a methodological approach based on detailed observations to understand the social context of translanguaging practices.

3.3. Epistemological and ontological considerations

Recognising the complexity of the social world in social research requires careful consideration of the ways of knowing about it (May & Williams, 2002). In this section, I clarify the epistemological and ontological positions that enable understanding of how

⁶ A pseudonym referring to the reception classroom where this study took place.

⁷ A pseudonym referring to the Islamic primary school which was the site of this study.

to approach young children's translanguaging practices in relation to questions of identities, power and inequalities.

In this thesis, I explore the relationality of young children's translanguaging and its mobilisations to negotiate multiple, intersecting Muslim identities based on local idealisations related to the 'good' Muslim. The epistemological decisions on how to approach young children's translanguaging and Muslim identities for this study are based on ideas from social constructionism, feminist epistemologies of situated knowledges and poststructuralism.

I explore the socially constructed and local meanings of translanguaging and Muslim identities as they unfold in daily classroom interactions. An epistemological approach informed by social constructionism offers ways to think about how social interactions play a crucial role in constructing and interpreting the local meanings which could be particular to a specific social group. According to this perspective, it is the constant processes of social interaction through which meanings are constructed because through relations, "the world comes to be what it is for use" (Gergen, 2001, p. 6). Further, it also offers ways to think about the social texture of translanguaging practices in a particular location, which means that a particular social interaction could elicit different meanings for different people. Using ideas informed by social constructionism is consistent with the processual meanings of translanguaging advocated by translanguaging theory, where interlocutors produce translanguaging through constant meaning-making processes, resulting in shifting identities (Auer, 2019; Hua et al., 2020). These ideas appear to be taken up in a growing number of recent linguistic ethnographic studies which foreground the embeddedness of language practices in the social (Creese, 2008; Blommaert & Dong, 2010). A socially

constructionist epistemological position aligns with Mikhail Bakhtin's views on the social. Bakhtin (1981) maintains that the social is always in a process and that linguistic meanings are constantly generated through interaction between self and others. According to these views, translanguaging can never be separated from context; through social interactions, the meanings of translanguaging are non-finalizable and always created anew.

I advocate an understanding of young children's translanguaging practices as occurring in particular contexts and thus generating specific meanings that cannot be generalised nor considered neutral or hold essential meaning. Ideas from the feminist epistemologies of situated knowledges (Haraway, 1988) offer helpful ways to understand the detailed accounts I provide in this thesis about translanguaging and the multiple local forms of Muslim identities. It offers ways to think about how the contextualised occurrences and interpretations of translanguaging may not occur in other research settings. Producing knowledges involves subjective aspects since researchers are compliant and co-responsible for these processes, which necessitates adopting a reflexive stance. My interpretations of the Elmer Class children's translanguaging practices, which involved using different varieties of Arabic and English, reflect my positional perspective as a Muslim person who speaks Arabic. Thus, the use of situated knowledges to inform the epistemological approach of this study resulted in producing insights about translanguaging in relation to different questions which could be generative in other locations.

Since questions of identities, power, and inequalities shape this study on reception children's translanguaging, an epistemological approach informed by poststructuralism is particularly useful. Ideas from this approach enable understanding

the relational meanings and discursive constructions embedded in and produced by translanguaging. Poststructuralism maintains that “subjects are embedded in a complex network of social relations” (Corker & Shakespeare, 2002, p. 3) and that people are constantly subject to cultural forces and discourses. A poststructuralist perspective maintains that language practices play a role by becoming a vehicle of power in maintaining and regulating socially approved ways of being (Baxter, 2016). I view translanguagers to be placed in the same web of relations, which includes competing cultural forces, language ideologies and broader discourses to actively use translanguaging in powerful ways to construct and maintain specific ways of being.

Bringing together ideas from social constructionism, feminist epistemologies of situated knowledges, and poststructuralism is generative for this study. Together, these ideas offer productive ways to think about translanguaging as socially constructed, context-specific, relational, with particular local meanings producing specific ways of being. In keeping with this combined epistemological perspective, I take an ontological position based on a subjective view of the social world, thus rejecting the presence of a single reality or an absolute truth representing a singular ‘truth’ (Silverman, 2017). This ontological position recognises the social world as complex and multiple ‘realities’ (Atkinson, 2005). Considering the subjectivity of reality leads to recognising the complex meanings co-constructed through social interactions and language practices (Pennycook, 2010).

3.4. Choosing and accessing the site of the study

Generally, the decision to conduct this linguistic ethnographic study in primary school was influenced by several reasons. Mainly, choosing a school site stems from the

increasing use of primary schools as rich sites for the ethnographic study of children in terms of educational processes and social relations (James, 2007; Christensen & James, 2017). Much ethnographic research has shown that schools form socially significant sites to research the language practices of children and how they are influenced by broader societal relations to construct and negotiate identities (for example Cekaite, 2012; Konstantoni, 2012; Kustatscher, 2017; Huang, 2018; Lefstein & Snell, 2019). Furthermore, school-based ethnographies, especially within Early Years settings, have shown how school sites contribute to the production and reproduction of social differences, social identities, asymmetrical relations and inequalities within young children's daily formal and informal activities (Bradbury, 2011; Rosen, 2014; Kustatscher, 2015; Barley, 2016). Some school ethnographies explore children's engagements with pedagogical translanguaging in early childhood education and other educational settings (Huang, 2016; Axelrod, 2012; Seltzer, 2017; Huang, 2018; Mendoza, 2020; Fashanu, 2021). As I shall discuss in later sections in this chapter and the analytical chapters of this thesis, some of these ethnographic studies are relevant to this thesis in terms of methodological choices and ethical considerations (Rosen, 2014; Kustatscher, 2015; Huang, 2016; Mendoza, 2020) and to analytical discussions on young children's translanguaging and intersectional identities (Axelrod, 2012; Huang, 2016; Seltzer, 2017; Fashanu, 2021).

There are also pragmatic reasons for choosing a school site for this study. Schools are significant sites where children regularly spend considerable amounts of their time learning, socialising, and constructing knowledge (Rotenberg, 1995; Maybin, 2008). Most importantly, children in school settings are segregated based on age criteria into distinct year groups (Woodhead, 2009). The age-based segregation of children makes

involving a particular group of children from a specific age group in research more possible than a group of neighbourhood children.

Choosing to conduct this study in an English primary school is also influenced by gaps I identified in the translanguaging literature. I found that a significant number of translanguaging studies tended to focus on using two primary sites for research, while a small yet growing line of work has started to focus on sites of mainstream schooling (D'warte, 2014). These sites mainly included formal sites of multilingual schooling primarily in the United States and Europe and supplementary or weekend heritage language schools in the United Kingdom (see for example Creese et al., 2014; Poza, 2016; Axelrod, 2017). I was looking for a school site that would enable me to conduct participant observations at least twice a week to get a detailed view of young children's translanguaging. Choosing a weekend language school would not fulfil this condition since these are usually held once a week. Therefore, I was motivated to find an early years site in an English primary school.

Since this study examines young children's translanguaging, I initially intended to find a primary school with many Arabic-speaking children. This decision was primarily motivated by being an Arabic speaker, which would make understanding children's translanguaging relatively easier. To locate a school with this criterion, I examined the statistical evidence provided by the Office of National Statistics, the Department for Education and several Greater London boroughs. I found existing statistics related to the different languages spoken in schools relatively scarce. General statistical evidence exists on the overall number of primary school children in London who speak languages other than English (DfE, 2017b). Since I was new to London, I relied on an acquaintance who was a resident in the area and had good knowledge about the locations of a few Arabic speaking communities in London. In our conversations, the

acquaintance mentioned that many people in these communities prefer enrolling their children in Islamic primary schools. This information led me to choose a London-based Islamic primary school to be the site of this study.

The process of initiating contact with an Islamic school to gain access was not as easy as I had thought. Initially, I made a list of ten London-based Islamic primary schools based on their proximity to my residential address. After that, I started contacting these schools via telephone to see the possibility of gaining initial access for preliminary observations to familiarise myself with daily routines in reception classrooms. It was difficult to contact school headteachers due to their increasing workload. Several administrative assistants asked me about the topic of my research. Whenever I explained that my research aims to examine the use of multiple languages in the reception classroom, some assistants replied that the reception children in their schools only speak English. Others informed me that observation-based research is generally not permitted in their schools. After a series of phone calls with some Islamic schools, I started to worry because, at that time, seventeen schools refused to facilitate initial access and participate in the study.

The increasing number of Islamic schools that refused to participate in my study led me to initiate contact with a secular primary school with a majority of Arabic speaking children. The school headteacher expressed initial interest in the study. However, two main reasons led me to look for another school site. First, I have learnt that the reception children spend much time doing structured activities while only limited slots were allocated for play and other unstructured activities. Since the initial focus of this study centred around translanguaging during playtime, I found these limited time slots, of about fifteen minutes twice a day, insufficient for observations. Second, the school population was relatively homogenous in terms of social class. A decision to conduct

this study in such a setting would have led to potentially privileging particular children and marginalising the perspectives of others from lower social classes.

Finally, I approached Westwood Primary after a few telephone conversations with the school's administrative office to see the possibility of gaining initial access for preliminary observations during the spring term of 2018. I then decided to conduct my research at this site based on language and the readiness of the school to facilitate my access. Another reason for choosing this site was that the reception children tended to spend a relatively long time doing informal activities without a direct adult supervisor. I also chose this site due to its proximity to my residential address.

3.5. A methodological approach based on linguistic ethnography

In Chapter 2 (see section 2.2.3), I explained that my view of translanguaging is informed by Bakhtinian heteroglossia (Bakhtin, 1981). I argued that employing heteroglossia to translanguaging sheds light on the complex stratification of its meanings and the language ideologies associated with different languages and language varieties that inform these practices. Using a heteroglossic lens to translanguaging complements a linguistic ethnographic approach for their coinciding interest in the complexity and situatedness of meanings associated with language practices. In this study, I used a linguistic ethnographic approach that combined detailed ethnographic observations with linguistic analytic tools to capture the rich social texture and local meanings of translanguaging practices, particularly in relation to Muslim identities. This methodological approach was stimulated by previous studies that used linguistic ethnography as a methodological approach (for example Maybin, 2008). Like Mendoza (2020), I thought a linguistic ethnographic approach allowed

contextualised accounts that included particular meanings of young children's translanguaging in relation to identities.

Linguistic ethnography has grown from linguistic anthropological traditions into a well-recognised methodological approach commonly used in contemporary sociolinguistic research (Rampton et al., 2015). The rise of this methodological approach has been prompted by calls for context-sensitive approaches to examine language as intertwined with the social world and as a way to instigate social action (Hymes, 1977; Gumperz, 1982). The main aim of linguistic ethnography is to study the local meanings of language practices from the point of view of social actors and how they are embedded within broader social contexts and structures (Copland & Creese, 2015). According to linguistic ethnography, language is understood as part of the social world and can never be contextless. Therefore, this methodological approach considers the inextricable relations between language and the social to offer rich insights into the impact of language on social processes and the influences of social processes on language (Heller, 2006).

A linguistic ethnographic methodological approach is premised on the following tenets. This approach bridges the seeming gap between ethnographic and linguistic research (Creese, 2008). The first tenet of this approach is based on highlighting synergies between language practices, including multilingual ones, and the social world by incorporating "thick descriptions" (Geertz, 1973, p. 6) or detailed ethnographic observations. The ethnographic component of this methodological approach aims to "open up linguistics" (Rampton et al., 2015, p. 4) by engaging in intensive observations of language practices in social interactions over extended periods to gain rich insights (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). By doing so, linguistic ethnography obviates previous binarised presentations of language and cultures as "separate unitary wholes"

(Gumperz, 1982, p. 155) by linguistic and ethnographic research (Snell et al., 2015). This unfortunate separation led to the necessity to consider the social aspects of culture hand in hand with particular language practices in specific spatio-temporal contexts, including socially specific references and values (Copland & Creese, 2015).

The second tenet of linguistic ethnography is based on the importance of employing linguistic and discursive tools for data analysis. Using these tools to approach the linguistic ethnographic data enables understanding “how people use language and what this can tell us about wider social constraints, structures and ideologies” (Copland & Creese, 2015, p. 207). It is important to note that a linguistic ethnographic study considers language practices, such as literacy practices and multilingual practices, as the key starting points of examination (Creese & Blackledge, 2015). Highlighting these practices as entry points allows a detailed focus on linking mundane everyday conversations to broader social relations and ideologies. For example, the linguistic ethnographic study of Snell (2015) provides detailed insights into the vernacular language use of working-class children in the English area of Teesside. Snell argues that using a linguistic ethnographic approach enabled her to understand the situatedness of the children’s language practices and their relation to broader ideological meanings. I later show in the data chapters of this thesis that using this approach enabled a close-up analysis of young Muslim children’s translanguaging in Elmer class. Notably, it is their translanguaging by using English and Arabic which was employed to make repeated references to the proficiency of Arabic, especially Quranic Arabic, and to being a ‘good’ Muslim. This use can be understood to produce an ideology of Quranic Arabic as the liturgical language of Islam linked to local, imagined ideals of Muslimness.

Using a linguistic ethnographic approach is productive for the following reasons. Firstly, this methodological approach has been described as possessing a “very rich and robust collection of frameworks” (Blommaert & Rampton, 2016, p. 26). This richness is attributed to the lack of a clear-cut and prescribed set of rules to be followed (Copland & Creese, 2015). I find this open-endedness useful since it allowed flexibility in examining and analysing the reception children’s translanguaging. Using an analytical approach that draws on the theoretical framework of this study helped highlight how conflicting social meanings and ideological references associated with different varieties of English and Arabic produce different ways of being a ‘good’ Muslim. Many linguistic ethnographic studies advocate using superdiversity as a theoretical and analytical lens (Karrebæk & Charalambous, 2018). While the use of this resource was shown to be productive in many sociolinguistic studies, I believe it raises the challenge of ‘pluralising’ indexical interpretations, which might overlook how power relations can be implicated in the interpretations of “the microscopic world of talk” (Blommaert & Rampton, 2016, p. 22). The linguistic ethnographic study by Jing Huang (2016) demonstrates the usefulness of using a linguistic analytical framework that is theoretically informed to analyse translanguaging in a complementary Chinese school. Huang shows that employing Bakhtinian heteroglossia to approach teachers’ translanguaging enabled her to view the conflicting language ideologies and ethnic references embedded in and produced by different varieties of Chinese in relation to local forms of Chineseness. Huang argues for the use of this analytical approach because it enables engaging the theoretical framework of the study in the analysis process which lifts description to data evaluation in light of theory. Similar to Huang’s study, I draw on a theoretically informed analytical framework to examine the

translanguaging practices and the intersectional identities of the Elmer Class children using the theoretical resources of heteroglossia (Bakhtin, 1981) and intersectionality.

Secondly, linguistic ethnography as a methodological approach is primarily influenced by its advocacy to understand real-world issues (Tusting & Maybin, 2007). This advocacy lies in the commitment to tie everyday micro relations to meso and micro levels. This interest in real-world problems is widely advocated in the translanguaging literature, which examines how translanguagers navigate how they are positioned as deficient learners by entrenched language hierarchies. A helpful example is the linguistic ethnographic study of Mendoza (2020), which examines the translanguaging of Hawaiian children in a heritage language school. Mendoza suggests that using linguistic ethnography enabled extending the stigmatised view of the Hawaiian pidgin the children in her study used by providing rich accounts of its localised meanings. In a way similar to this study, I used linguistic ethnography to offer detailed, contextualised accounts of the Elmer class translanguaging and its implications for different Muslim identities and their localised meanings in the context of the Islamic school. Using this methodological approach enabled viewing the local, socially textured meanings of translanguaging practices rather than decontextualising them as indices of fundamentalist identities (see Chapter 7 for more discussion). It also allowed looking across multiple languages and language varieties and the ways in which they were received depending on how speakers were racialised (see 5.3 for more discussion). However, here I do not intend to imply that using a linguistic ethnographic approach to examine phenomena such as translanguaging indeed does solve 'problems', for this can be epistemologically contrary to the theoretical positioning of this study by implying the existence of objective reality. I argue that linguistic ethnography offers the potential to examine timely issues such as the translanguaging

practices of young Muslim children within settings infused by broader Islamophobic sentiments. Using this approach enables exploring the relations of these practices to Muslim identities by offering a close reading into these practices within their contexts.

3.6. Generating data

The most important research tool in ethnographic research is the ethnographer (Coffey, 2018). The presence of the ethnographer and her interactions with participants are key to producing meaningful, situated accounts about language practices in a particular setting (Creese, 2008). In this sense, ethnography is regarded as a data generation process rather than data collection (Mason, 2018). Recognising linguistic ethnographers as crucial tools in their research who co-produce and generate knowledge with the participants of their research is based on the contention of ethnographic research that ethnographers are not “insulated from the wider society” (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2019, p. 45), nor is research data is ‘out there’ in the field waiting to be collected (Gallagher, 2008a). Hence, my use of the term data generation in this section acknowledges that the linguistic ethnographic data of this study was produced through interactional processes between the research participants and myself. The process of data generation in linguistic ethnography involves using various procedures and methods to provide detailed descriptions of situated language practices in everyday contexts (Rampton et al., 2016). In this section, I describe how I used the methods of participant observations and informal conversations to generate data for this study.

3.6.1. Participant observations and informal conversations

Copland and Creese (2015) state that adopting a linguistic ethnographic approach is characterised by the sustained use of participant observations conducted over long periods. In this part, I explain how I used participant observation during the fieldwork stage of the study. I then discuss negotiating the boundaries of participation and the complex and fluid power dynamics involved in participant observation. I also discuss how my observations in Elmer Class in Westwood Primary were moderated and shaped by practical and institutional considerations.

Upon the formal start of my fieldwork in Westwood Primary, I began two days a week of participant observation. I was present in this school setting for the school year of 2018-2019, starting from the autumn term in September 2018 to the end of the summer term in July 2019. During the initial stage of my fieldwork, I observed three days a week to build rapport with the children and adults in the setting. After my presence in Elmer class became a regular part of the daily routine, I visited the school twice a week for the whole school day.

My use of participant observation in this study stems from its consideration as one of the most important data generation methods in ethnographic and linguistic ethnographic research (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). There are varying degrees of participation in observation methods, ranging from participant to non-participant (Mukherji & Albon, 2018). The study of Kustatscher (2015) demonstrates that using participant observation to generate ethnographic data offered rich insights into the children's daily classroom activities. Participant observations involved spending long periods of time with them and participating in a wide range of their activities in the school setting. As Kustatscher (2015) notes, being a participant observer enables

much engagement with young children in the research process rather than being a distant observer which could reinforce power differentials between adults and children. However, it necessitates careful ethical consideration of one's positionality as an adult researcher, which required her to explicitly state her positionality as a researcher throughout her fieldwork. Concurring with Kustatscher, I have opted to use participant observation because it offers a close view of children's everyday activities and translanguaging practices. I also chose this form of observation because I did not want to assume the position of the isolated adult researcher for fear of reinforcing adult-child power asymmetries.

Being a participant observer during the fieldwork of this study involved spending a considerable amount of time 'lurking and soaking' (Werner & Schoepfle, 1987) for the whole school day, starting from drop off time at 8:00 and ending at pick up time at 3:40. Inside the Elmer Class and throughout Westwood Primary, I was mainly involved in 'deep hanging out' (Geertz, 1998) with the reception children to understand their daily activities, translanguaging and perspectives.

Choosing participant observation as the primary data generation method in this study is motivated by several reasons. Firstly, being a participant observer was stimulated by my interest to produce a directly detailed account of children's translanguaging practices as they occur on site. Secondly, participating with the reception children in their everyday activities enabled providing situated and localised accounts of their translanguaging and the interactions in which it occurs rather than far "removed accounts" (Groundwater-Smith et al., 2014, p. 106). Thus, participant observations augmented my understanding of how the social interactions in the reception classroom relate to other practices, ideological hierarchies and discourses in the context of the Islamic primary school.

Being a participant observer in Elmer Class meant participating in a wide range of the reception children's formal and informal activities while explicitly stating my positionality as a researcher. It also involved spending considerable time with the reception children across different classrooms and school spaces. I spent time with the children in spaces such as the lunch hall, the school corridors, the computer room, the main school hall and the playground. I was also present during some school events based on the invitations I received from the Elmer class teachers, such as parent evening meetings, some school trips and the school's Eid celebration.

During formal schooling activities, what I shall refer to as 'lesson time' in the thesis, I sat on the carpet with the children, organised into four rows according to register order. Each day, I sat in a different row. I politely rejected the offers of Ms. Mina⁸, the Elmer class teacher, to offer me a seat at the front of the class close to her for the fear it would position me as a powerful adult. Sitting close to the reception children allowed me to access and participate in their off-task conversations, which I considered a potentially rich site for translanguaging. There were times when the Elmer class teachers asked me to help them during teaching activities by distributing worksheets for the children or accompanying some children to the reception classroom's restroom. I accepted participating in these activities to build good relations with the teachers and maintain my access to the reception classroom.

In the early days of my fieldwork, I started by engaging with the Elmer Class children in their formal and informal classroom activities to communicate being open to participation. For example, during lesson time, I engaged with some children by responding to their comments and questions in their off-task conversations. Despite

⁸ A pseudonym for the reception class teacher

the initial reluctance of the children to engage with me and the dismissal of my presence by some, I became much involved in these off-task conversations after I started interacting with three Arabic speaking girls who sat in the second row. The interactions with these girls seemed to produce a sense of excitement in other children who displayed keenness to have me sit next to them and explain to me 'how things go' in their classroom. For example, two children constantly offered to translate Somali to me whenever used in an off-task conversation.

At the beginning of my fieldwork, I focused my presence in the indoor and outdoor play areas since the initial focus of this study aimed to examine translanguaging practices during imaginative play activities. I chose to sit in what I thought were strategic places in the indoor play space, between the building blocks area and the home corner anticipating an invitation to get involved in a play activity. I chose a prominent place in the outdoor play area where a wooden bench was located. While at first, I felt that many children in the Elmer class seemed to be ignoring my presence, soon I was approached to participate in games such as "it", tag, hide and seek, "what time is it, Mr Wolf?" and even football matches.

To ensure the possibility of observing potential translanguaging encounters amongst the reception children, I extended my observations to the school lunch hall. At lunchtime, I sat with the reception children at their designated dining tables for this purpose. I often received invitations from some children to have lunch with them and talk about various topics. However, when I did not receive any invitation, I sat by myself in an isolated corner in the hall, having my field journal in hand to record the interactions which happened previously during the day as a form of 'aide memoires' (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007).

I have also observed the children as they were moving around the school. “Lining up” time was a potential site for informal instances of translanguaging. During this time, the reception children formed a line in register order to move from one space to another within the school. I did not take any part in arranging the line or directing the children where to go.

In daily school assemblies, which took place at the main school hall, I sat with the reception children in the front row, thus differentiating myself from the teachers who sat at the back.

While I tried to engage with as many children as possible during participant observations, I should note that the interactions highlighted in this thesis prominently feature some children more than others. This focus shows the close relations that I developed with some children, the apparent lack of the desire to ‘talk’ with me that the other children displayed limited my interactions with them. For this reason, a group of reception girls feature prominently in the analytical chapters of this study which led to focusing on Muslim femininities rather than Muslim masculinities. Additionally, some children remained silent, which I interpreted as a sign expressing a lack of interest to take part. Thus, it is worth mentioning that the children in featured interactions throughout this thesis are not a representative sample and that the aim of this linguistic ethnographic study is not to make generalisations about children or translanguaging practices. Instead, this thesis aims to offer detailed, contextualised accounts of the reception children’s translanguaging practices within a particular school context.

Being invited to participate in informal activities helped provide a first-hand account of the children’s interactions. These invitations generally took two forms. These invitations were mainly verbal when a group of children called me to join in a particular

activity. Sometimes, these invitations took a physical form by handing in play objects, performing certain gestures using hands or heads, and even getting pulled by a group of children to join an activity. In all these activities, my participation was mainly dictated by the unfolding of interactions since I did not deem it appropriate to have prescribed activities for the children. This decision was prompted by my desire to examine the occurrence of translanguaging in the micro-world of talk.

Informal conversations with the children and the adults in the Elmer class in this study supplemented participant observations with rich contextual information about the school site and its interactions. Informal conversations refer to informal interviewing (Punch, 2001), where ethnographers talk to participants about a range of topics that interest them. These conversations are considered in the methodological literature on ethnography as the key elements of exploring social sites (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007; Swain & Spire, 2020). I favoured using this method rather than formal semi-structured interviews because I did not want to pressure the children and teachers. Further, conducting formal interviews in this Islamic primary school could have triggered the anxieties of some children, teachers and other administrative staff due to the intensified scrutiny that Islamic schools face in the English context (Busher et al., 2017). This choice was in response to the constant requests of the school's headteacher not to conduct any form of formal interviewing in the school since it might be an extra burden on the teachers and the reception children.

I found these informal conversations helpful to hear the reception children and their teachers "tell it as it is" in a less "artificial" way (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007, p. 71). There was no clear-cut form to these conversations. Sometimes, I brought up some points from an earlier observation, asking the teachers and the children questions. To exemplify, sometimes, I would be in the outdoor play space with the Elmer class

teacher and teaching assistant. As we talked about many things, I asked them questions about some previous observations. The teachers would answer the questions, and usually, this helped me contextualise understanding a particular interaction. At other times, these conversations were initiated by the teachers and children. For instance, some children asked questions about an unfamiliar utterance or why something happened in an informal activity. I remember struggling to understand what a group of children meant by the word “*waka*”, repeatedly used on several occasions. At first, I noted the utterance, not knowing which language it was from or its meaning. The Elmer class teaching assistant, Ms. Choudhary, who helped me translate data from Somali, did not know either. It was an informal conversation with a group of children, initiated by one child, that enabled understanding that this word means “ok” in Moroccan Arabic, but it is used to impart meaning similar to “never mind” in English. In these ways, using informal conversations with children enables exploring their knowledge (Mayall, 2008).

Observational research is not free of challenges since these observations do not occur in a vacuum. An important issue often faced in ethnographic research can be seen in the following questions: what can or could be counted as data? Furthermore, how might these data be analysed according to linguistic ethnography? (Snell et al., 2015). In my fieldwork, I faced a similar dilemma where I constantly asked myself, how do I know that a particular interaction included translanguaging? This issue was particularly challenging as sometimes the Elmer class children appeared to use multiple languages in ways that differed from the translanguaging patterns presented in the empirical examples of many translanguaging studies. At first, I narrowed my focus to the social interactions in which the children used clear-cut and distinct examples from languages such as Arabic or Somali, which were spoken in the classroom. However,

as I was compiling copious fieldnotes, I noticed that there were instances of interactions where the children challenged these patterns of translanguaging by using creative and novel linguistic forms which contained elements from multiple languages. To illustrate an example, I was confused about how some children in Elmer Class used novel forms that blended elements from two languages, such as the word “*salyiing*”. This word includes the first element, “*saly*”, which means to pray in Arabic, and the “*ing*” particle is from English and is used to indicate either a noun or doing something. As I spent more time in the field, I found these children commonly translanguaged using multiple forms (see Chapter 6 for a detailed discussion). As Blommaert and Dong (2010) advise, challenges that arise during linguistic ethnographic fieldwork can be best approached by noting as much as possible about social interactions and locating patterns which eventually leads to the gradual refining of the research focus. My study initially focused on translanguaging practices and intersectional identity negotiations in imaginative play; its focus became slowly refined to examine the interface between translanguaging practices and negotiating intersectional Muslim identities in everyday interactions.

3.6.2. Recording data by using fieldnotes and video-recordings

Recording observational data using extensive and copious fieldnotes forms the mainstay of ethnographic research (Emerson et al., 2011). The importance of fieldnotes lies in their role in ‘fleshing out’ details to observations and serving as records functioning as memory aids for the researcher (Coffey, 2018). This study recorded ethnographic data using the two methods of fieldnotes and video recordings of observed social interactions.

I mainly recorded the generated linguistic ethnographic data of this study through participant observations and informal conversations using ethnographic fieldnotes. In these fieldnotes, I tried to record as much as I could about the children's translanguaging practices and social interactions as they occurred in the reception classroom's hectic daily routine. By keeping a small A6 notebook on my person at all times, I jotted down notes quickly whenever I heard utterances that seemed to be potential instances of translanguaging. I wrote 'semi-legible scribbles' (Mills & Morton, 2013) in this fieldnotes journal, mainly during in-between activities and lunch breaks. This process was helpful to aid my memory of the daily occurrences and to seek the teaching assistants' help in translation whenever needed.

While jotting down these fieldnotes, I included information such as observation dates, the times in which formal and informal activities took place, the duration of these activities, their location, the key interlocutors involved, and further details about the verbal and multimodal interactions. I kept a daily record of the children who wanted to 'talk' and those who did not want to. While I tried to do my best to capture the happenings at the site of this study by jotting down notes whenever possible, these notes were 'messy and unfinished' (Emerson et al., 2011).

Time constraints between activities played a role in limiting the amount of description that I could put on paper. The nature of the activities I participated in with the children at playtime hindered the process of noting things down in my field journal. For example, whenever I tried to record an utterance that seemed to be from a different language other than English, the reception children sometimes competed over my journal to write their names or draw. There were also other times when the children asked me to write their names in Arabic, which they often followed by rewriting.

I have relied on writing keywords, phrases, or sentences in my field journal to aid my memory. As Schatzman and Strauss (Schatzman & Strauss, 1973) put it, the process of writing keywords and brief descriptions in initial fieldnotes would help trigger or “trip off a string of images that afford substantial reconstruction of the observed scene” (Schatzman & Strauss, 1973, p. 93). Upon returning home after an eventful day in the field, I would develop these scribbles into fieldnotes containing detailed descriptions in the digital field journal that I kept on my personal computer when events were still fresh in my mind. I also added further contextual information in my fieldnotes to provide a fuller picture of the events in the setting.

At the end of each fieldnote entry, I allocated what I referred to as a ‘reflexive space’ to record feelings, thoughts, and emerging theoretical points relevant for analysis. As Emerson, Fretz and Shaw (2011) maintain, adopting reflexivity while writing fieldnotes highlights the awareness that what an ethnographer writes includes reminders about what occurred on particular occasions and how it shaped their methods and mode of participation. In this space, I reflected on my actions during observations and the influence of my presence in the setting. For example, I focused more on girls in my observations, even though more boys were in Elmer Class than girls. While I acknowledged that my identity as a Muslim female was one reason that restricted my interactions with the boys, this limited focus on interactions with the girls made me question my ability to generate ‘good’ data (Punch, 2012). I also reflected on the difficulties I faced while developing rapport with the participants. Keeping this ‘reflexive space’ as part of my field journal helped me realise that I was becoming a part of the social setting I was researching

In addition to the conventional method of noting down fieldnotes, I used video recordings to record the children’s interactions during their play activities. My decision

to use video recordings of social interactions in the play space was rationalised by the attempt to capture 'dynamic visual data' and create a 'rich data source' (Flewitt, 2006). I video-recorded the children's play interaction in the indoor play area to get a glimpse of the multimodality of translanguaging. A recorded video helped me revisit and better understand translanguaging as it occurred in a single interaction. It also reassured me that I had an accurate record of these interactions. Starting from November 2018, I used a small video camera that I sometimes carried with me or placed in a prominent place to record the reception children's interactions. Sometimes, the children offered to carry the camera to video-record an activity in a hidden corner away from adults. To draw an example of this, a group of reception boys video-recorded an interaction that occurred in the cloakroom. In total, I recorded about thirty-eight hours of play activities in Elmer class throughout the entire period of my fieldwork.

While these video-recorded observations helped generate transcribed data sets, recording the videos was challenging. Given the location of the Westwood Primary in a broader Islamophobic context, anxieties were often expressed by the Elmer class teachers and the headteacher over the process of video recording interactions. For example, the headteacher and the reception teachers expressed concerns about including video captures in my thesis, which could expose the features of the school. They also worried that I might portray the school as a site where English is not spoken. I tried to mitigate these concerns, and I explained to the reception teachers and the headteacher that the main reason for these video-recorded observations was to gain a contextualised understanding of translanguaging practices.

Other challenges I faced in video-recording observations included the frequent requests by some children and teachers in Elmer class to stop recording at specific points. I turned off the camera whenever a child or a group of children asked me to do

so. For example, one child asked me to turn off the camera so that he would not 'get into trouble' with the reception teachers. Additionally, there were safety issues that led me to stop video recording. Once, I immediately turned off the camera, rushing to help a child who bumped her forehead on a table edge, which caused her to bleed.

Upon returning home, I reviewed my observations to write notes about interactions and participants and transcribe the verbal data. Whenever I heard a word that I suspected to be in Somali, I noted it down using the pronunciation I heard and then checked with the reception teaching assistants, who were both speakers of Somali, to offer their translations. These teachers helped me with translations, providing the correct pronunciations and offering contextual meanings, which enabled me to understand the Somali words the reception children used.

3.7. Analysing and interpreting data

Using a linguistic ethnographic approach emphasises the importance of "meticulous analysis of language and interaction, and for analysing language as an entirety of form" (Karrebaek & Charalambous, 2017, p. 75). According to this, translanguaging should be considered not only as a linguistic phenomenon of superficial denotations. Instead, it should be examined as producing broader social, political, institutional, historical and ideological meanings. This section discusses the tools I used to analyse generated data in this study. As I have previously explained, the primary reason for using this methodological approach lies in its potential in capturing the social and contextual textures of translanguaging practices.

Ethnographic research maintains that analysis is not relegated to a particular stage, as is the case in quantitative research. Data analysis in ethnography is viewed as an ongoing iterative process that extends from fieldwork to the stage of writing up the

research (Punch, 2012). Indeed, as Hammersley and Atkinson argue, the analytical thinking of ethnographers always begins in the field. Fieldwork and analysis are deeply entangled, thus highlighting the need for a reflexive stance and “make obvious the process through which they choose to represent people’s lives in text” (Davis, 2000, pp. 203–204). Analysis in this study involved a complex writing process, rewriting and revisiting fieldnotes and transcriptions of video-recorded observations at different stages of the research.

I took the following steps to begin my analytical engagement with the generated data through participant observations and informal conversations. First, I started by writing up my scribbled fieldnotes from my field journal in a digital form to construct detailed accounts about the interactions of a specific observation day. I then followed this by writing reflections related to fieldnotes in the reflexive space I allocated in my digital field journal. These reflections were mainly about my anxieties of getting lost in the details of data and not seeing what is there. These reflections also included expressing fears about getting the ‘wrong’ conclusions. While having this space seemed to have a cathartic effect, writing about these anxieties led me to spend more time in the field, hoping to make sense of and connect my observations to the subject of the study. I followed this step of writing up my fieldnotes in a digital format by beginning a process of re-reading the generated data and layering more information from the hard copy of my field journal.

The information I added was typed using a different colour than the colour of the main text. Adding contextual information was followed by highlighting the instances of translanguaging that occurred on a specific day of observation. To categorise these instances of translanguaging, I created different colour codes. Using these colour codes helped make the data more manageable and easily identifiable. I initially

highlighted five common ways of translanguaging, which were later reduced to four (see Chapter 6 for more details). After determining the common ways of translanguaging using codes, I started another coding process to identify the forms of translanguaging used in relation to dimensions of identities. Due to the complex nature of identities, this was a complicated process that resulted in creating a large number of codes.

To relate these forms of translanguaging to identities, I started another coding process where I attempted to identify the forms of translanguaging used concerning salient dimensions of identities. As this process unfolded and included numerous revisitations of these data sets, the focus of this study became narrowed to examine intersectional Muslim identities based on the identified patterns. Specifically, it focused on uncovering relations between translanguaging which draws on English and Arabic and intersecting forms of Muslim identities.

Following the argument of Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) that analysing ethnographic data is not a cognitive activity but “a form of writing” (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007, p. 90), I started to choose fieldnote excerpts that seemed striking and constituted common practices to write analytically about them. These writings later developed into multiple iterations for the analytical chapters of this thesis. In practice, this process involved using different arguments and experimenting with various ways of bringing together seemingly contradictory data excerpts with contextualised descriptions. I revisited and annotated my fieldnotes throughout this writing process, which enabled me to generate a richly detailed description of the setting and the children’s interactions. This process of writing prompted further data layering.

I used a linguistic ethnographic approach in this study to highlight the situated and contextualised translanguaging of young children in relation to intersecting negotiations and imaginations of identities. I find this approach helpful in highlighting the necessity of considering translanguaging in relation to the social (Mazzaferro, 2018). Since this is an interdisciplinary study, I chose to approach the generated linguistic ethnographic data differently. As Rampton (2007) states, there are no strict linguistic ethnographic analytical conventions for analysing data about language practices. While many linguistic ethnographers consider transcription an important aspect of data analysis, it has been widely recognised as a ‘politicised tool’ because the researcher is fully implicated not only as a co-producer of data but as deeply embedded in the details of the produced text (Bucholtz, 2000, p. 1444). In this sense, transcriptions are not far-removed or neutral pieces of data.

This thesis presents data from fieldnotes and transcripts based on video-recorded observations. In terms of data presentation, I use excerpts of generated data following the suggestion of Campbell and Gregor (2002), followed by analytical discussions related to the arguments I present in the data chapters. I distinguish between these forms of data in these extracts by using marks used by transcription conventions⁹ used in this study (see Appendix E) to show the transcripts embedded in these extracts. At the end of these extracts, I explicitly stated the sources of these data forms. The reason for this methodological decision was to capture the social texture of the linguistic production in the context in which it occurs. It contextualises the interactional and linguistic data in interaction (Creese & Takhi, 2016).

⁹ I used the transcription convention used by Canagarajah (2017)

This decision stems from my belief that presenting chunks of transcribed data in my thesis would severely decontextualise the instances of translanguaging that I documented. I chose not to use the original language scripts of Arabic, Somali or Urdu in these transcribed bits, for it would assume prior linguistic knowledge of these languages amongst readers. Instead, I used simple anglicised transliterations following Mahmood (2011) to make the transcribed data more accessible.

Considering the linguistic diversity of Westwood Primary as a school, it was unsurprising to see that many children in Elmer class spoke different languages and language varieties. The languages spoken in the reception classroom included Arabic, Somali and Urdu. Being a fluent speaker of Arabic enabled me to understand the translanguaging forms, which included the uses of Arabic in addition to English. Since several Arabic-speaking children in Elmer class speak an Arabic vernacular that I am not familiar with, Moroccan Darija, I relied on using a Moroccan Arabic vernacular dictionary (Harrell & Sobelman, 2006) to help in understanding unfamiliar phrases. The parent volunteer in the classroom, Ms. Jumana, often offered contextual background about some Moroccan Arabic words and idiomatic phrases. Since I am not a fluent speaker of Somali or Urdu, I thought of contracting professional translation to help understand the potential instances of translanguaging in these languages. The teaching assistants of the reception classroom offered me help in translating the Somali words and phrases. I was also fortunate to have one of the children volunteer to help me understand unfamiliar Somali words and phrases. I noticed that the reception children of Elmer Class tended to translanguage mainly by using combinations of Arabic, Somali and English. While on the other hand, translanguaging using Urdu and French was less salient given that only two children spoke each language in the classroom. Perhaps, this was because only one child spoke Urdu in

the classroom. There were very few interactions in which he used a couple of phrases in Urdu related to the Muslim prayer, which I was, fortunately, able to understand since they were elementary level words. Similarly to transcribing data, translations are not free from the translators' assumptions, beliefs, histories and values (Gavioli, 2015).

I chose to use a theoretically informed linguistic analysis based on the conceptual framework of this study, which draws on the theoretical resources of Bakhtinian heteroglossia and intersectionality. As this is useful for fostering further theoretical engagement in this methodological approach (Copland & Creese, 2015, p. 45), it enables a particular view of the generated data according to the focus of the study. I have used Bakhtinian heteroglossia to understand the indexical meanings of translanguaging as embedded within a "historical flow of social relationships, struggles and meanings". (Copland & Creese, 2015, p. 37). To illustrate an example, the translanguaging utterance using the Arabic pronunciations of the words Quran, which was said as "Qur'an", served to impart particular meanings related to being a 'good' Muslim who has a good command of Quranic Arabic, especially in a non-Arabic speaking setting. An intersectional analysis enabled an understanding of the constitutive nature of social categories shaped by other categories (Konstantoni, 2012). I operationalised this approach in my analyses by examining the relations between particular instances of translanguaging and salient social categories in Muslim identities. This approach helped uncover the gendered ways in which a group of girls negotiated being the 'good' Muslim in relation to an ideal form of Muslim femininity. For example, the Arabic pronunciation of the hijab using the pharyngeal fricative sound of /h/ by a group of girls in Elmer class operated to connote meanings associated with an imagined, idealised 'good' female Muslim (see Chapter 7 for more discussions). I have tried to pay attention to the spatial aspects of translanguaging to

uncover its relations to the context in which it occurs. As a start, I included a table in my fieldnote journal through which I tried to identify and characterise the features of translanguaging which occurred in specific spaces. For example, during play time, the children translanguaged using different languages, while in school assemblies, they mainly translanguaged using English and Arabic.

3.8. Ethical considerations

The significance of the researcher as the 'key fieldwork tool' in ethnographic research (Coffey, 2018) requires careful consideration of ethics. In this section, I outline the ethical approach that I used in this study which combines formal procedures of institutional ethics and a reflexive stance inspired by the principles of Bakhtinian answerability following Albon and Rosen (2014).

3.8.1. Informed consent

Before gaining access to Westwood Primary, I had to apply to the Institute of Education Ethics Committee. Since my study involves contact with young children at a school site, I first applied to get a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check as per the requirements set by the ethics committee. I applied for a DBS check a few months before submitting my ethics application to gain initial access to a reception classroom within a primary school site to familiarise myself with classroom routines. The ethics form included sections about the nature of the research and the potential handling of possible ensuing ethical issues. This provided me with some familiarity regarding anticipating and addressing possible ethical issues. As Guillemin and Gillam (2004) state, ethics applications serve to ensure that researchers are competent and knowledgeable about potential ethical predicaments and provide a sense of

reassurance regarding appropriate dealing with such issues. Since my study did not involve collecting any personally identifying information, I, fortunately, gained approval from the committee within two weeks.

As I began my fieldwork, I followed the ethics guidelines set by the British Sociological Association (British Sociological Association, 2017) to ensure an ongoing consideration of ethical aspects. Thus, following this code, I strove to preserve the participants' privacy, anonymity, and confidentiality in my study and maintain an ethical practice. After I gained ethical approval, I decided to formally approach the school site to initiate the formal stage of my fieldwork. I gained access to Westwood Primary by contacting the school office via a telephone conversation before the formal start of my fieldwork. Ms. Erkan, one of the administrative assistants in the school office, was the one with whom I initiated the contact process. She arranged a telephone conversation with the school headteacher, followed by an informal meeting during the spring term of 2018. I initially approached the school to gain access to informal weekly observations to familiarise myself with the daily routine in the reception classroom since I had no previous background in this early childhood education setting. However, it took some time to arrange a meeting with the headteacher. After this meeting, the head granted me access to the school, attending once a week during the 2018 Spring Term. The school mandated that I present my DBS certificate, which I obtained earlier that year. After my informal conversations with Westwood Primary's headteacher and the reception teachers, they expressed interest to take part in the study.

After getting the ethical approval from the Ethics Committee at the Institute of Education, I began negotiating formal access with the gatekeepers in the school to conduct my research in the reception classroom. At first, I had a formal meeting with the headteacher, Mrs. Jones, the deputy headteacher, Ms. Khan and the reception

teachers, Ms. Mina and Ms. Choudhary. I explained what the research was about and provided multiple consent forms. After this, Mrs. Jones, Ms. Mina and Ms. Choudhary helped me arrange for an information session on multiple dates for the families of the reception children after drop-off time. Invitations for the information sessions were sent via email and the school messaging application. At the end of these information sessions, families were provided with information leaflets and consent forms (see Appendix B). After some parents expressed their interest in the research, I provided them with an information pack for their children, which included consent forms. These forms included a brief language questionnaire (see Appendix C) that aimed to identify the languages children spoke in addition to English. The majority of families identified their children as speaking Arabic. Several identified as speaking Somali, while only one family identified as speaking Urdu. While the school office informed me that many of the reception children's families have limited English proficiency, I did not want to make assumptions about their language proficiency when I conducted the information sessions. I also did not want to reinforce such assumptions by preparing leaflets in multiple languages. When I conducted the sessions, I spoke in English and tried to use clear language to explain. I also explained that if the need to explain the research information in Somali or Arabic ever arises, the families should inform me, and I will arrange for a Somali or an Urdu speaker to explain the leaflet to them. In total, twenty families gave consent and returned filled consent forms. The families of four children chose not to take part in the research. Two parents gave consent for their children to participate in the study and chose to opt out of the video-recorded observations.

After getting consent from the reception children families, Ms. Mina introduced me officially to the children and allocated a time later in that day to conduct an information session for the whole class. During circle time, I sat on the carpet with the children and

introduced myself and what I will be doing in their classroom for the year. I handed out copies of a colourful information booklet I designed for the children (see Appendix D). At the end of the information session, the reception children asked me several questions. Ms. Mina brought me the children's filled consent forms in the next few days. She has helped scrutinise the forms with parents and sent text message reminders.

Consent does not end with filling out forms about agreeing to participate in the research. It is an ongoing, negotiable process throughout the research (Gallagher, 2008b). At the start of each observation day in Elmer Class, I dedicated a page in my field journal, which included the names of children who 'wanted to talk' or 'did not want to talk' with me. I chose not to use colourful stickers or magnets for the children to indicate ongoing consent because it would reinforce assumptions about children as not understanding what consent means. Some days, others told me that 'today I don't want to talk' or 'don't write about me', which I understood as forms of opting out. Some children rarely interacted or spoke to me during my observations despite providing written consent. I understood this avoidance using the 'ethical radar' (Skånfors, 2009) as signs of expressing their lack of interest in participation.

3.8.2. Anonymity, confidentiality and privacy

Ensuring confidentiality and respecting the privacy of the research participants are crucial aspects of the research process (British Sociological Association, 2017). While gaining consent from the school, I assured the headteacher, the reception teachers and the children's families that their confidentiality would be preserved by not discussing the content of observations, information about the setting or the children in any way or with anyone. I have also explained to the children that what they say or do

in their informal activities will not be shared with the other adults in the classroom. There were some situations where the headteacher and the reception class teacher would ask me to share information about specific children based on my observations. Ms. Mina, the class teacher, once wanted to know specific information about a child, and I informed her that I could not do so due to the importance of maintaining the confidentiality of the participating children.

All the participants in the study were assured that their names would be changed into pseudonyms. The name of the school was anonymised, and no information about the borough in which it is located was shared. Using pseudonyms in this study corresponds to the importance of maintaining the confidentiality of the research participants as an ethical requirement (Allen & Wiles, 2016). My selection of pseudonyms for the children, the teachers, and the school's administrative staff reflects my view of their gender, ethnicity, and religious affiliation.

During my fieldwork in the school, I faced pressure from the headteacher to get access to my field journal to understand 'what sorts' of information I collected about them and who had access to my fieldnotes. I also faced similar pressure from the class teacher, Ms. Mina, who expressed that she would like to read what I write about the children to know the ones who 'misbehave' the most. These requests caused me to worry since I considered them as attempts to breach the confidentiality duty I was obliged towards the children. I explained that I would be willing to share general points about my observations rather than comment on specific children. I assured the headteacher that no one else had access to my field journal. I also explained that I am mainly interested in how the reception children use multiple languages and what meanings could be associated with that.

When I scribbled field notes in the research setting, I adopted an approach to 'anonymise' or 'encrypt' my writing to maintain confidentiality and privacy (Mills & Morton, 2013). I mainly jotted down fieldnotes in places where I felt children or even other adults did not surround me. I used letters to refer to the participants' pseudonyms. For example, if I were writing about Shahid, I would refer to him as 'SHD' in the fieldnotes. To maintain the anonymity of the school, I ensured that none of its identifiable features would be made known in the thesis. For example, I did not include any information about the type of the school, whether it was a voluntary-aided state school or an independent private school. Additionally, I did not include any identifiable information about the London borough in which it is located.

I tried to maintain confidentiality while writing fieldnotes confidential during writing by resorting to writing some keywords and descriptions in Arabic since the reception teachers did not possess the proficiency to read Arabic script. Another method for 'encryption' I used in writing my fieldnotes on-site was using illegible handwriting so the children and the adults inside the reception classroom would not be able to read the 'jottings' that I had in the journal. Despite these efforts, I noticed that the children generally expressed some interest in holding a pen and writing or drawing something in my field journal whenever I noted anything. As a result, it was common to see my fieldnote journal pages filled with drawings or scribbles by the children.

3.8.3. Data protection and storage

Following the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) as set by the Data Protection Act (2018) and the ethical standards set by the IOE Research Ethics Committee, I have informed the gatekeepers and the participants of this study about how the generated data will be stored, how it would be used and who would be able

to see it. I have done this in person during the information sessions I conducted prior to the start of my fieldwork. I have also expressed this in a written form in the information leaflets about this research which accompanied the written consent forms. I assured the participants and the gatekeepers that no identifying information about the school or themselves would be stored or disseminated. Furthermore, I explained to them that the video-recorded observations I was going to record would never be shared with anyone, nor will they be included in the body of the thesis.

In complying with the GDPR, which legally mandates the safe storage of research data, I have kept all forms of data related to my research in safe places. The data recorded in paper fieldnotes that I have taken were always kept in notebooks that I carried on my person during my fieldwork. I have never left these field notebooks in any accessible place in the research setting. I stored these notebooks in a locked drawer in my study at home. Upon returning home after a day in the setting, I typed these fieldnotes using Microsoft One Note Application, a digital notetaking application, on my personal computer, password-protected. To ensure safe and encrypted storage, I have used a password to protect access to my fieldnote journal. The video recordings I took in the setting were transferred to my personal computer and were stored in a password-protected folder. All these digital data files were safely backed up into cloud storage and a USB storage device which were both encrypted.

3.8.4. Adopting Bakhtinian answerability

In addition to fulfilling the formal requirements of ethical procedures, I have adopted a relational ethics approach based on the Bakhtinian notion of answerability (Albon & Rosen, 2014; Rosen, 2014).

As my research involved spending considerable time with the young reception children, I encountered some children with limited English proficiency and some who did not talk much. Given my previous background as a language teacher, I had residual assumptions that somehow reinforced my view about the unintelligibility of young children's talk, which led me to hear them say meaningless utterances at the beginning of my fieldwork. For example, as one child used to talk with me about the types of clothing that she likes, I constantly kept asking her to repeat what she said, stating that I did not get what she said. As I did that, I became anxious when she accused me of 'not being kind' and 'not caring'. This interaction made me think I communicated a sense of privilege as an 'all knowing' adult. As Albon and Rosen (2014) contend, adopting an answerable stance requires the researcher to forge a sense of caring and engagement with the participants, which is what Bakhtin (1993, p. 32) refers to as an "interested-effective attitude". The study of Rosen (2014) employed Bakhtin's answerability as a guiding ethical approach, highlighting the importance of using principles of social justice to guide constructing meaning in the research process. Rosen explains that using this attitude involves bringing meaning and value to others, especially young children, which recognizes the different ways in which they act or speak in a social setting. In this study, I use the answerable approach used by Rosen (2014) since it offers an ethical sensibility in the interactions between researchers and participants. I found using this ethical approach to guide my research practice useful since my study aimed to examine children's translanguaging practices. Given the fluidity of their translanguaging, assumptions about children's biological immaturity could lead to dismissing their creative language practices which they use to make sense of their worlds. Using this approach led me to listen to children with

care and challenge common assumptions about the unintelligibility of young children that I had when I worked as a teacher.

Using this attitude enabled me to forge meaningful relationships with some of the reception children deemed 'developmentally delayed' by the Elmer class teachers. I have seen that Jacob, one of these children, was marginalised in the classroom for these main reasons. However, it was striking to see how he engaged in playful forms of language use and interesting usage of translinguaging in informal activities. I strove to preserve the confidentiality of the research participants by not sharing the content of the conversations that I had with the reception children with their teachers. However, there was a time when I felt compelled to describe how one child, Jacob, actively used resources from different languages in creative ways during his interaction with his peers in their informal activities. My intervention to describe Jacob's general language use was to act against his exclusion from different classroom activities, including taking part in this study in which he expressed interest. Therefore, in one interaction, I explained to Ms. Mina, the class teacher, that Jacob did not seem to have the signs of 'language delay' she often referred to at the beginning of the school year by telling her general comment that he actively used language with his peers. Thus, the reason for intervening in this way was stimulated by the ethical obligations and responsibility that I had in relation to this child and acting for the child's best interest.

Using an interest-effective attitude enabled me to understand that Jacob, as a child, felt silenced by his teachers and expressed not being listened to because of some assumptions they held. Indeed, failing to observe those who are silenced contributes to silencing them further from participation (Albon & Rosen, 2014).

I approached the site of my fieldwork with confidence that I was a speaker of Arabic. I assumed that this knowledge would enable me to 'know' children's translanguaging, drawing on Arabic. This confidence formed a somewhat privileged position in understanding what was going on in the field. As interactions unfolded over the days, the Arabic speaking children seemed to translanguage in a colloquial variety of Arabic, which I was unfamiliar with and found some difficulty understanding its contextual meanings. I had to consult a dictionary of colloquial Moroccan Arabic to understand some of these children's utterances. Furthermore, the parent volunteer's presence in the reception classroom who spoke this variety of Arabic helped provide meanings to these utterances. This issue directed my attention to the many possible instances of children's translanguaging that I was not attuned to and consequently missed despite my efforts.

Adopting an answerable approach inspired by Bakhtin's work (1993) makes us as researchers understand that our interpretations of children's utterances undergo a process of meaning-making where no absolute meaning can be reached. As Kurban and Tobin (2009) put it, our interpretations as researchers are speculative attempts that are 'intuitive' and 'imaginative' to the children's utterances (Kurban & Tobin, 2009, p. 27). Our speculative interpretations show that our positions as researchers do not mean that we possess a superiority of knowledge that lead us to a single, uniform meaning.

3.8.5. My roles and identities in the field

The interaction between the researcher and the participants in sites of ethnographic studies plays a significant role in generating and creating data. In this interaction, the researcher as a "key fieldwork tool" brings their 'common sense' knowledge,

theoretical directions, values, and assumptions, impacting the research process (Reinharz, 1997; Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). It is thus important to recognise that acknowledging this impact on ethnographic observations and interpretation does not result in inaccurate representations of the social world (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2019). Instead, it shows the situated and subjective nature of the produced knowledge (Lykke, 2010). Reflexivity is thus important to understand the influence of the meanings that researchers bring to the research process and how these meanings influence the study of the research participants (Davis, 1998; Konstantoni, 2011). While I do not intend to be solipsistic, in this section, I discuss the roles I adopted in my fieldwork to understand what I brought to the field (Albon & Rosen, 2014) and the ways in which I negotiated the complex power relations throughout the process. As Gallagher (2008) observes, power forms an inevitable part of the research process and requires careful reflexive consideration. Therefore, I seek to show my particular and subjective perspectives by reflecting on these aspects which shaped this research.

From the beginning of my fieldwork in Elmer Class, I positioned myself as a friendly adult who is “not knowing” (Mukherji & Albon, 2010, p. 76). I made it clear to the reception children from the first information session I conducted that I was a university student who wanted to learn about their use of different languages. I also assumed a non-authoritative role stressing that I am not one of the teachers in the school, which resulted in distancing myself from the duties and activities carried out by the reception teachers. Maintaining a non-authoritative role for myself has been motivated by recognising that asymmetrical power relations between researchers and children can be heightened and produce privileged accounts of knowledge about them (Gallagher, 2008b; Valentine, 2000).

Being an ethnographer, especially in a school setting, presents researchers with many contradictions in terms of power relations between themselves as adults and young children. Since this study was conducted in a school setting where adults appear to have more power than children, navigating power dynamics during my fieldwork was a complex process. From the beginning of my fieldwork in Elmer Class, I have tried to position myself as a friendly adult who is “not knowing” (Mukherji & Albon, 2010, p. 76). I made it clear to the reception children from the first information session I conducted that I was a university student who wanted to learn about their use of different languages. I also assumed a non-authoritative role stressing that I am not one of the teachers in the school, which resulted in distancing myself from the duties and activities carried out by the reception teachers. Maintaining a non-authoritative role for myself has been motivated by recognising that asymmetrical power relations between researchers and children can be heightened and produce privileged accounts of knowledge about them (Valentine, 2000; Gallagher, 2008a). This is because power differentials between children and adult researchers cannot be ignored due to the factors of age, competency and experience (Einarsdóttir, 2007; Mayall, 2008).

However, many authors in childhood studies cautioned about viewing power relations as influenced by generational relations where adults are presumed to be in ‘control’ of children or that children are ‘used’ by adults taking control of their lives (Punch, 2002b). For example, Christensen (2004) argues that power relations between children and adults in the research process are much more complex and that “power moves between different actors and different social positions” (2004, p. 167). Negotiating my role as a friendly, non-authoritative adult was particularly challenging due to the fluidity of power relations. There were some feelings of confusion and conflict about the roles

I preferred to have and those expected of me by the children and the adults. In my interactions with the children, there were times when they interacted with me as an authoritative, 'official' adult, whereas at other times, they unsettled my being as an adult. In some interactions, the reception children viewed me and interacted with me as one of their teachers. At the beginning of my fieldwork at the site, it was common to hear the children refer to me as Ms. Sharifa. It was also common for them to ask me to intervene to resolve disputes. The context played a part in determining my powerful position as an adult who is protective of children to ensure their safety. However, the reception children seemed to disrupt my status as an adult at other times. This is illustrated by a number of encounters with a group of girls who often talked about me as a child. For example, a child called Amira used to ask me questions at the beginning of the autumn term, such as: "does your Mum help you get ready for school?", "do your parents help you with homework" (from fieldnotes 12/09/2018). After hearing questions, I strove to explain to the children that I am an adult who goes to university and that I do not live with my parents. Such questions seemed to be infused with binary assumptions about adulthood as a period of not going to school and childhood as a period of learning by going to school. In this way, I did not seem to be a 'proper' adult to the children.

As I spent more time during my fieldwork with the Elmer Class children than with other adults, my attempts to join the children in their informal activities were often met by excitement. There were times when two groups of children engaged in disputes in deciding with whom I would spend time. However, at others, my attempts to join the children were viewed as dubious and led to my exclusion. These attempts reflected how the children referred to me as "the lady". To illustrate an example, a few boys

used this phrase to talk about me during the stage of rapport building. I would get these invitations to join some play activities, but moments later, I hear some children saying that “ladies” do not like to play with children. There were times when I heard a child talking to another discussing what if the lady tells us off to Ms. Mina. Additionally, one child restricted other boys from inviting me to join their play by citing my difference as ‘a lady’ who should join the girls instead.

My interactions with the reception teachers were infused by complex power relations, which impacted my participant observation in Elmer Class. Navigating these relations was challenging yet was necessary for negotiating access to the site of this study. While I explained my non-authoritative role to the reception teachers at the beginning of my fieldwork, there were situations where they positioned me in an authoritative position which I accepted at certain times. The reception class teachers assigned me an authoritative adult role during some formal teaching activities. This role included doing tasks such as distributing worksheets, taking some children to the restroom, organising children during line up time and supervising children in the playground. Despite telling the teachers about my discomfort with taking up these authoritative adult roles, I accepted because of my presence as an outsider in their classroom. There were times when the reception classroom teacher emphasised my presence as an adult by asking the children to do certain activities or to behave in specific ways to ‘impress’ me. For example, during the religious education lesson, Ms. Mina used to say to the children that if they read ‘good’ during Quran time, ‘Ms. Sharifa’ will write good things about them. There were times when both teachers, Ms. Mina and Ms. Choudhary, the teaching assistant, would tell the children to play nicely and clean up after the end of play time, so I, referred to as Ms. Sharifa, would tell the headteacher that the reception children do clean up and tidy up all the time. The ‘authoritative’ way

the reception teachers positioned me seemed to contrast with the 'non-authoritative position that some of the children placed me in. For instance, it was common for us to exchange secrets or comment about the teachers. The children positioned me as a responsible adult (Christensen, 2004) whenever someone got hurt or insulted. I was approached as an adult who could help or intervene in such occurrences.

My identity as a Muslim female transpired in my relationships with the children and the teachers. Upon entering the field, I positioned myself as a Muslim female who initially wanted to learn about the use of multiple languages amongst Arabic-speaking children. I wore the hijab, and I thought that this would make my presence accepted in the school, especially amongst the adult gatekeepers. However, my different modest dress style placed me in a few awkward situations. For example, I was urged by the reception class teacher to wear an *abaya*, which is a long garment worn over clothes when a woman goes out because Muslim women 'do not wear slacks' outside of the home. I received similar remarks from the reception children who used to question me for not wearing the abaya. These remarks caused me to feel pressured since my dress choice was based on personal preference and practicality. I, therefore, resorted to asserting my Muslim identity by explicitly expressing my religious knowledge and emphasising being an Arabic speaker. These explicit expressions led the teachers to consult me in verifying some information related to the Quran and the Hadith. In retrospect, I think emphasising my identities as a Muslim female who speaks Arabic was mainly driven by the anxieties of building relationships with the participants, enabling me to produce 'good' data (Guillemin & Heggen, 2009). However, I believe that asserting my identities in this way inadvertently implicated me in producing a fixed image of the 'appropriate' female Muslim as an Arab and adhering to specific forms of modest dress. Being a Muslim female seemed to play a role in my informal interactions

with the children resulted in increased interactions with reception girls. While I was sometimes invited to the boys play activities, it was common to get rejected by some others who cited facts such as “Muslim girls do not play with Muslim boys” or “Girls cannot play with boys it’s *haram*, religiously prohibited in Arabic” to justify my exclusion from their activities (from fieldnotes 2/10/2018, 10/10/2018). As a result, I ‘hung out’ more with the girls and was often surrounded by them. These rejections are a primary reason reasons why the interactions of girls in the reception classroom figure more prominently in this thesis.

3.9. Conclusion

To conclude, I explained in this chapter that using a linguistic ethnographic methodological approach is well-suited as it offers detailed attention to translanguaging practices as embedded in banal contexts. I described how this linguistic ethnographic approach was conducted in the field and provided a rationale for the methodological decisions that I have taken. I also explained that using a theoretically informed linguistic analysis that considers the theoretical concepts of heteroglossia, intersectionality and translanguaging spaces is helpful to account for the complex and social textures of translanguaging practices. Using a relational ethical approach to inform my reflexive stance in this linguistic ethnographic study enabled extending my focus as a researcher on social justice issues.

In the following chapter, I set the scene of this study by providing a detailed description of the context in which it was conducted.

CHAPTER 4: Exploring the context of Westwood Primary

4.1. Introduction

In the preceding chapters, I introduced the study and presented its conceptual and methodological frameworks. In the following chapters, 4 and 5, I introduce the context within which the young children of Elmer Class translanguage and negotiated intersectional Muslim identities. I first start setting the scene with the present chapter that explores the broader, policy and local context of Westwood Primary. This chapter sets out the integral role of context in ethnographic accounts (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2019). It offers a detailed account of Westwood Primary, the Islamic primary school in which this study took place, on multiple levels. It also aims to provide an overview of the contextual factors which shape and impact the translanguage and Muslim identities of the young reception children in Elmer Class.

As an Islamic school, I seek to show that Westwood Primary is located in a context filled with contradictions, ambivalences and intersectional inequalities. While this Islamic school exists in a context that appears to be welcoming of social and linguistic diversity, it is set in a broader British context characterised by rampant Islamophobia after 9/11 in the U.S, 7/7 in the U.K and the rise of the radical Islamic State. Therefore, this chapter demonstrates the relations between the broader English context and the local context where the Elmer Class children and their teachers navigate complex ambivalences.

I begin the contextualised account of the site of this study by describing the macro context in which Westwood Primary is located. I discuss how English Islamic schools are impacted by broader popular, social and political discourses of Islamophobia after

the terrorist attacks of 9/11. I then introduce the policy terrain of Westwood Primary by describing the policies of Prevent Duty, the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and school inspection regimes by the Office for Standards of Education, Children's Services and Skills (OfSTED) which shape its institutional context. I then provide an account of the local context of Westwood Primary by describing the characteristics of the local school community and the school catchment area. I also introduce the school context and the participants who took part in this study.

4.2. The broader context of Islamic schools in England

“When I met the headteacher of Westwood Primary in her office to get the official approval to conduct my fieldwork in the school, I was quite anxious. In my mind, thoughts were racing, and I was worried that she might suddenly change her mind and opt not to participate in the study. I was preparing myself for the refusal of the headteacher and started to think about how difficult it is to gain access to another Islamic school. The next moment, Mrs. Jones started a conversation, and she asked me whether I knew about the number of Islamic schools in the U.K. I answered that there are approximately about 200 Islamic schools. Mrs. Jones nodded her head in agreement and added that there are ‘so many’ Islamic schools, especially in London, that the government started to allocate state funding for some of these schools. She emphasised that there are many Islamic schools here enough to make me feel that I am in a Muslim country like my home country.” (Fieldnotes: 03/09/2018).

In the above fieldnote, which I recorded after I approached the headteacher for the formal approval to begin my fieldwork in Westwood Primary at the start of the school year, the headteacher pointed to the increasing presence of many Islamic schools in the British context. The accounts of the reception teachers and members of the school senior leadership team I present in the fieldnote excerpts included in this chapter reflect their own opinions about the broader and local school context, including the institutional practices within the setting.

Indeed, as Mrs. Jones stated, Islamic schools in the U.K. are becoming increasingly visible with some even receiving state funding from local authorities in recent years. While their presence is not equal to that of Christian faith schools, the number of Islamic schools in the U.K. can indicate the growing Muslim population. In addition, Mrs. Jones pointed out that many of these Islamic schools evoke similarities to schools in Muslim countries since the majority of schools there are Islamic. I should note, however, that the similarity she draws between Westwood Primary and Islamic schools in Muslim majority countries is nearly impossible due to the specificity of their contexts. Therefore, the context of Westwood Primary should be understood as a “socially constituted, interactively sustained, time-bound phenomena” (Duranti & Goodwin, 1992, p. 2), which is not only shaped by the broader landscape but is significantly constituted by it. Furthermore, understanding the contextual particularities of this specific setting, including socio-historical, discursive, and local factors is crucial to ground the understanding of the occurring utterances (Bakhtin, 1981) and translanguaging practices.

Increased transnational mobility and complex conditions of globalisation have brought an influx of immigrants to the United Kingdom during the twentieth century (Brah, 1996). Consequently, these conditions have created a linguistically, ethnically, and religiously diverse population. In European countries, people from Muslim nations form the most significant percentage of immigrants (Cameron, 2016). In the United Kingdom, there has been a ten-fold increase in the Muslim population, estimated at 3,372,966 (Office for National Statistics, 2011). It should be noted, however, that while Islam is considered a unifying factor amongst this population, British Muslims are characterised by heterogeneity in race, ethnicity, language, origin and understanding of Islam (Modood, 2009). Due to the tendency of the Muslim community to concentrate

in certain areas, the percentage of the Muslim population in certain places has become higher than the national average. London is the largest conurbation in the country, where approximately 800,000 British Muslims from diverse linguistic, ethnic, racial and socio-economic backgrounds reside (Office for National Statistics, 2011). It is also worth mentioning that London also has the highest concentration of Islamic schools in the United Kingdom (Lawson, 2005). According to the Association of Muslim Schools in the U.K, there are currently fifty-one Islamic schools in London, ranging from primary to secondary schools and including colleges and academies (Association for Muslim Schools, 2018).

The youthful population profile of the British Muslim population led to an increased and visible presence of Muslim students in mainstream schools. An estimated fifty per cent of this population is reported to be under twenty-five years old (Office for National Statistics, 2011). The growing number of Muslim school students encouraged members of Muslim communities to establish Islamic faith schools to address the religious and educational needs of their children. The establishment of these schools, especially at the beginning of the twenty-first century, was viewed by many to reflect an emphasis on the discourse of 'celebrating diversity' in the British landscape and maintaining 'respect for all' (Shah, 2008; Ipgrave et al., 2010; Baumfield & Cush, 2017). These faith schools were premised on integrating an Islamic religious education with British education policy directives and developing a Muslim identity in an Islamic educational environment (Mabud, 2018). As Shah (2012) comments, the increasing number of Islamic schools, especially after 9/11 in this context, represents a new phenomenon that grew out of multiple factors, including the religious and educational needs of Muslim students. However, complying with the requirements of British

education policies and promoting Islamic education and a Muslim identity presents these Islamic schools with complex challenges.

On the religious level, the need for Islamic schools was generally prompted by a felt 'threat' of secular British culture, values, and ways of behaviour in mainstream state schools by some conservative members of the Muslim community on influencing the Islamic values their children uphold (Shah, 2014). The Muslim Council of Britain states that some members of the British Muslim community have expressed concerns about the seeming failure of state schools to address the religious needs of Muslim students. Some of these needs included allocating space and time for performing Muslim prayers, providing halal meals and permitting modest dress codes for Muslim girls (Muslim Council of Britain, 2015). Considering that the majority of Muslims view Islam as a religion and as "a way of life" (Dabashi, 1993, p. 439), this has significantly impacted how British Muslims understand education and what they expect of it (Shah, 2019). As a result, the educational provision of mainstream British schools was viewed by some Muslims as incompatible with their expectations of developing a Muslim identity for Muslim school children (McKenna & Francis, 2019). Significantly, the everyday microaggressions and racism that some Muslim school children faced in mainstream schools formed a driving force for establishing Islamic faith schools (Kundnani, 2007; Carr & Haynes, 2015; Hodge, 2020). The council further reported that many Muslim students have constantly faced ridiculing religious figures, beliefs and lifestyles.

On the educational level, English Islamic schools sought to address the needs of Muslim students. These needs were represented in an educational provision consistent with core Islamic religious principles, values and expectations based on the Islamic philosophy of education (Shah, 2014). The attention accorded to the

educational needs of Muslim students heightened after growing numbers of the British Muslim population expressed their dissatisfaction with the shortcomings of educational provision in state schools for their children and the constant reference to a large number of Muslim students as 'low achievers' (Muslim Council of Britain, 2015; Francis & McKenna, 2018; Lahmar, 2019). Notably, this attention resulted in studies, reports, and surveys that highlighted the academic, cultural and linguistic difficulties Muslim students face in British state schools, which possibly play a role in their 'underachievement'. However, a growing body of work has focused on questioning these students' perceived 'underachievement' in relation to broader issues in the British context (for example Archer, 2003; Abbas, 2005; Shah, 2017). Khattab and Modood (2018) argue that the large volume of work that has directed its focus on the low attainment of Muslim students has focused on a particular, small group within the Muslim population based on gender, ethnicity, and social class, thus ignoring the Muslim population its diversity and heterogeneity. The authors point out that the subjects of these studies were often Muslim female students from Pakistani and Bangladeshi origins and lower socio-economic backgrounds who performed lower than their White counterparts (Abbas, 2005; Lynch, 2013). This focus, Khattab and Modood contend, has contributed to a limiting understanding of how Muslim students perform in schools since it contradicts evidence about the increasing participation of these students in higher education institutions.

The work of Khattab and Modood (2018) is an example of work that directs attention to the complex picture of the attainment of Muslim students within British schools, which can be related to the interplay of many factors. Shah (2014) notes that school experiences considerably affect Muslim students' educational attainment. Studies exploring the relations of Muslim students' attainment to school experiences

demonstrate how mundane experiences of Islamophobia and exclusion within school settings impact the achievement of some Muslim students (Gillborn & Mirza, 2000; Basit & Tomlinson, 2012; Shah, 2012). Many of these studies claim that Muslim students, especially in state schools, face experiences of Islamophobia that intersect with gender (Hoque, 2018; Mirza & Meetoo, 2018), 'race' (Mirza, 2013a; Breen, 2018) and ethnicity (Haque & Bell, 2001). Significantly, these experiences were found by Muslim community members to discourage their children from participating in teaching and learning activities inside schools (Miah, 2017b; Saeed, 2017; Myers & Bhopal, 2018; Meetoo, 2019).

On the other hand, Muslim students in Muslim majority Islamic faith schools were found to perform better, including in under-resourced schools, making the debate on the attainment of Muslim students more complex (Lawson, 2005; Shah, 2012). In addition to school experiences, assumptions about students and broader social discourses are considered significant factors that could frame the attainment of Muslim students in particular ways. This is a point I shall elaborate on in the next section discussing the policy context of Westwood Primary. Therefore, the religious and educational needs of British Muslim students contributed to increasing the demand for Islamic faith schools as safe environments conducive to Islamic teachings and values (Shah, 2019). While these Islamic faith schools mainly started as weekend schools and independent private schools, many Islamic state schools, funded by British local authorities, have started to be established across the country (Dwyer & Meyer, 1995; Miah, 2017a).

The increasing visibility of the Muslim population and Islamic schools, especially in London, can paint a superficial picture of social and religious diversity in the British landscape. The socio-political consequences of the unjustified terrorist attacks of

9/11 in the United States and 7/7 in the United Kingdom resulted in the production and circulation of discourses about 'Britishness', Islamophobia and anti-immigration that have impacted Muslim students and Islamic schools in many ways. Using a language of 'us' and 'them' (Yuval-Davis, 2010), these discourses constructed British Muslims, including British Muslim school children, as the 'Muslim others' (Panjwani, 2014) and 'the Muslim problematic' (Miah, 2017b), reflecting racialisation, pathologisation, and moral panics about British Muslims.

On a broader level, several British Government and media reports have played a significant role in framing Muslims in essentialised ways, which contributed significantly to the rise of anti-Muslim hostility (Francis & McKenna, 2018). These reports are characterised by a tendency to essentialise Muslims linguistically by portraying them as possessing limited English language proficiency or speaking Arabic. Statements made by senior figures in the British government made associations between the 'lack of English proficiency and the high susceptibility to 'Islamic' extremism (Rosowsky, 2018). To exemplify, David Cameron, a former British Prime Minister, emphasised that 'not speaking English at home', especially by British Muslims from South Asian origins, leads to religious extremism (Rosowsky, 2018). Furthermore, reports commissioned by the British government raised alarming concerns about the lack of English language proficiency amongst British Muslims, attributed to the increased segregation of these Muslims from the wider community (for example Casey, 2016). These reports raised debates about the extent of integration of Muslim communities in British society and questioned their 'Britishness'.

In relation to education, Muslim students face complex inequalities where structural disadvantage intersects with political discourses linking Islam to terrorism since 9/11. Shain (2021) contends that Muslim students in the British context face disadvantage

in education due to the reproduction of racialised, classed and gendered inequalities. In one of her earlier works, Shain (2011) mapped how the policies of successive British governments have drawn on dominant discourses that positioned Muslims, and other marginalised social groups, as a cause of social problems and decline. Shain (2011) argues that the positioning of Muslim boys as 'failures' in terms of educational achievement reflects exclusionary racialised and classed discourses of Muslim boys as 'problems'. She thoroughly critiques these discourses and attributes Muslim boys' 'underachievement' to complex forms of racism rather than self-segregation.

These inequalities were further compounded in the aftermath of the 7/7/2005 terrorist attacks in Britain and the Trojan Horse affair in 2014, where an alleged plot by Muslim extremists to 'radicalise' the English curriculum was purportedly uncovered (Abbas, 2017). As Muslim students are increasingly viewed as 'threats' and 'suspects' through counter-terrorism policies and citizenship education classes (Mac an Ghail & Haywood, 2017), Shain (2021) argues that Muslim students face complex forms of racism which significantly affect their school experiences. Gendered racism towards Muslim female students is one powerful example. Shain (2021) maintains that Muslim female students in British education are positioned as dangerous *Muslim* girls who need regulation and surveillance. She argues that the visible markers of Muslimness, such as the hijab and Islamic forms of dress, lead these female students to face increasing cultural hostility. In the context of her study, Shain shows that Muslim girls felt responsabilised for the occurrence of any terrorist attack and that they continuously had to 'prove' to their teachers and peers that they did not advocate 'Islamist terrorism'.

The aftermath of 9/11 led to the formation of securitised policies implicitly motivated by Islamophobic and racist discourses purportedly targeting Muslim students more than others (Bonino, 2013; Awan, 2018). As I have explained in Chapter 2,

Islamophobia is a form of racism where Muslims are discriminated against based on perceived and embodied markers of Muslimness such as language, forms of dress and religious practices. An example of these policies is the Fundamental British Values (FBV) policy (DfE, 2014) which gained prominence in the wake of the Trojan Horse Affair events (Farrell & Lander, 2019). Schools are required to promote values defined as democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect for and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs and those without faith (DfE, 2014). While much confusion surrounds what is 'British' about FBV, Shain (2021) points out that promoting FBV in school settings places a burden on Muslim students to 'prove their loyalty' to the British state.

Furthermore, Taras (2013) argues that the implementation of FBV results in the stratification of citizenship to those who belong, the indigenous majority, those who can belong, the assimilated minority, and those who do not quite belong, namely the Muslim 'others'. Vincent (2019) argues that the discursive positioning of Muslims in Islamic schools as homogenous, isolationist and ultra-conservative operates as a lens through which Ofsted sees Muslims in these schools as clashing with British values. In this study, policies such as the Fundamental British Values circulated in the context of the Westwood Primary. Although the reception teachers did not refer to it in an explicit form, it seemed to influence a preferred identity position that the school worked actively to promote for the children. There was a preference in the school to encourage what was described as 'good' English to promote a British Muslim identity that the school leaders and teachers saw as more appropriate for the children for their life in Britain.

Sensationalised media reports, especially by British tabloid newspapers, tended to present a representation of British Muslims as mainly speaking Arabic by implying links

between this language and fundamentalist, radical forms of Islam (Poole, 2011; Sian et al., 2012). While it is known that Arabic is the language of the sacred text of Islam, the Holy Quran, and the language that was spoken by its Prophet Mohammed (Jaspal & Coyle, 2010; Rosowsky, 2015), not all British Muslims speak it since the majority are of South Asian origins (Shah, 2014). A purported link between the Arabic language and 'terrorism', especially in relation to young children, was highlighted in some British newspaper articles. An example of these articles appeared in the Daily Mail on 19/10/2011, based on an 'undercover' T.V. documentary about Islamic weekend schools, commonly referred to as '*madrasahs*' by British Muslim communities. This article included a shockingly sensational headline that stated that "hundreds of children abused in U.K. madrassas" (Loveys, 2011). One of the 'forms of abuse' that these children were subjected to was being forced to study a dense curriculum consisting of the Quran, principles of Islamic Law and Islamic history in Arabic for lengthy chunks of time, even if they were not speakers of Arabic. According to the point of view of the author, this Islamic curriculum is considered a source of radicalisation.

Another example of how British media linked the Arabic language and the radical forms of Islam is explained in a study by Al Tikriti and Al Mahadin (2015). Al Tikriti and Al Mahadin shed light on how British tabloid newspapers such as the Sun and the Daily Mail tended to demonise Islam and the use of Arabic by focusing on reporting about famous 'hate preachers' such as Osama bin Laden, Abu Hamza and Abu Baker Al Baghdadi, who are well known for using Arabic in their speeches. The authors argue that the sensationalised coverage of these notorious hate preachers created a social representation of Muslims as the 'dangerous other' which significantly led to increasing violence, racism and aggression against Muslims in everyday life settings. Cameron

(2013) directs the attention to how the British media portrayed the perpetrators of the London 2005 bombings as speakers of Arabic who had limited proficiency in English. However, it later turned out in an interview that the perpetrators of these attacks are proficient speakers of English who view themselves as monolinguals and lack the knowledge of Arabic.

There is an increasing number of Islamic schools in England, a point made by Westwood Primary headteacher and documented in the professional and academic literature. This increased presence indicates inclusivity and diversity in the English context. However, this diversity is superficial because the broader context of English Islamic primary schools is much more complex. Islamic schools do not occur in isolation from the broader social and political discourses that resulted from 9/11 and the rise of the 'Jihadist' radical groups. These schools are influenced by broader discourses, which collapse religion, use specific languages such as Arabic and terrorism in the same label, and infuse the educational policies and school inspections, which I shall elaborate on in the following section.

4.3. The policy and institutional context of English Islamic primary schools

“Today, at our lunch break Ms. Mina, the reception class teacher, expressed how uncomfortable and anxious she gets during my presence in her classroom because she suspects that I might be reporting the daily occurrences in her class to OfSTED. I was troubled by this revelation and explained to her that my presence here in the school was only for research purposes. She paused for a bit and apologised for what she had said. She told me that it was all due to the pressure she and other teachers in the school feel because of OfSTED inspections and their “fault-finding”. At the end of our break, Ms. Mina said a phrase that stuck in my head all day. She said that the OfSTED inspectors are constantly “hounding” them as if they are terrorists because the school is Islamic and because the teachers and children are Muslims.” (Fieldnotes: 17/09/2018).

Ms. Mina, the Elmer Class teacher, expressed some of the pressure she felt from my presence which she seemed to link with being overly scrutinised as a teacher by the inspections of the Office for the Standards of Education, Children’s Services and Skills (OfSTED). I have noted some of the words Ms. Mina used to talk about school inspections verbatim. Her use of words such as “fault-finding” could signify what can be described as discriminatory practices purportedly targeting Muslim schools, which are possibly informed by racism and Islamophobia. It is worth mentioning that the fieldnote excerpt highlighted in this section includes statements made by Ms. Mina, which reflect her own opinions and experiences as a teacher in relation to OfSTED inspections at Westwood Primary.

This section offers an overview of the policy and institutional terrain governing educational provision in Islamic English primary schools such as Westwood Primary. While the fieldnote excerpt shows Ms. Mina’s worries about the pressures induced by institutional inspection practices and their implicit links to Islamophobia, it only shows one example amongst many which recurred during my fieldwork in her classroom.

Thus, in this section, I contextualise these worries and pressures by locating them in a broader policy context that is significantly impacted by the consequences of events, i.e., the terrorist attacks of 9/11, the bombings of 7/7 in London and the Trojan Horse Affair in England. Together, these events, along with popular, social and political anti-Muslim discourses, led to the creation of counter-terrorism strategies, namely Prevent Duty (HM Government, 2015), which are enforced in educational settings and implicitly influence educational policies in Islamic schools such as the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). In this section, I explain that English Islamic primary schools can struggle to offer appropriate education for Muslim children and develop their Muslim identities while complying with statutory educational requirements. I first start by discussing how the strategy of Prevent Duty impacts Islamic Primary schools.

4.3.1. Prevent Duty

With schools being one of, if not the primary way the state relates to children and families, it is not surprising that broader Islamophobic discourses have implicitly made their way into school policy and practice. These Islamophobic discourses played a role in the suspicion of Muslims, which was exacerbated by reports of Muslim school children flying to the territory of the Islamic State to join terrorist Jihadis (ISIS) (Martini, 2018; Nyamutata, 2020).

To counter the threats of radicalisation in British society, the British government introduced a counter-terrorist strategy called Prevent Duty (HM Government, 2015, p. 3) under the Counter Terrorism and Security Act (2015). The counter-terrorism strategy of Prevent Duty mandates all childcare providers and schools “to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism” (HM Government, 2015, p. 3) and “identify children who may be vulnerable to radicalisation” (HM Government,

2015, p. 5). This strategy stresses the importance of assimilating fundamental 'British values' to build resilience to radicalisation and challenge 'extremist' views.

While the strategy of Prevent aims to build the resilience of children towards radicalisation, its agenda and implication have drawn much criticism and intense debates by education scholars. A significant criticism relates to how Prevent Duty appeared to disproportionately target Muslim children and young people in educational settings (Saeed, 2017; Breen & Meer, 2019). Qurashi (2018) argues that the focus of Prevent was placed on Muslims due to the framing of 'terror threat' as mainly Muslim. Consequently, this framing resulted in securitising Muslim relations, which demonstrated a form of discrimination towards Muslims. Busher, Choudhary, Thomas and Harris (2017) voice a criticism related to Prevent. Whilst they concur with other scholars about how Prevent targets Muslims more than others, they further maintain that Prevent is premised on assumptions conflating conservative Muslimness with ideological radicalisation and proneness to terrorism. Significantly, targeting Muslims in addition to essentialist assumptions about Muslims and Islamic religion led to teachers and children in Islamic schools to be concerned about being viewed with suspicion.

One of the ways in which Prevent infiltrates English Early Years classrooms is through the securitisation of values (Anderson, 2020). Most Islamic faith schools in the British context strive to incorporate Islamic values and a positive Muslim identity whilst complying with the British Department for Education (Shah, 2014). However, this implementation has presented these schools with many complex issues (Ahmed, 2012; Lumb, 2018). Some of these issues centre around the perceived incompatibility between the teachings of the Islamic religion, 'Britishness' and British values (Phoenix, 2019). Some of the basic teachings of Islam and content from the core sacred text,

the Holy Quran and lessons from Islamic history have been described in broader discourses as 'incompatible' with British values (Panjwani, 2014). While some of these Islamic teachings were used by Islamic schools for religious familiarisation and developing a Muslim identity, they were considered signs indicating 'fragile' Britishness in the institutional context (Farrell, 2016). This incompatibility between some elements of Islamic religious education, which were implemented in some Islamic schools, led them to receive failing inspection reports by OfSTED. The impact of these reports was significantly worsened by media coverage of failing inspection reports of some Islamic schools portrayed as 'enclaves' inculcating extremism in young children and promoting 'non-British' values (Ahmed, 2012).

Evidence collated by some professional bodies and religious organisations in the United Kingdom demonstrates how Prevent strategy appears to monitor the use of different languages by Muslim children, especially Arabic, in their everyday school activities. The Muslim Council of Britain, the largest Muslim national organisation, reported numerous cases where young children were referred to the deradicalisation intervention program Prevent based on their spontaneous use of Arabic phrases and words in some of their everyday activities. It should be noted that most of these reports occurred in mainstream, non-Islamic faith schools where educators suspected the use of particular instances of Arabic, notably those related to Islam which included the name of "*Allah*", which is the Arabic equivalent for God. Strikingly, the fleeting usage of Arabic was interpreted by some teachers as signs of 'concerning' and 'radical' behaviour' (Muslim Council of Britain, 2015, p. 3). For example, a young Muslim child was reported for saying the phrase "*Alhamdulillah*" after eating his school meal, a phrase which means praise be to Allah in Arabic and commonly used at the end of having one's food, as "inappropriate language" (Muslim Council of Britain, 2015, p. 3).

This phrase consequently led the child to be referred to social services and police interrogations for exhibiting ‘concerning behaviour’.

The safeguarding discourse of Prevent, which renders practices related to Islam as suspicious for their perceived role in spreading ‘extremism’, particularly the use of Arabic, raises questions about whether young Muslim children need saving and, if so, from what. Safeguarding plays a central role in Prevent, which presumably seeks to protect Muslim children from the risk of being drawn to terrorism where “ideology is a central factor in the radicalisation process” (HM Government, 2015, pp. 44–45). However, this strategy in policy and practice is based on problematically fused constructions of Muslim children as either vulnerable or pathologically deviant (Coppock & McGovern, 2014). These safeguarding discourses are often invoked in relation to the Muslim children who attend Islamic schools more than those who attend mainstream schools (Reed et al., 2020). Safeguarding Muslim children has intensified in the wake of the ‘Trojan Horse’ affair, where an anonymised letter claimed that radical Islamists were planning to take hold of schools in Birmingham, England, by implementing a curriculum infused with fundamentalist Islamist ethos (Awan, 2018). The letter also warned that ‘extremists’ in Islamic schools put vulnerable Muslim children at grave risk of radicalisation.

4.3.2. The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) policy

Early Years provision in mainstream and faith-based schools is governed by the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) policy (DfE, 2017), a mandatory statutory requirement for all Early Years providers in England. This policy was first introduced in 2003 as the Foundation Stage (Langston & Doherty, 2013). Later, it was revised and renamed the EYFS in 2008 (Snowling, 2013). This policy was revised in 2012 and

later in 2021 (DfE, 2021). With the primary goal to standardise Early Years provision in English educational settings, the EYFS policy aims to ensure young children's development, learning, health, and safety (DfE, 2017, p. 5).

The EYFS policy is premised on four principles that are considered key to shaping educational practice, which are: the uniqueness of each child, the importance of positive relationships in making children independent, the importance of enabling environments for learning and development and the different ways and rates children develop (DfE, 2017, p. 6). By stressing the importance of promoting school readiness, learning and development to enable 'the best start in life' (DfE, 2017), the EYFS policy highlights seven areas of learning and development in Early Years programmes. According to the policy guidance document, communication and language, physical development, and personal, social and emotional development are described as 'crucial' for learning (DfE, 2017, p. 7). It also states that Early Years providers must support and strengthen young children's learning in the four specific areas of literacy, mathematics, understanding of the world, and expressive arts.

Since the EYFS framework is considered adaptable to include a wide range of Early Years settings, faith schools are permitted to include an element of religious education for its valuable role in young children's learning experiences and identities (DfE, 2013). Regarding Islamic faith schools, the Association of Muslim Schools in the United Kingdom (2018) states that Islamic schools are permitted to adapt the EYFS framework to accommodate their needs and educational approaches. As a result, many Islamic primary schools which offer Early Years provision for Muslim children include elements of Islamic religious education, commonly referred to as *tarbiyyah Islamia* in Arabic, and developing a Muslim identity for young children (Ahmed, 2012). It should be noted that its arrangement is contingent upon the approval of school

governing bodies. Incorporating these elements stems from the importance of early childhood education in developing lifelong values for children. However, the Early Years provision in Islamic primary schools must follow the OfSTED guidance for religious education (OfSTED, 2013), which sets many compliance standards. Amongst these requirements is the emphasis on deepening the young children's understanding of religious diversity in the surrounding world (OfSTED, 2013, p. 7). Most importantly, Islamic schools are required to offer a religious education that promotes British values and adheres to the equalities law.

Promoting school readiness amongst young children is one of the EYFS policy goals to prepare them for future success. However, assumptions about particular children, broader social discourses, especially racism, and teachers expectations interplay in complex ways to produce inequalities in Early Years settings. The discourse of safeguarding the young child that the EYFS promotes seems to operate in relation to young Muslim children differently. The EYFS guidance states that Early Years providers have a duty to safeguard young children in every way possible based on the assertion that "children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure" (DfE, 2017, p. 16). The presence of broader discourses that link Islam to religious fundamentalism and extremism requires Early Years educators to be vigilant about potential radicalisation, primarily through religious education lessons (Meehan & Meehan, 2019). These concerns about the dangers of radicalisation led to contradictory assumptions about Muslim children as highly vulnerable and deviant. As Coppock, Guru and Stanley (2018) argue, safeguarding Muslim children is based on assumptions about their vulnerability to religious radicalisation. British governmental institutions justify these safeguarding efforts to serve these children's 'best interests'. Coppock and colleagues observe that this perceived vulnerability of Muslim children

positions them as in need of saving. This discourse of vulnerability to radicalisation is sometimes fused with a pathologised view of the Muslim child as deviant in the case of suspected radicalisation. There were several cases where young children were referred to anti-radicalisation programs and social services based on suspicions of religious practices in order to maintain safeguarding (Muslim Council of Britain, 2007; Muslim Council of Britain, 2015). Hence, the Prevent strategy operates in these ways to supposedly protect “the most vulnerable and impressionable members of our society” (HM Government, 2015, p. 10).

In addition to assumptions about vulnerability to radicalisation, assumptions about the ‘low’ attainment and language proficiency of particular children resulting from the focus on school readiness and assessment tools have also contributed to inequalities in Early Years settings. The work of Bradbury (2013) on the use of assessment tools, namely the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile, and how it excludes specific children from being the ‘good’ learner is highly relevant in this regard. Bradbury argues that the EYFS profile interplays with broader discourses of race, religion and social class in complex ways to exclude the children who do not conform to the White, middle class and English-speaking ideals from educational success. Further, Bradbury observes that prevailing and stereotypical discourses about Islam, amongst other discourses, contributed significantly to the construction of racialised disparities.

The focus on promoting school readiness, especially language proficiency, has resulted in contradictions that could impact some students differently. The EYFS policy guidance, on the one hand, supports the use of home languages for children who speak languages other than English in Early Years classrooms. On the other hand, it explicitly states that these children must be encouraged to develop a ‘good’ standard in English (see section 1.7 in DfE, 2017, p. 9). Robertson, Drury and Cable (2014)

argue that this contradiction leads to viewing the development and maintenance of English and home languages “as existing at two ends of a spectrum” (2014, p. 610). They further add that this binary opposition represents an implicit form of ‘silencing’ the multilingual practices of young children. As I shall discuss in Chapter 5, the reception teachers of Westwood Primary appear to navigate this contradiction in many ways. In mainstream schools, the use of particular languages in the Early Years classroom could propel a series of suspicions about Muslim children, perhaps based on the links between Arabic, its position as the liturgical language of Islam and the dangers of ideological radicalisation (Rosowsky, 2018). However, in Islamic primary schools, reception teachers negotiate multiple pressures related to assumptions about the ‘low’ attainment of Muslim children in Islamic schools compared with the national level (Shah, 2017). They also worry about how using other languages inside the classroom might impact schools’ inspection reports, given the circulating reports and popular assumptions about these schools as enclaves that do not teach English.

4.3.3. OfSTED school inspections

To maintain safeguarding and prevent the risk of radicalisation, especially after the Trojan Horse Affair, the Department for Education resorted to implementing extreme and discriminatory measures (Myers & Bhopal, 2018). One of these extreme measures is the implementation of sudden and stringent OfSTED inspections (Lander, 2016). One of the critical tasks OfSTED undertakes while inspecting Islamic schools is checking the Arabic content of the Holy Quran verses taught in Religious Education (R.E.) lessons. For example, some verses of the Holy Quran are considered to pose safeguarding risks for children since they invoke meanings associated with ‘jihad’ and religious law, which are considered inappropriate for living in ‘modern Britain’ (DfE,

2014). The way OfSTED interprets the risk posed by some elements of religious education in Islamic schools is based on relative decontextualisation and misinterpretations. Some Quranic verses are associated with particular historical contexts, and their meanings have been understood literally without due attention paid to context or morals learned. It is worth pointing out that OfSTED does not consider the teaching of the Crusades and the Holy Wars in Key Stage 3 contributing to the spread of radicalisation and racism in the same way the Islamic conquests were viewed (Bryan, 2012).

Another key task OfSTED undertakes while inspecting Islamic schools is to ask young Muslim children about Muslim practices in everyday routines. A powerful example of this questioning is how OfSTED inspectors were described to ask young Muslim girls why they wear hijabs which senior officials in the Department for Education permitted in 2017 (Griffiths & Ramzan, 2017). This decision partly arises from a series of shocking statements made by the head of OfSTED, Amanda Spielman, in 2018. Spielman stated that Muslim girls should not wear the hijab because of pressure from their families and that Muslim girls should not be allowed to wear it to 'look like their mothers' (Alimahomed-Wilson, 2020).

To conclude this section, the sedimentation of Islamophobia in Prevent and how they infiltrate the EYFS policy and OfSTED inspection has a significant influence on the policy terrain of Westwood Primary as one of many Islamic schools in England. Consequently, Islamophobia and anti-Muslim discrimination against institutional policies and practices contribute to perpetuating a state of suspicion of all practices related to Islam for the claimed sake of safeguarding young Muslim children.

Having located the Islamic school in the broader and policy contexts, I now present the social and linguistic context of Westwood Primary by describing the characteristics of its local catchment area. I focus on the linguistic and religious characteristics in the local area in which the school is located, which frame its micro context.

4.4. The local context of Westwood Primary

When I started my fieldwork at Westwood Primary, I found that the school ethos was explicitly stated in several school documents, promotional materials, and posters in multiple school spaces. The school ethos statement was mentioned in the first few pages of the school prospectus. It was also mentioned in one of the OfSTED reports that the senior leadership team of the school shared with me. Additionally, this statement was included in beautifully designed posters at the school entrance and in the main school hall where assemblies took place. The ethos of Westwood Primary was based on promoting a British Muslim identity for its school children suitable for living in a socially, linguistically and religiously diverse place such as London.

The location of this school in one of the Greater London boroughs indeed reflects such diversity. Sartorial signs of diversity caught my attention when I started visiting the local area in which the school was located. I saw many people wearing different kinds of ethnic clothing in that area. I frequently saw some people walking nearby in that area who wore the traditional garment of the *djellaba*, which is a traditional garment worn by Muslim men in North African countries such as Morocco, Algeria, Libya and Tunisia and the *thobe*, which is a long white garment worn by Middle Eastern Muslim men. I also saw some women wearing coloured abayas who often greeted me with the Islamic greeting of “*Asalamu Alaikum*” whenever I crossed paths with them. When I talked about these observations to the school office assistant, Ms. Jama, she

explained that most residents in this area are mainly Muslims from North African and other African origins.

According to the information I obtained from the school office, I have learned that the three hundred Muslim children who attend this Islamic school are from North African, African, South Asian and European origins. The information collated by the school indicates that the school children of Westwood Primary speak at least thirteen languages in addition to English, such as Arabic, Somali, Hindi, Urdu, Bengali, Turkish, Yoruba, Hausa, Albanian, Swahili, Pashtu, Tamil and French. A similar degree of linguistic diversity is reflected in the languages spoken by the school staff. Ms. Jama told me that the school staff speak several languages, including Somali, Swahili, Urdu, Arabic, Bosnian, Yoruba, Turkish, and English. In relation to the socio-economic composition of the children's families includes a relatively broad mix of people from different income backgrounds. The senior leadership team of the school informed me that the majority of families in the school are mainly from low-income backgrounds. This information was based on the high number of children who received free school meals and grants for school uniforms known to be proxies for poverty (Gorard, 2012).

Before providing biographical details about the teachers and the children who participated in this study, it is important to note that below I aim to offer a general background about them. While I mention some details about their ethnicity, national origin, spoken languages, religion, social class and political status in what follows, my main goal is to showcase the diversity of the setting while preserving the anonymity of the participants. There were two class teachers in this classroom, Ms. Mina and Ms. Naima and two teaching assistants, Ms. Choudhary and Ms. Fatia. The educational qualifications of the Elmer Class teaching staff ranged from associate degrees to undergraduate degrees in education. Three of the teachers gained their university

qualifications from British higher education institutions, except one who was educated at a university in the Middle East. One of the reception class teachers was studying for a master's degree when conducting the fieldwork for this study. Three teachers were born outside of the U.K, lived abroad for many years, and spoke other languages such as Arabic and Somali in addition to English. One class teacher was from a White European background, and the other class teacher described herself as an Arab national. The two teaching assistants were of Somali origins who moved to the United Kingdom before starting their higher education. The reception teachers who spoke Arabic described their language proficiency as elementary. They mentioned that their knowledge of Arabic is limited to the essential verses and supplications used for the five daily prayers.

Only one teacher was born in the U.K. In relation to religion, three of the teachers informed me that they were Muslims from birth, while one of the class teachers identified as a revert who recently embraced the Islamic religion. Before reverting to Islam, the teacher identified as Christian. In addition to the teaching staff, two parent volunteers were present to assist the reception teachers on Mondays and Wednesdays. Ms. Asila was one of the parent volunteers. She identified as a British national of South Asian origins. The other parent volunteer, Ms. Jumana, identified as an Arab national from a North African country recently settled in London.

During my fieldwork, there were twenty-six children in Elmer Class. In terms of gender, boys comprised most of the student population in the reception classroom. In comparison, only six girls often hung out as a group. According to a brief language questionnaire I conducted at the beginning of my fieldwork in the school, the reception children of Elmer Class spoke the languages of Arabic, Somali, Urdu and French in addition to English. Fifteen of the reception children spoke Arabic at varying

proficiency levels. Most of these children's families were born outside of the United Kingdom in North African, Arabic speaking countries. Eight children spoke Somali in addition to English. Whereas in relation to Urdu and French, only one child spoke each. According to the information provided by the school administrative office, many families in Elmer Class were from low-income backgrounds. About half of the reception children's older siblings were on free school meals and uniform grants. Notably, the parents in these families did not have higher education qualifications. Some of these families arrived in the United Kingdom to seek asylum and settled in the country for a few years when I started my fieldwork. As a result, they did not have access to employment. Parents of a few children in Elmer Class had post-graduate qualifications and had full-time employment.

The admission policy of Westwood Primary of 2018-2019 states that admission is primarily based on the location of children and families in the school catchment area, with a priority given to the households in proximity to the school building. The administrative assistants in the school office informed me that the majority of the Muslim children who attend the school are from the local neighbourhood, except about ten children who reside in different Greater London boroughs. While the school policy states that admission to the school can be provided to children of different faith backgrounds to promote inclusivity, priority is given to Muslim children from practising Muslim families. The school also accepts out of borough applications. The admission process requires completing a supplementary form which includes a religious practices test. In this form, families must confirm they are raising their children in an Islamic way according to the teachings of the Holy Quran and the Sunnah of Prophet Mohammed. This form has a section that requires families to confirm they are

'practising' Muslims who regularly attend local mosques and perform religious practices. This form must be attested by the signature of a local mosque leader.

The mission statement of Westwood Primary states that the main aim of the school is to provide the best education for Muslim children in a safe Islamic environment by applying the principles of the Noble Quran and the *Sunnah*, which refers to the sayings and teachings of the Prophet Mohammed

As is the case of any primary school in the English context, Westwood Primary comprises many school spaces where the school children engage in different activities at specific times in the school day. While broadly, the school spaces of Westwood Primary might seem like separate containers allocated for particular activities, these spaces are infused with elements of religion and religious practices.

There are no particular features that set Westwood Primary from any other English primary school from the outside. The school comprises a large building composed of three floors and a playground at the back. Since Westwood Primary is an Islamic faith-based school, the timings of the school day are not the same as other mainstream and faith-based schools, which start at 9:00. The timings of the school day differ because of early dismissals on Friday, which is considered a day of worship in the Islamic religion. Therefore, school days usually start at 8:30, which means that drop off time for the children starts at 8:00. They end at 3:20 except on Friday, where they end at 11:30 to enable families to attend congregational prayers of *Juma* (Friday in Arabic) with other Muslims in local mosques. At the end of the school day, several after-school clubs run, with ending times ranging from 4:30 to 6:00. I observed in Elmer Class from the end of drop-off time at 8:00 until the end of pick-up time at 3:40.

When entering the school and signing in in the school attendance book in the school office, elements in the school's linguistic landscape characterise it as Islamic. All posters and publications on the school notice boards are remarkably in English. However, elements from Arabic related to Islam are transliterated using English script to mark the Muslim identity of the school. For example, a poster is hung across the school entrance with the following words "*Bismillah al Rahman al Raheem*", which is Arabic and connotes the name of Allah, the most gracious and the most merciful. Usually, this phrase is used to open the reading to all chapters of the Holy Quran. Muslims also use it as a prayer to start doing something to get divine blessings. A plaque carefully placed in the main school corridor states, "make time for *salat*" *salat* is an Arabic word for prayers. On the walls that face the school playground, there is a beautiful drawing with the Islamic shahada, the principle of the Islamic faith. Interestingly, the drawing has "know your *shahada* (An Arabic word that refers to the religious declaration of Islamic belief): there is no God but Allah and that Mohammed is the prophet of Allah".

According to the informal conversations I had with members of the senior leadership team of Westwood Primary about the reasons for putting these posters across the schools, the deputy headteacher Ms. Khan told me that the presence of these materials is important to serve as a reminder for the children of their Muslim identity. Mrs. Jones emphasised that such posters and artwork are crucial to showing the school children that Islam is "a way of life".

These elements of Arabic are even used by the school staff and the children in their everyday activities. Notably, the Islamic greeting of "*Assalamu Alaikum*", which means peace be on you in Arabic, was almost used by everyone in the school instead of "good morning". In the reception classroom, when Ms. Mina used to start the day with

the register, she would call the name of a child and say “*Assalmu Alaikum Ahmet*” for example, the child would reply with “*Assalamu Alaikum Ustadha*”, which means in Arabic peace be on you teacher. The reception children who replied by using the full greeting of “*assalamu alaikum wa rahamat allahi wa barakatu*”, which means, may peace, mercy and blessings of Allah be on you, would often get praised and rewarded for showing signs of religious knowledge and respecting older people. Sometimes when I used “good morning” to greet any of the teachers, I was placed in an awkward position when they replied to me using “*wa Alaikum Assalam*”, which is used as a common reply to Islamic greeting, which means “and peace be on you too”. In addition to the greeting, the school staff used the word “*ukht*”, which means sister in Arabic, and sister while addressing each other. For male teachers, the word “*akh*” means brother, and the English word brother was sometimes used as a term of address. It is worth mentioning that these terms of address are based on the Islamic belief in global brotherhood and sisterhood since all human beings are believed to originate from the same parents, Adam and Eve. When the teachers referred to other teachers in the presence of the school children, they used the word “*ustadha*” for female teachers and “*ustadh*” for male teachers, which means teacher in Arabic. However, during my observations, there were a few times when the teachers used Miss or Mister instead.

Around midday, the whole school gets time after lunchtime to perform the dhuhur, which means noon in Arabic, prayers. The call for prayer is announced via speakers attached to the school lunch hall and classrooms to mark the start of prayer time. There is an allocated carpeted area in the main school hall equipped with prayer mats for this purpose and where the school staff and the children participate in this collective form of prayers.

However, as I shall later show in the following chapters, the Elmer Class teacher Ms. Mina expressed some worries about sudden OfSTED inspections and the possible ways in which these inspections could question and misinterpret some of the everyday practices in her classroom. I have recorded in my fieldnotes that Ms. Mina replaced the Arabic greeting of Islam with 'good morning' at some points. When some of the children asked her about this change, she said it would be a good way to practice greetings in English since school is where children learn English. Another observation is related to the reception teachers' responses to the Muslim way of dress by the reception girls. The reception teachers sometimes informed the Elmer Class girls that they do not 'need' to wear long-sleeve school shirts or the hijab as parts of their uniforms. When it was the time for the R.E. lesson, or what the reception teachers referred to as 'Quran time', the teacher would ask the girls to get their hijabs from their backpacks to show religious respect, a point I will discuss later in Chapter 7.

4.5. Conclusion

The chapter sought to set the scene for the context of this study by addressing this question. Westwood Primary is one of an increasing number of Islamic schools in England. It is located in a linguistically and socially diverse Greater London borough with a relatively high concentration of the Muslim population. However, this Islamic context in a non-Muslim majority country such as the United Kingdom is not merely a positive expression of social, religious and linguistic diversity. The presence of Islamic schools such as the one in which this study took place is not isolated from the socio-political global consequences post 9/11 and the local events of 7/7 in London and the Trojan Horse Affair in England. Broader discourses of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim discrimination are circulating widely in social, media and political circles, which

infiltrate educational policies and institutional practices such as school inspections. The local context of the school boasts pockets of Muslim concentration marked by the presence of multiple Islamic religious organisations close to the school. It is important to note that the mission of the school centres around providing a safe Islamic environment for learning. The Islamic ethos promoted by the school seemed to permeate many spaces and daily routines in the school and the reception classroom. In the next chapter, I offer a detailed account of the ideological context of this school setting which is important to ground the understanding of the reception children's translanguaging practices and the negotiations of Muslim identities.

CHAPTER 5: Heteroglossic hierarchies of language ideologies in Westwood Primary

5.1. Introduction

The preceding chapters have introduced this study and outlined its conceptual and methodological frameworks, with the previous chapter presenting the context of Westwood Primary on the broader, policy and local levels. In this chapter, I present a detailed exploration of the ideological context of this school setting. This ideological context is key to understanding the interaction between “the local interactional and the social ideological” (Creese & Blackledge, 2011, p. 4), crucial for grounding the translanguaging practices and intersectional Muslim identity negotiations. I use the concept of Bakhtinian heteroglossia (Bakhtin, 1981) to consider the co-presence of multiple competing language ideologies which produce power-laden language hierarchies in this school setting. These hierarchies reflect broader social, discursive, political, institutional, and historical references, which are parts of the reception children’s translanguaging.

The four subsequent sections draw on linguistic ethnographic data to identify the themes of language ideologies that underpinned the language interactions of the reception teachers and children. The first section presents the ideology of ‘good’ standard English as a privileged language of formal schooling. The second section explores the ideology of Quranic Arabic as the language of religious practice and religious schooling. The third section examines the ideology of French as a source of social prestige. The fourth section demonstrates the conflicting ways Urdu is used in the classroom as a source of national and ethnic pride and racial mockery. The final

section discusses how the ideology of Somali reflects its use for meaning-making and as a source of social stigma linked to language, race and class.

5.2. A Bakhtinian heteroglossic understanding of language ideologies

Rather than being viewed as decontextualised or monolithic, Bakhtin views language as practices reciprocally associated with context and ideologies (Bakhtin, 1981). A growing body of scholarly work in sociolinguistics and translanguaging has expressed concerns regarding monolithic views of language practices as informed by a singular dominant language ideology (Pietikäinen & Dufva, 2014). This work employed a heteroglossic understanding of translanguaging, which maintains that these practices are underpinned by multiple, shifting language ideologies (for example Bailey, 2007; Blackledge & Creese, 2014). The use of heteroglossia as a theoretical and analytical resource showcased the dynamic interaction between broader social relations and language ideologies which significantly impacts translanguaging practices (Charalambous et al., 2016).

As discussed in Chapter 2, Bakhtinian heteroglossia offers a useful theoretical resource to examine the contextualised interplay of languages, language varieties and ideologies in tension-filled spaces. The heteroglossic understanding I employ in this thesis reflects recognising the different stratification of language varieties within named languages, including multiple ideological positions (Bailey, 2012). This understanding opposes the unitary idea of language as a fixed entity and is consistent with the repertoire approach to language used in this thesis. There are times in this chapter where I use the linguistic name of a particular language, such as English or Arabic, for purposes of expediency where the main distinctions are between named

languages as opposed to within languages. At other times, I refer to specific varieties of some languages, such as standard English and Quranic Arabic, to discuss the ideological tensions. This discussion reflects my awareness of these varieties due to my ability to understand and speak these languages. However, sections on Somali, French and Urdu rely on using the named language only because of my unfamiliarity with these languages. As mentioned in Chapter 3, my dependence on some of the reception teachers for translations led me to become less attuned to the internal variety and stratification of these languages compared to that of English and Arabic. I should also note that my use of tension-filled spaces in this chapter aligns with Bakhtinian theorisation, which posits that spaces are beset by dynamically shifting tensions amongst broader meanings, ideologies and discourses.

In this chapter, I consider the school and the reception classroom as a space where the children's "repertoires and language ideologies come into contact" (Quehl, 2021, p. 17). This view is consistent with Bakhtinian heteroglossia, which maintains that ideological references and tensions permeate language practices. Hence, my use of heteroglossia highlights the complex and dynamic interplay between multiple language ideologies in this local context produced by specific values and interests held by interlocutors.

Using Bakhtinian heteroglossia reveals that speakers constantly produce language ideologies in interaction, demonstrating "the nature, function and symbolic value of language" (Seargeant, 2009, p. 349). Language ideologies are defined as beliefs, ideas, and mental representations considered of socio-political significance to language users (Woolard, 1992; Jaffe, 1999; Wortham, 2001). Bakhtin's material theorisation informs the understanding of ideologies in this chapter of language based on their material presence in the social world (Ball & Freedman, 2004). In this sense,

ideologies do not exist as ‘parts of reality’, but they ‘diffract’ or reflect reality in interactions (Bakhtin, 1994). Therefore, the point made by Bakhtin that “language is not a neutral medium that passes freely and easily” is worth returning to (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 291). Bakhtin refers to the complexity of language practices which necessitates paying attention to their intricacy and location in a flow of social-historical relationships, struggles and meanings (Copland & Creese, 2015).

The particularities of the setting in the site of this study show how local interactions reflect language power dynamics which corresponds to the description put forward by Heller (2006) of schools as ‘sites of struggle’. This consideration disrupts long-held social romantic illusions of equality that seem to exist in many linguistically and ethnically diverse social settings. Pavlenko (2019) argues that language interactions within these areas show that some languages appear to be ‘more equal’ than others, which links to broader everyday asymmetries. The discussion I provide in this chapter corresponds to current discussions in recent work exploring language ideologies in school settings (Creese & Blackledge, 2010; Busch, 2017). Some of these discussions show that schools are constituted and framed by multiply entangled ideologies and societal discourses (for example Quehl, 2021). I consider Westwood Primary and Elmer Class similar to these school sites due to the multiple ideologies produced and reproduced by the reception children in their translanguaging encounters.

The discussion in this chapter demonstrates the dynamically shifting language ideologies in the reception classroom and around the Islamic school, which are always in a state of constant struggle for hegemony. It resonates with Huang’s (2016) study which explored heteroglossic language ideologies in a Chinese complementary school located in an English context. Huang (2016) found that heteroglossic language ideologies were dynamically constructed by the Chinese teachers to navigate their

professional identities, ethnic Chinese identifications and a new local form of diasporic and flexible Chineseness. Huang demonstrates that ideologies of different Chinese varieties were linked to particular identities. For example, she discusses how the teacher's promotion of an ideology of Mandarin is strongly linked with an ethnic Chinese identity.

The heteroglossic language ideologies that I shall discuss in depth in the following sections relate to local forms of Muslimness negotiated in complex ways in the Islamic school. Huang (2016) primarily focuses on the heteroglossic language ideologies associated with different varieties of Chinese, such as Mandarin and Cantonese which can be attributed to the nature of the school setting in which she conducted her linguistic ethnographic study. The discussion on heteroglossic language ideologies in this chapter shares similarities with Huang's study. As I shall discuss in 5.3.1 and 5.3.2, different varieties of English and Arabic produce and reproduce particular ideologies in the context of this study. However, this discussion complicates further the heteroglossic ecology of language ideologies by examining the ideologies of different languages and some of their varieties as they come into contact in the setting. The constant pushing and pulling between the competing ideologies associated with multiple languages follows historically informed language hierarchies and inherent power relations. Consequently, these interactions produced localised language hierarchies based on spaces and social actors (Blommaert et al., 2005). Hence, Bakhtinian heteroglossia is helpful to explain how the reception children's translanguaging is embedded within multiple and struggling ideologies, which produce shifting language hierarchies.

5.3. Hierarchies of language ideologies in Elmer Class

“During the maths lesson, Ms. Mina wrote some numbers on the whiteboard from 1 to 20 and picked some children to read them. It was Abraham, Hamda, Farida and then Abdul. She then held a card showing the addition symbol ‘plus’ to everyone and stuck it on the board. She used it to form the equation ‘1+2’. She then pointed to the plus sign and asked the question: “does anybody know how to say this?”. Three children raised their hands to answer: Faizal, Abdul and Aminat. From the back row where I was seated, I could hear Hamda telling Amira that the numbers Ms. Mina wrote were “*wahid woo thineen (which means one plus two in Arabic)*”. Dale interjected that it is “one woo two” (woo means and in Arabic). Amira raised her hand and answered Ms Mina, “one woo two, Miss”. Ms. Mina smiled at her and then addressed the whole class that the symbol is not “woo”, which connotes plus in Arabic. She tried to elicit the word from the children. I could hear Shahid and Faizal discussing: “one *lagu darai* two (which means plus in Somali)” with Aminat, who sat next to them, nodding her head, saying in agreement while pointing to the whiteboard “*lagu darai*”. These side talks prompted Ms. Mina to scold the whole class, “Class!” she attracted everybody’s attention. “In English! In English, please!” and then directed her gaze toward Shahid and Faizal: “this is not *lagu*. What is *lagu*?” The whole class burst into laughter. She then said, “This is ...”, quickly averting her gaze to Abdul, who was raising his hand. Abdul answered, “plus”. She said, “this is a plus, a plus. One plus two. Say it with me”. The children chimed in one plus two. Dale playfully poked Shahid, who sat in front of him, and it was obvious to notice the scowling face of Shahid. Shahid whimpered, “noo!”. Ms. Mina then addressed the whole class, “how many times do I have to tell you that we speak English only here” (Fieldnotes: 10/10/2018).

This fieldnote excerpt was recorded at the beginning of the autumn term when I started my fieldwork in Elmer Class, Ms. Mina’s reception classroom. Elmer Class included twenty-six children who spoke Arabic, Somali, Urdu, French, and English. Whilst this excerpt offers some examples of translanguaging by the children drawing on the use of Arabic and Somali, it seems that these two languages do not appear to be occupying the same status. This seemingly unequal status raises a series of questions to help in understanding the ideological context of translanguaging in this site. Why did Ms. Mina consider the use of standard English important during lesson time? Why did she smile at Amira’s use of Arabic while at the same time she appeared to mock the use of

Somali? What does this moment convey about the values of languages by using and responding to them? Can this be related to language hierarchies in this setting? Moreover, what is particular about this setting that makes for these hierarchies? How do the power dynamics around language involved in site-specific interactions contribute to creating a contested terrain pushing and pulling from privileging English to respecting Arabic as the language of religion and stigmatising the use of Somali?

The above excerpt serves as an example. It does not intend to fix the status of Arabic and Somali as stable or as located within an equally plain ground in Elmer Class. It also does not intend to suggest that English, Arabic, and Somali are the only languages present in Elmer Class. In the following subsections, I discuss the five language ideologies which form the ideological context of Elmer Class.

5.3.1. Standard English as the privileged language of schooling

The interactions of the Elmer Class children in languages other than English in the introductory fieldnote excerpt appear to have prompted the class teacher to call for using ‘English only’ during carpet time, the time which is allocated for whole-class instructional activities. Ms. Mina’s promotion of this rule primarily reflects the position accorded to English, particularly standard variety, as the language of curriculum, assessment in Westwood Primary, which subscribes to the requirements of British Education. In this section, I examine how the daily classroom interactions between the reception children and their teachers reflect an ideology of standard English as the privileged language of formal schooling.

This ideology is one of the directly manifested ideologies in the reception classroom due to its direct association with formal classroom practices. Significantly, this ideology is located against a background of struggle to maintain a status of linguistic hegemony

against the other spoken languages by the reception children, such as Arabic, Somali, Urdu and French. The Elmer Class teachers' promotion of standard English in school activities represents an act of socialisation that aims to prepare the children for their future educational trajectories. This promotion stems from the importance accorded to standard English as the formal medium of instruction in English schools (Bourne, 1991). However, this promotion can also be interpreted as an ideological 'ritual' (Rosa & Burdick, 2016) that creates a language hierarchy bound with broader social discourses, relations, and assumptions, especially those related to race and social class (Cushing, 2021). As I shall discuss later in this section, promoting the ideology of Standard English as the privileged language of schooling in the study site racialised particular children as 'linguistically inappropriate' subjects. This racialized positioning, based on raciolinguistic ideologies, fits with the notion of 'linguistic inappropriateness' in the work of Flores and Rosa (2015), which uses a raciolinguistic lens to show how multilingual students from particular language and racialised backgrounds are positioned as 'deficient'. While Flores and Rosa (2015) mainly centre their discussion around education and academic practices, I extend the notion of linguistic inappropriateness in Chapter 7 by applying it to Muslim identities, where I argue that this linguistic inappropriateness constructs particular children as deficient and thus positions them outside the category of the 'good' Muslim.

As Busch (2017) suggests, the repertoires of children, including the very young, are not isolated from ideologies and discourses circulating in the broader context. My discussion reflects how the reception teachers promoted an ideology of standard English to comply with curricular linguistic requirements and reinforce a sense of linguistic appropriateness, which implied rejecting or devaluing other languages.

Despite this promotion in the local school and classroom contexts, the reception children actively translanguaged in various activities and across different spaces.

During my early observations in Elmer Class and Westwood Primary, I found that English generally dominated the school's linguistic landscape. The majority of the posters, signage and displays in and around the school were English. English was also used as the primary means of communication in the formal spaces of schooling with the children. While the two reception teachers identified as speakers of Arabic, they rarely used it in their everyday communication with the children who spoke this language.

It was noticeable that the reception teaching staff made a great effort to use standard English and restricted the use of non-English in their interactions with the children. Notably, the teachers and the children referred to this variety as 'good' English. However, the reception teachers were not the only ones who seemed to valorise this language ideology in Elmer Class. Significantly, the interactions of the reception children during educational activities reflected an accorded importance to this language variety. This importance was demonstrated by displaying metalinguistic awareness and engaging in language policing practices.

As I have discussed in Chapter 4, the educational provision in Elmer Class is governed by the EYFS policy (DfE, 2017). The EYFS stresses building a secure foundation for young children by promoting their learning and development in seven key areas. Literacy is one of these key areas which consider the importance of developing a good standard of English. This focus explains why the reception teachers actively promoted the use of standard English in this reception classroom. Promoting standard English ideology in this school setting is similar to many studies exploring language ideologies

in school settings. These studies documented the prevalence of promoting the 'standard' language variety in schools and its association with academic success (for example Milroy, 1999; Snell, 2013; De Costa, 2016; Ferri, 2017).

The EYFS has a set of contradictory imperatives around language and diversity which resulted in ambivalences about supporting and using home languages in the classroom. While the policy supports the use of home languages for children who speak languages besides English, it emphasises using a good standard of English. This standard variety is used to develop language skills and promote academic success. The following fieldnote excerpt demonstrates an example of how Ms. Mina emphasised the use of English in the classroom:

“As Ms. Mina sat on her chair in front of the children near the whiteboard, she started to talk about class rules and tried to get everybody to talk. Shahid was getting a bit chatty talking to Abraham at the back. Ms Mina suddenly put her index finger on her lips to indicate a gesture of “be quiet!” to Shahid. She reminded the children of one rule: listening when Miss is talking. The boys nodded their heads and listened attentively. Miss Mina then said: “We have to use good English when we talk in class because everybody speaks it here” [either referring to the school or England?]. She further added that the children have to be “accurate” and polite while talking with other children and adults in the classroom. “Arabic... Somali is for home time. English is for school; are we listening class class?” Ms. Mina continued. The children answered in what sounded like a unanimous chant, “yes, yes Miss”. (Fieldnotes: 21/09/2018)”

This excerpt illustrates an example of typical classroom talk during carpet time at the beginning of the school day in this reception classroom. Ms. Mina's constant emphasis on using 'good' English was striking, given that the children in this classroom speak multiple languages in addition to English. Some of the reception children started the school year with what Ms. Mina described as 'limited' language proficiency in English. Ms. Mina's use of English is justified by its position as the language spoken 'here' since it is the language of the curriculum, instruction and assessment, as is the case

in all English schools (Cushing, 2021). The word 'here' could be understood to suggest references to the geographical location of the school is located.

By talking this way, Ms. Mina implicitly draws a boundary by deciding which language variety and which language can be used during lesson time with the preference accorded to standard English. In the first several weeks of my observations, she also took the effort to assure me that asserting standard English in the classroom is an important aspect of her teaching. Emphasising the use of English in teaching can be understood as an attempt to prevent suspicions about Westwood Primary as one of the non-English speaking 'enclaves' as portrayed in popular and political discourses in the English context.

Ms. Mina justified the call for the reception children to speak 'good' standard English during an informal conversation we had using the following reasons. First, she talked about how promoting the use of 'English only' in class sets a solid foundation for basic literacy skills necessary for assessment purposes. Second, she stated that the children attend a school in an English-speaking country. Here, Ms Mina's rationale seems to correspond with Shah's (2014) descriptions of the perceived 'low' academic achievement of Muslim children in English Islamic schools, especially in relation to language. One source of perceived 'poor' language skills of children in Islamic schools was government-commissioned reports (for example Casey, 2016) which highlighted the large number of British Muslims who do not speak English.

Asserting the importance of using 'good' standard English for Westwood Primary can be understood as an attempt to distinguish itself from other Islamic schools purportedly promoting an Islamic, 'non-English' ideology. As Shain (2013) argues, an Islamic ideology is usually suspected by PREVENT to be 'dangerously' advocating

fundamentalism which spawns 'homegrown terrorism'. Ms. Mina and Ms. Choudhary occasionally referred to the cases of some Islamic schools in Greater London whose OfSTED inspections and ratings were covered in sensationalised media reports. The teachers supplemented these reports with insider accounts from parents of children who used to attend these schools. Ms. Mina mentioned that large segments of the school day in some of these schools were dedicated to the strict teaching of the Quran and the sayings of Prophet Mohammed, mainly in Arabic.

Furthermore, the Elmer Class teachers expressed their opinions about how these Islamic schools form breeding grounds for 'future Islamist zealots' who cannot live in the 'modern' English context. The way that these teachers talked about these Islamic schools seems to draw influence from considering Islamic religious texts in Arabic to be promoting "cultural and religious practices (...) that (...) run contrary to British values" (Casey, 2016, pp.5–6). These factors contribute to constructing Islamic faith-based schools as sources of suspicion. Hence, asserting English for interactions in the reception classroom can be considered one way the school navigates a highly charged broader social atmosphere.

Westwood Primary considers 'good' standard English central to promoting the school's ethos, which emphasises being a British Muslim. Ms. Choudhary, the reception teaching assistant, justified the promotion of standard English in Elmer class. She explained that all the children in Elmer Class are not 'native' speakers of English. She referred to the lack of opportunities to learn 'good English' at home, especially for children of Somali origins and its detrimental effects on their future educational trajectories. Ms. Choudhary's statements implicit references to broader discourses on race and social class in her assumptions about the Somali-speaking families as 'not speaking English', which significantly impacts their children's English language skills

development opportunities. Ms. Choudhary also expressed that the lack of speaking English makes these children 'unfit' for the image of the British Muslim aspired to by the school since popular imaginaries reinforce assumptions about Muslims as 'non-English' speaking. These implicit references to Somali-speaking families show how racism intersects with language. These references are examples of reproducing broader discourses about Somalis in the broader context. These discourses inform the racialization of Somalis by their exclusion from being British Muslims in this particular local context. Despite identifying as both Somali and Arabic speakers, Ms. Choudhary expressed worries about the 'interference' these languages might cause to the reception children's emergent English language skills. These worries contradict providing home language support for young children, which is permitted by the EYFS policy guidance (DfE, 2017; DfE, 2021).

Privileging the use of 'good' standard English in Elmer Class by the reception teachers could be interpreted as one of the ways they navigate requirements and pressures placed on them by the Department for Education and OfSTED. The curriculum enforced in Elmer Class follows the statutory requirements set by the EYFS statutory guidance set by the Department for Education (DfE, 2017). The teachers expressed that promoting the use of this language variety in their classroom is one of the ways to improve the academic attainment of the reception children in assessments which is highly important for future academic success. The senior leadership team in the school and the reception teachers provided school records demonstrating that many of the reception children in previous years showed emerging performance in relation to the early years learning goals. As a result, the teachers made intensified efforts to familiarise the children with assessments to improve their performance. For example, the teachers tested the children on spelling weekly based on statutory spelling lists.

Additionally, the teachers tested the children's mathematical skills and set rapid recall targets. In these short tests, the Elmer class children were given a set of problems to solve in a time ranging from seven to five minutes.

The call that privileged using 'good' English in the classroom in relation to educational activities could be seen as a push toward standardisation, unitary language and correctness, as Bakhtin (1981) explained. It also suggests embedded intentions about what constitutes a normative language variety associated with schooling. As Bakhtin highlighted, languages and language varieties are embedded within specific and unique spatio-temporal settings. To understand language as social, he suggested that these practices are saturated with social-historical references to other utterances and populated with 'intentions' (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 293). I found this push to reflect the importance of recognising Westwood Primary as an English speaking site different from imagined 'other' Islamic schools which promote 'non-English' education to children.

Promoting the ideology of 'good' standard English extended to other guided and self-initiated classroom activities. I noted a pattern of this promotion in the observational data, which took different forms. This promotion took the form of correcting children's pronunciation. For example, Amira, an Arabic speaking child, used to pronounce the word 'here' with a strong emphasis on the /r/ sound prompting the teachers to correct her by saying 'here' using the British pronunciation. It also took the form of modelling sentence structures and polite requests. The following data excerpt illustrates an example of the ideology of standard English in operation:

"It was guided activity time, and the children sat at their desks working on different activities: some were working on tracing alphabet letters with Ms. Choudhary, and some were working with Ms. Mina on tracing numbers. There was one group working on pen control pattern worksheets. Teachers moved

around from one group to another to monitor the progress of the children's work and to see if somebody needed assistance. I noticed that Jacob has good pen control compared with the others in his group. He worked silently; then, when Ms Mina approached their group table, he uttered 'water' to her. I think the word he said could have been a request to drink some water. Ms Mina replied, "Jacob, you have to say, Miss can I get some water to drink?" and she elicited a repetition of that request from him. He said it word for word after her, and then she said: "very good, this is how reception children should speak". Jacob glanced at me and then lowered his gaze immediately. I could notice that his face had blushed. She turned to me and said, "he has to speak well" (Fieldnotes: 8/10/18)"

In the above extract, Ms. Mina demanded Jacob speak English 'well', which applied to all children in the classroom despite their diverse language backgrounds. While this micro-level demand could be seen to constitute acts of language socialisation for children, it also could be understood as producing embedded broader social discourses about language and young children in two ways. Firstly, Elmer Class is a site where proper English has to be spoken primarily in responding to a request made by an authoritative adult. Secondly, children are viewed as learning passively through repetition and modelling and thus positioned as possessing no language skills without the help of adults. This method reflects a commonly held developmental discourse of children starting their early childhood education as blank states waiting to be inscribed (McKinney, 2018).

The promotion of this ideology can be seen to racialise particular children, especially those from Somali speaking backgrounds, as linguistically inappropriate subjects who are described as lacking proficiency in standard English. This point aligns with the study of Seltzer (2017) on the translanguaging of African American youth and raciolinguistic ideologies. Seltzer (2017) argues that raciolinguistic ideologies operated to position African American students as deficient, linguistically inappropriate subjects. As Seltzer (2017) discusses, the use of a standard variety of English in

relation to schooling and academic activities reflects a “common sense practice” in schools that naturalises its higher position as ‘better’ than other varieties. She maintains that this naturalisation in everyday school practices stigmatises other varieties based on ‘race’. The standard language ideology and local school language policies promoted in the school setting where Seltzer conducted her study stigmatised the language practices of African American students as highly ‘inappropriate’ for academic practices based on the assumption of their deficiencies in standard English.

The racialisation of the Somali speaking children in the reception classroom shares similarity with Seltzer’s study (2017). These children were racialised by how the reception teachers often used English to point to their linguistic ‘mistakes’ and lack of proficiency. The teachers sometimes claimed that the children had made mistakes even when the children had not made any. Racialised differentiation also appears in the ways the teachers spoke about these children as linguistically and economically ‘disadvantaged’. While teaching correct English grammar is one of the responsibilities of Early Years teachers, particular children were the common targets for grammatical modelling. By contrast, the teachers’ views about the high achievement abilities of particular children led them to stop using the modelling technique. The teachers often referred to Abdul and Fawzi, from South Asian backgrounds, as ‘smart’ and ‘brilliant’. When I pointed out this differential treatment to Ms. Mina, she mentioned that Abdul and Fawzi are ‘excellent’ and ‘learn quickly’ compared with the other children.

Elmer Class is a reception classroom that depicts a picture of the modern preschool in Western countries where early childhood education is informed by certain expectations and norms (Millei, 2019). Some expectations about the children who study in these schools link low-income backgrounds to academic underachievement. While the children in Elmer class came from various income backgrounds, the class

teacher expected everyone to speak a 'good' standard of English. This expectation even applied to those who started the school year with limited English proficiency after recently arriving from Arabic-speaking countries. Fixed positionings of the children also infuse this expectation. For example, there were 'the good behaving' Arabic speaking girls, the 'low achieving Somalis' and 'the excellent' south Asian boys. There were also children from specific language backgrounds who were thought to find pronouncing English words and speaking English 'more difficult than others'. These fixed positionings align with what Bradbury (2013) refers to as the construction of learners in the Early Years context, which interplays with 'race', gender, social class, language background and migratory status.

There appears to be a link between children's positions as learners in this classroom and their Muslim identities. It was the 'low achieving' Somali speaking children who were racialised and positioned outside being a 'good' Muslim in this school setting. It seems that how the Somali speaking children were constructed as deficient learners was linked by the teachers to a deficient Muslim identity. Although these children's engagement in religious practices and articulating their religious identities shows one of the ways in which these children navigate tensions and inequalities, their religious identities seem to be linked to how they were positioned as learners.

In their study Kenner, Kwapong, Choudhury and Ruby (2016) show that children's learner identities link with their religious identities. They argue that a religious identity dimension which is fostered through engagement in complementary faith institutions, informs children's learner identities in positive ways and fosters their progress in mainstream school settings. The discussion below, which links how the Somali speaking children are positioned as learners and as Muslims, resonates well with the work of Kenner and colleagues in one aspect. This aspect relates to the ways in which

young children's learner identities inform children's religious identities. However, I disagree with the authors' suggestion that children are always viewed and constructed positively by teachers in sites of religious education. As I shall discuss in Chapter 7, the religious education lesson or what was referred to as Quran time in the reception classroom was not immune from differential treatment of children, which was informed by broader social discourses of racism.

Kenner and colleagues argue that children's engagement in religious practices and expressions of religious identities in complementary schools is one of the strategies children use to navigate discourses of racism and low expectations about their educational achievement. My discussion on how children use translanguaging to express a sense of resistance resonates with this argument. I shall discuss this point later in detail in Chapter 7 (section 7.3.1).

The demands made by Ms. Mina to speak 'good' and 'appropriate' English, as shown in the previous data extracts, demonstrate that the classroom practices she engages in with the children can be viewed as steeped in the 'discourses of appropriateness' that interlink with raciolinguistic ideologies (Flores & Rosa, 2015). Flores and Rosa (2015) argue that while linguistic standardisation practices might seem objective, they are permeated by raciolinguistic ideologies which position specific school children in fixed racialised ways. Significantly, this fixed positioning constructs children as racialised subjects whose language practices are constantly viewed as deficient. In this sense, these discourses frame standard language practices as acceptable and key to school success. Not adhering to these 'acceptable' forms frames some children as linguistically inappropriate 'others'. This framing was evident in my discussions with the reception teachers during my fieldwork on this site. The reception teachers tended

to associate children's use of some languages, such as Somali, with deficiency and signs of linguistic delay.

The children's interactions show signs of their compliance to the request made by the teacher to use 'good' standard English. In the first example in the previous excerpt, the children produced a chorus of voices signalling their acceptance of the rule iterated by Ms. Mina, an adult who possessed authority as the class teacher. Jacob followed Ms. Mina's modelling order for the polite request in the second example, which permitted him to do a specific task. Remarkably, the reception children reproduced this ideology in the classroom by engaging in metalinguistic commentary and language policing. Reasons for engaging in these practices could include a desire to be positioned as a 'good', praiseworthy student by the class teacher. For example, Abdul's constant use of polite requests often gained recognition and praise from the reception teachers, especially in the presence of other adults in the setting.

Using metalinguistic commentary was one way the Elmer Class children appeared to reproduce the ideology of standard English as the language of schooling in everyday classroom interactions. It should be pointed out that metalinguistic commentary refers to the knowledge that speakers of a language have about it and how they talk about it (D'warte, 2014). This type of talk includes talking about some language features, evaluating them, and rendering them as either appropriate or not.

"You're not speaking/talking good" was one of the typical phrases the reception children frequently use during learning-related activities, which they do in different learning stations. Here, I examine the meanings the children seemed to attach to the language practices they considered inaccurate or including mistakes by situating them within the broader context. An instance of this metalinguistic commentary occurred in

December 2018, before the holidays break. Three children, Ahmet, Abraham and Abdul, engaged in a conversation about Amira, a speaker of Arabic who started the school year with limited proficiency since she recently moved to London with her family. As the boys talked about Amira, they interestingly made significant points. Abraham mentioned that Amira needs to practice “talking good” so the teacher can be “happy with her”. Abdul mentioned the importance of ‘good talk’, which he referred to as speaking appropriate English for school purposes. Ahmet pointed out that while it was a good thing that Amira was ‘practising’ English in class, it made her sound “funny”. Notably, using the word “funny” by this group of boys produced a local meaning referencing certain children’s inability to speak English appropriately. Additionally, the boys ‘metalinguistic’ talk demonstrated a connection between using ‘good’ standard English and positive outcomes such as teacher satisfaction and negative ones such as mockery. It can be said that while these metalinguistic commentaries about the language practices in Elmer Class operated to maintain the local language order, they can be understood to index a preferred mode of interaction in an Anglophone country.

The Elmer Class children’s assumptions about language and language ideologies seemed to function as a form of ‘border work’ or policing (Thorne, 1993) as to what languages or language varieties can or cannot be used in a particular space. Originally related to gender, Thorne’s concept of ‘border work’ refers to the interactional work used to maintain activities and expectations relating to boyhood and girlhood. Mobilising this concept in this discussion offers ways to capture how the Elmer Class children maintained expectations regarding using ‘good’ English in class. I have identified examples of bordering in some of the data excerpts in which these acts occurred. While superficially, the children might seem to be adhering to class rules

and that following the rules is something that children typically do, especially in early childhood settings, these rules are tied to broader discourses and ideologies.

Some reception children in Elmer Class policed the language use of the other children in classroom interactions. Abdul and Ahmet, whom the reception children considered praiseworthy for their exemplary use of 'good' English, engaged in border work against the children who did not follow the teachers' linguistic rules. If the child in question does not comply with that request, Ahmet and Abdul would say that they will report that to the class teacher. Ironically, they used "tell off you" instead of "tell you off". One day, I asked Abdul why he engaged in this bordering activity, and his answer struck me. He mentioned that if these children do not speak 'good', they would be 'in trouble' because teachers and children only speak English in English schools. He also reasoned that if these children cannot speak English, they should not attend English schools. When I asked him about the reason for such a statement, he answered me matter-of-factly that everybody speaks only English for everything in these schools.

Ahmet and Abdul engaged in this form of language bordering to ensure that I must follow the set rule of speaking 'good' English. They threatened to report me to Ms. Mina for not speaking appropriate English and sometimes Arabic. During the first several weeks of the autumn terms when I was building rapport with some Arabic-speaking children in the setting to navigate the awkwardness and relative isolation of my new role as an observer. Ahmet would occasionally say to me that 'no Arabic spoken here' and shake his head sideways to show his disapproval. He cautioned that I would be 'in trouble' with Ms. Mina. In one occurrence at lunchtime that term, a group of Arabic speaking girls and I were having a conversation in Arabic. Ahmet suddenly questioned our use of Arabic in this setting. These interactions can be related to the broader socio-political discourses where living in an English-speaking country is

associated with the mandatory requirement of speaking English. Otherwise, those people's identities will be questioned and constructed as 'non-British' in this context (Kahani-Hopkins & Hopkins, 2002).

To conclude, this section has shown how the classroom practices in Elmer Class promoted the ideology of 'good' standard English as the privileged language of schooling. The interactions between the reception teachers and the reception children have demonstrated a demand for 'good' English in relation to formal educational activities and schooling. This push towards standardisation reflects an act of language socialisation for English as the formal medium of education and an act of racialisation that constructs some children as linguistically inappropriate subjects.

As an Islamic school, Westwood Primary operates within a context of contradictory imperatives necessitating good standard English in relation to schooling. However, this school setting ascribes value to Quranic Arabic as the language of religious practices and religious instruction, given its position as the liturgical language of Islam. In the following section, I explore the ideology of Quranic Arabic, which was present in the ideological context of the school.

5.3.2. Quranic Arabic as the language of religious practice and education

As I have explained in the previous section, the ideology of 'good' standard English in relation to schooling seemingly prevailed in the reception classroom. As Hamda's use of the phrase "*wahid woo thneen*" (one and two in Arabic) in the introductory fieldnote excerpt (see Section 5.3) indicates, Arabic is another language that was present in this school setting.

In this section, I argue that during particular activities and within specific spaces, the ideology of Quranic Arabic¹⁰ as the language of religious practice and education was promoted. The presence and interaction of two varieties in this setting, namely Quranic Arabic and a regional vernacular form of Arabic called Moroccan Arabic, was characterised by moments of struggle in relation to Muslimness. At some times, this value made this language variety achieve a momentarily stable, non-threatening relationship to English as the language of schooling and, at other times, a state of struggle within the OfSTED and PREVENT. However, at other times, the presence of the Moroccan vernacular resulted in struggles related to being an 'appropriate' Muslim. I first discuss this ideology by offering contextual information about these two language varieties.

The first language variety, Quranic Arabic, seemed to occupy a prominent place in Westwood Primary in the school spaces and activities related to religion due to its known position as the language of the Islamic faith. Muslims commonly know that Arabic is the language in which the Quran was revealed, written and spoken by its Prophet Mohammed (Jaspal & Coyle, 2009). Quranic Arabic is the language variety that almost all Muslims across the globe use for religious practices such as the five daily prayers. This variety represents a high-status standard that is usually incorporated into religious practices. Rosowsky (2015) mentions that it is almost impossible for any Muslim to pray without reciting the introductory chapter of the Quran, *Al Fatihah*, in Quranic Arabic. The status of this language variety is mentioned in the most widely known English translated version of the Quran. Mohammed Marmaduke Picktall, who

¹⁰ Quranic Arabic, or Classical Arabic, is a high status, standard variety of Arabic. This variety is referred to in Arabic as *Al Arabiyah Al Fusha* and is considered the liturgical language of Islam. It is also used in Classical Arabic literature. In this thesis, I use Quranic Arabic to refer to this variety.

translated this version, acknowledged in its preface that no language could “take the place of the Quran in Arabic” (Pickthall, 1997, p. 7) and that it is the only means by which the ‘true’ essence of religious teachings can be expressed.

The prevalence of this language ideology in this study site is similar to what was documented in many studies that examined language ideologies in Islamic schools. Asker and Martin-Jones (2013) show that the use of Quranic Arabic in schools where some students spoke Berber was valued in religious observance and acts of worship. The study of Alam (2020) in Indian Madrasahs demonstrates the ideological importance of this language variety in relation to religious authenticity and appropriateness.

The second language variety, Moroccan Arabic, locally referred to as *Darija*, is a regional vernacular mainly spoken in Morocco in North Africa. This language variety was spoken by most of the reception children in Elmer Class. In the brief language questionnaire that I conducted at the start of my fieldwork, about fifteen children were identified as Arabic speakers by their families. I have also learned from the reception teachers and the children’s families that nearly all of these children were of Moroccan origins except for one child from Libya. According to the information provided by the parent volunteer who spoke this variety in her social life, the child who spoke Libyan Arabic tended to use elements from Moroccan Arabic in his interactions with the other children who spoke this variety. She also mentioned that Libyan Arabic contains many similar elements to Moroccan Arabic. As I have already discussed in Chapter 4, the majority of the Arabic speaking children attending Westwood Primary were predominantly of North African origins from countries such as Algeria, Libya, Morocco, and Tunisia compared to Muslims from Somali and South Asian backgrounds. While people originating from these North African countries speak different varieties of

Arabic, it is worth mentioning that these varieties contain a significant number of mutually intelligible elements and use some words from Quranic Arabic (Anssari-Naim, 2016).

I have noted in my observations some wider-scale and smaller-scale religious practices in some spaces in Westwood Primary and Elmer Class, which appeared to reflect an ideology valuing Quranic Arabic as the language of religious practices and education. An example of this valorisation was primarily evident in the daily school assemblies. These assemblies took place in the main school hall at 8:15, which marked the official start of the school day before classes. It was common practice for the school headteacher, Mrs. Jones, to let the children who were proficient in Arabic lead the assembly by reciting prayers, supplications, religious poetry or some verses from the Holy Quran in Arabic to the whole school.

Ms. Zuha, the Arabic language teacher of the school, was the one who directed these assemblies. She expressed that she viewed them as an opportunity for children to practice basic prayers in this variety. She also supervised the rehearsals of “*nasheed*” recitations, a form of religious sung poetry, which some school children performed in Arabic every Friday. It could be said that the position Ms. Zuha assumed in assemblies is due to her ‘native’ language proficiency and advanced knowledge of Quranic Arabic, which familiarised her with its intricacies.

During discussions about the meanings of some chapters of the Quran in morning assemblies, the children present commonly responded to Ms. Zuha’s questions in English. Ms. Zuha typically responded to the children by “say it in Arabic”. If a child who had limited fluency in Arabic participated in these religious discussions, she would encourage them by saying “*na’am barak Allahu feik*”, which means “yes God bless”, a

phrase used in Arabic schools by teachers for eliciting answers. However, when some Arabic-speaking children used vernacular Arabic to participate in these discussions, Ms. Zuha demanded they speak using elements from Quranic Arabic, which she referred to as “Al Fusha” because it is the liturgical language variety of Islam.

The ideology of Quranic Arabic as the language of religious practice and education appeared in the utterances of the two reception class teachers, Ms. Mina and Ms. Naima. While both teachers identified as Muslim ‘reverts’, a term used to refer to people who recently embraced Islam, signifying their personal choice to become Muslims, Arabic appeared more in Ms. Naima’s language practices than those of Ms. Mina. Ms. Naima would often use Arabic phrases which are derived from Quranic Arabic, such as “*mashallah*”, which means great, “*mumtaz*”, which means excellent, and “*Subhan Allah*”, which means how great is Allah but can be used as an expression of exclamation. Despite the reception teachers identifying as speakers of Arabic, Ms. Mina and Ms. Naima have expressed to me on multiple occasions that their Arabic is not as ‘good’ as mine. Ms Mina mentioned that she knows ‘very basic’ Arabic, which is sufficient only to read some of the shortest chapters of the Quran.

Similarly, the other class teacher, Ms. Naima, who took over Elmer Class in Spring 2019, constantly used the phrase ‘not good enough’ to describe her Arabic language skills. I could see Ms. Naima looking in my direction whenever she used Arabic in the classroom during free-flow activities but especially during religious education lessons. She would commonly use phrases like: ‘Isn’t this how you say it?’ and ‘am I pronouncing it correctly?’. Perhaps, the teachers considered me more familiar with Quranic Arabic because I received nearly all of my education in standard Arabic. Upon their requests, I provided meanings and corrections for the teachers’ pronunciation of many Arabic forms.

It seemed to matter to the teachers that they use 'appropriate' and 'good' Arabic to teach children the basics of religion in religious education lessons. Ms. Naima knows that being the class teacher requires setting and enforcing standards about language. I found her confidence in using English to be countered by relative anxiety about using elements from Quranic Arabic in the religious education lesson. Ms. Naima's anxiety could have resulted from a fear of making errors or mispronunciations. Such errors might potentially threaten her authoritative position in Elmer Class to maintain the standards of language appropriateness. It could also relate to concerns about 'not knowing enough', a threat that potentially seemed to be exacerbated by my presence in her classroom, knowing that I am fluent in this standard variety.

The ideological connections between Islam and a Quranic of Arabic made the teaching assistant, Ms. Fatia, a speaker of Somali, ask me if she was praying 'the right way'. She complained of worries that her prayers might not be accepted because of her inability to direct the words of the Quran to God in 'appropriately' and 'correctly'. While using Arabic in prayer is a subject of intense debate in Islamic jurisprudence scholarship, her concern could be possibly prompted by the assertion of some prominent religious scholars of the centrality of Quranic Arabic to liturgical practices. For example, Mohammed Marmaduke Pickthall, the author of the most well-known English translation of the Quran, maintains that the Quran can never be translated (Pickthall, 1997; Jaspal & Coyle, 2010). I assured her that no matter what her pronunciation sounds like or whatever language she uses, she needs not to worry because her prayers will be accepted.

In the religious education component of the curriculum, Ms. Naima placed emphasised learning the shortest chapters of the Quran necessary for prayer in 'good' Arabic. She often offered the parent volunteer, Ms. Jumana, who is of Moroccan origins and a

fluent speaker of Arabic, the lead in modelling the recitation of these chapters for the children because of her advanced proficiency in Quranic Arabic. The following extract illustrates that while Arabic is valorised in practices related to religious education, it can be interwoven with privileging the use of 'good' English as the language of schooling:

“After playtime and after everybody was seated on the carpet, Ms Naima called the attention of the children by saying, “class, class”. The children immediately got quiet and responded, “yes, yes, Miss”. She invited Ms Jumana to sit next to her and told them everyone should be nice and listen. She then took her pink portfolio and went to the other side of the classroom. Ms. Jumana greeted the children in Arabic, “*assalmu alaikum wa rahmatu allahi wa barakatu ya awlad*” (“peace be upon you children), and the children responded, “*wa alaikumu salam wa rahmatu Allah wa barakatu ustadha*” (peace and blessings be upon you, teacher). She told the children that they would read Surat Al Falaq, the chapter of dusk; she took the marker and wrote the name of the chapter in Arabic. She asked if anyone knew it already. Her daughter Farida raised her hand, but Ms. Jumana chose Zeinah, sitting next to Farida. Farida then protested, “*ana ya Ummi* choose me”, which translates to Mum, I want you to. Her mother said, “Farida *esmaeei* (listen in Arabic). This is an English classroom,” She gave her 5 minutes as time out. Shahid said, “Miss, talk in Somali, *fadlan* (please in Somali)’. Ms. Jumana then reiterated the class rule that everybody should speak in English, and the use of Arabic is only for the Quran because it is the word of God which he revealed to his Prophet in Arabic. “*nahnu muslemeen, saheeh?*” she told the children (which translates into We are Muslims, right?). All children said “*na’am* (yes)” she asked me “*marra thania*” (which translates into say it again”, and they all said loudly “*na’aam*”. Then, she did two rounds of a group reading of the chapter with the children, which took about 1 minute each. (Fieldnotes: 02/05/2019)”

The above excerpt shows that multiple languages ideologies were present in this lesson. More ideological value was given to Quranic Arabic as the language of religious practices and education because of its association with the Quran. Ms. Jumana's connection between using Arabic and being Muslim to the children can be interpreted to include what Duchene and Heller (2012) refer to as a discourse of 'pride' that legitimises specific languages for membership purposes. This discourse links this

standard variety of Arabic to being a Muslim which becomes more pronounced in Western, secular European contexts (Panjawani, 2017). Hence, valuing this ideology in religious education lessons serves to strengthen the children's language skills to be able to understand the word of Allah and hence to be able to 'do Islam' the right 'good' way and to forge a sense of connection with the imaginary Muslim '*ummah*', community in Arabic (Shah, 2012).

The importance of this language variety of Arabic as the liturgical language of Arabic seemed to operate in a monoglossic pull (Bakhtin, 1981) where it appeared to represent the collective interests of Muslims as a salient social group in this school setting. However, the use of Arabic by the reception teachers, parent volunteers, and the children appeared to racialise particular children based on race and language. When some of the reception children who were from different language backgrounds, such as Somali and Urdu, asked Ms. Naima and Ms. Jumana about the reasons for learning to recite the Quran in Arabic, a typical answer would be that they have to because "it is the language of Quran".

The ideological value given to Quranic Arabic was even evident in some of the Elmer Class children's informal activities. However, this ideology seemed to clash with vernacular Moroccan Arabic, which was spoken by the majority of the Arabic speaking children. I have observed that the Arabic speaking children would use this language variety to make exclusionary claims about being an Arab Muslim. For example, some Arabic speaking boys such as Ahmet and Dale would taunt Abdul, a speaker of Urdu, by claiming that he is not a 'real Muslim' because he is not from an Arab country. One day I witnessed Dale and Ahmet's intense argument about whether Abdul was doing his prayer 'all wrong'. Dale cited Abdul's inability to pronounce the Arabic pharyngeal sound /ħ/ as in Mohammed. In another example, a group of Arabic-speaking girls,

including Amira, Hamda and Lama, constantly told Aminat, a Somali speaker, that she is not a 'good' Muslim because she does not pronounce Arabic sounds correctly. Here, there appears to be an ideological pull favouring this vernacular language variety due to its association with being an Arab Muslim based on religion and language. Some children were excluded from being Arab Muslims based on race in these ways. However, at some points, these children countered the claims the other children made about this particular form of Muslimness by citing their knowledge of the Quran and Quranic Arabic to position themselves as 'good' Muslims. I shall return to this point in detail in Chapter 7, where I discuss how the reception children mobilised their translanguaging to negotiate intersectional Muslim identities based on race, gender and generation.

Thus far, I have argued that the interactions between the children and the teachers in relation to religion have produced an ideology of Quranic Arabic as the language of religious practices and education based on its status as the liturgical language of Islam. A command of Quranic Arabic was associated with a good practice of Islam. Nevertheless, this language variety was co-present with English which is valued in relation to formal schooling activities. This co-presence supports the argument presented in this chapter language ideologies form contestable hierarchies which are in a state of constant struggle

I should note that the ideologies associated with the language varieties of English and Arabic were more prominent in this school setting than the ideologies I set to discuss in the following sections. The prevalence of these ideologies can be explained as follows. Westwood Primary is an Islamic school that uses a standard variety of English as the primary mode of teaching and communication, similar to many other English schools. At the same time, the ideological preference for a standard variety of Arabic

is linked to Islam and Muslimness, which forms a part of the Muslim way of life (Shah, 2018). In the subsequent section, I examine the ideology associated with French and prestige in daily interactions.

5.3.3. French as the language of perceived prestige

The introductory fieldnote excerpt included examples of translanguaging from Arabic and Somali, the two dominant languages spoken by most children in Elmer classroom. I should note, however, that using this excerpt does not intend to suggest that these were the only languages besides English that were present in this school setting. As I shall discuss in this section, another ideology manifested in the setting was French as a language of perceived prestige.

Since monoglossia in Bakhtinian theorisation is associated with the interests advocated by a dominant social group in a particular setting, there seemed to be a pull towards favouring French. Notably, French did not predominate in the setting like the previously mentioned ideologies of English and Arabic since only one child spoke it in Elmer Class who rarely used it to interact with others. Milroy (1999) observes that speakers are not usually aware that their behaviours are sometimes conditioned by ideological positionings such as associating prestige to a particular language such as French. French is considered not only an international elite language but the language of a once large empire (Wright, 2016). Many North African countries such as Libya, Algeria, Morocco, and other Sub-Saharan countries continue to speak French due to a history of French colonisation (García-Sánchez, 2010).

A language ideology that associated French with prestige was present in Elmer Class. When Ms Mina learned from Zeinah's father during parent evening meetings in the autumn term that Zeinah speaks French in addition to English and Arabic, she invited

Zeinah to use French in some classroom activities. Notably, Ms. Mina initiated these invitations at lesson time, a formal whole-class educational activity where all children were encouraged to speak 'good' English. In my observations of lesson time, I noted several instances when Ms. Mina asked Zeinah to provide the French equivalent of an English word they were using in the classroom. In one literacy lesson, the children read the very hungry caterpillar book. Ms. Mina asked Zeinah to tell the class about the French word for caterpillar in French. Zeinah answered by saying, "la chenille". I was surprised to see Ms. Mina praise Zeinah for that. However, when Shahid raised his hand and told Ms. Mina that he knew how to say caterpillar in Somali, Ms. Mina dismissed Shahid and reiterated the importance of using 'good' English in literacy lessons. A similar occurrence can be seen below:

"The children are having a lesson about shapes. Ms. Mina introduced the activity. They have to make a snowman using geometric shapes by telling her which shape can be used for its body parts. I was sitting in the back row with Abraham, Amira and Shahid. Ms. Mina asked the children which shape could be used for the eyes. Excitedly, Shahid raised his hand. However, he struggled to read 'diamond' from a card placed on the whiteboard. While he sounded out the word, Ms. Mina asked others to suggest a shape for the eyes. Zeinah then participated by saying "star". Ms. Mina applauded Zeinah's contribution by saying "*Tres Bien*" and asked the girl if she said it 'right'. Zeinah nodded. Then Ms. Mina asked her to name shapes in French. After Zeinah did that, the teacher said French "can get her to very good places in the future". I could hear Aminat and Faizal saying something in Somali sounding like 'wareegay'. Ms. Mina shouted, "stop it, you two!". (Fieldnotes: 29/11/2019).

This fieldnote excerpt shows a pull towards considering French as a language of perceived social prestige. Ms. Mina displayed interest in Zeinah's French by using a French phrase in the domain of lesson time. She even asked her to check the correctness of her pronunciation. While Zeinah has always been referred to as one of the 'good girls' by Ms. Mina, it seemed that her knowledge of French augmented her position as being a 'good girl'. Ms. Mina's remark, as shown in the previous excerpt,

which was about how speaking French can get Zeinah “to very good places in the future,” indexes how the teacher attributes this language to being possibly profitable as a form of cultural capital in getting prestige in the form of a ‘good’ job in the future. Once, Ms. Mina explicitly stated that Zeinah’s language skills could help her get a ‘diplomatic job’.

The highlighted interaction is among a limited number of rare incidents showing fascination and importance given to French. While at the same time, the use of Somali, which will be discussed more below, was not as well-received. When the children said the Somali word for circle, the teacher curtailed this language use by demanding them ‘to stop it’. As I shall explain in the next section, these children’s use of Somali was considered invaluable or unimportant due to racism and processes of racialisation.

To sum up, this section has demonstrated that the reception teachers highly valued Zeinah’s knowledge of French and reflected an ideology that considered French as the language of perceived prestige. The teachers’ fascination with Zeinah’s knowledge of this language can be interpreted as interwoven with Duchêne and Heller’s (2012) discourse of profit. This discourse is embedded in the interactions between Zeinah and the reception class teachers, where French was linked to futuristic profit socially and occupationally.

5.3.4 Urdu as a source of ethnic pride and racialised mockery

Urdu was one of the languages which appeared in the language ideological context of Elmer Class in Westwood Primary. Abdul was the only child who spoke this language in the reception classroom which could explain its precarity compared to the ideologies associated with English and Arabic. According to some statistics that I obtained from the school office, the administrative assistant Ms. Erkan informed me that a relatively

small number of children speak Urdu in the school compared to those who speak Arabic and Somali. Given that Abdul was the only child speaking this language in his class, there were only a few instances where I have recorded its use within the everyday activities of the reception classroom in my fieldnotes. In this section, I examine the few instances in which Urdu was used in Elmer Class and the conflicting ideologies of ethnic pride and racialised mockery it seemed to produce.

One day during playtime, the reception children played outside in the playground. As I was waiting to be invited into one of these play activities, I heard Abdul singing while running around and bouncing a ball. He was singing this phrase “*Allahi yallah kiyaa karo Allahi yallah Allahi yallah*”. I felt that he was addressing me with that phrase because I remember telling him at the start of my fieldwork that I could understand some Urdu, yet he questioned me by saying, “you’re not Pakistani” (Quotes from Fieldnotes: 20/09/2018). I told him that when I was a school student, many children in my school spoke this language and that using elements of it enabled me to make friends. I told him that I knew the ‘*dua*’, which means supplication in Urdu, that he was singing. I said to him that the beginning of the *dua* is “*Allahi yallah kiyaa karo, jo duniya ki malekahi*”, which translates into say the name of Allah, who is the ruler of the world. A smile from Abdul was all I got in response.

At certain times, Abdul’s use of Urdu, albeit recorded by me in a very few instances, showed an ideology of ethnic pride that he linked with belonging to his country of origin, Pakistan. While many British South Asian Muslims mainly speak Urdu and Bengali, according to statistics gathered by the Muslim Council of Britain (Muslim Council of Britain, 2015), only some speak it to maintain cultural heritage and interact with relatives during their visits to their countries of origin.

In some conversations with Abdul in the lunch hall, he often took pride in being a British Pakistani who knows how to speak Urdu. He told me about his annual family trips to Pakistan and that all his relatives there speak Urdu. Abdul informed me that he uses this language at home to talk with his grandmother. I could see how happy he used to get when he described that his knowledge of Urdu enabled him to talk with his relatives in his country of origin, especially during family and religious celebrations. Once, I asked Abdul about the importance of Urdu, and he surprisingly responded that he is 'Urdu'. Interestingly, I had a conversation with his mother one day. She mentioned that they use the language as a family because it maintains the pride of being of a Pakistani origin.

The Elmer Class teachers always praised Abdul for behaving well and doing well in his schoolwork. Despite this, he was mistakenly described as an 'Indian' by Ms. Mina. Whenever this happened, I have seen his efforts in explaining that he is of Pakistani origin and that Pakistani and Indian are different ethnicities. During one literacy lesson, the children read a story about why Elephants have trunks. Ms. Naima asked Abdul about Elephants in India. Abdul explained to her that he was not from India and questioned her for saying that.

Urdu, which is the language Abdul speaks in addition to English, was perceived differently by some children. Their interactions with him sometimes displayed racialised mockery by using mock language. Occasionally, when Abdul's language was mistaken for Hindi by some reception children, Abdul would take a great deal of effort to clarify that it is not Hindi and spoken in Pakistan. One day Abdul had the following heightened interaction with Ahmet, an Arabic speaking child whom he interacts the most with, as illustrated below:

“It was playtime, and the classroom was soon filled with boisterous voices. Shahid and Abdul went to play in the block area. Abdul was constructing an automobile, and he then started to arrange a few action figures on it. <We’re going on a trip in the car>, he said, making a loud vrooming sound as he moved his automobile. Shahid was constructing a train track. Ahmet then joined Shahid in the track making. Ahmet took an automobile and started moving it over the tracks being built carelessly. Shahid looked a bit unhappy. <Heyy!> he said. Abdul then stopped, adding more blocks to make his automobile taller and bigger. He placed the action figures on the carpet. Ahmet took one of these figures and tossed it on the floor. He laughed. He then took another figure saying to Abdul, <he’s brown (.) like you>. Abdul replied, <I’m not brown (.) Don’t say that>. Ahmet was making the action figure talk for a moment, <Am Abdul [laughing] and am from *Hindiya*> (a new form using the Arabic word for India ‘Hind’ and -is from the English word India). Ahmet was nodding his head, imitating an Indian headshake and giggling. Abdul seemed uncomfortable with this uttering a firm reply, <I am NOT from India. I am (.) I am (.) I (.) from England and my parents are from Pakistan>. Ahmet continued his mockery, <The police he says go back to *Hindya* because you talk funny I speak gooder than you>, causing Abdul to retract in tears <I don’t want to go India [crying]>. He went to Ms. Choudhary, saying to her, <Miss (.) Ahmet is being mean to me [still crying]>. She replied, <That’s all right darling[she hugged Abdul] I am sure he did not mean what he said> (from video recorded observation 30/01/2019).”

The above excerpt shows that while Ahmet seemed to have upset Abdul by saying that he is Indian, a conclusion that he perhaps reached was because Abdul speaks a South Asian language. Ahmet’s use of translanguaging indicated signs of mocking Urdu, such as mockingly using the gesture of the headshake along with the phrase ‘brown’. The use of the word “*hindya*” is an example of racialisation which intersects with nationality and language, which can be said to reflect an ideology of mockery in relation to Urdu. When I first heard this, I linked it to how Ahmet often referred to his language as high status compared to Hindi and Urdu. Ahmet mentioned that these languages are ‘not good’ because manual labourers and workers in the Middle East speak them. Abdul appeared to be offended and tried to assert to his peers that he is not ‘brown’ and that he is a British Pakistani to set himself apart from the unfavourable positions they placed him in.

This section has shown how the use of Urdu by Abdul and talking about it by others in the reception classroom produced conflicting language ideologies. At some times, the use of Urdu was valued as a source of ethnic pride linked to being Pakistani. Whereas at other times, this language was considered a source of racialised mockery in the presence of other interlocutors who thought that the languages they spoke were 'better' than Urdu.

Notwithstanding its presence, these conflicting ideologies of pride and racialised mockery seemed to be contested by the permeating presence of other languages in specific interactions. Abdul countered such contestations in the effort that he paid to assure that he is not "*Hindi*" and that he comes from Pakistan. Going back to the introductory fieldnote excerpt (section 5.3), the use of Somali appears to be dismissed and even disapproved by the reception class teacher. Ms. Mina appears to be mocking the use of a Somali word, "*lagu darai*", that Shahid, Faizal and Aminat used to make sense of the word "plus" and was immediately called for to be stopped by making the statement "how many times do I need to tell you that we speak English only in here?". The following section discussed the ideology of Somali as a source of meaning-making and deficiency.

5.3.5. Somali as a source of meaning-making and deficiency

In this section, I discuss how the use of Somali promoted conflicting ideologies. The use of this language reflected its use as a meaning-making resource for the Somali speaking children. At the same time, its use was linked to perceived deficiency, which intersected with language, 'race' and social class. Therefore, I argue that the language practices in the interactions of the teachers and children in Elmer Class appeared to reproduce broader social discourses about Somalis. I also draw attention to how

language and racialisation intersect and operate to position the Somali speaking children as linguistically inappropriate and as those who do not belong to the 'good' Muslim category. This discussion shows how broader discourses and racism inform local ideological hierarchies, thus placing particular languages lower in the hierarchy.

Somali was the second most spoken language in Elmer Class after Arabic. Eight children were identified as speaking it using the brief language questionnaire I distributed to participating families at the start of my fieldwork. On the school level, it was also one of the most spoken languages amongst the children and school staff, according to the information provided by the school administrative office. Some children used this language in formal and informal activities during my observations. At first, I struggled to note down the words I suspected were from this language. I relied on phonetic differences to distinguish Somali from Arabic. Since I am not a speaker of Somali, I relied on Ms. Choudhary's fluent Somali language abilities to translate some of the words I recorded. Aminat, a Somali-speaking child, also volunteered to act as a translator to help me understand some of the Somali words that the children use, which helped contextualise some of these words in action.

During my observations in Elmer Class, I saw how often the Somali speaking reception used elements from Somali in different classroom activities for meaning-making purposes. For example, some of those children used Somali words to interpret some of the English words used by the reception teachers. The introductory fieldnote excerpt at the beginning of the chapter illustrates how these children used Somali to make sense of the mathematical vocabulary used in their lessons. Another example of how the Somali speaking children used Somali for meaning-making is illustrated in the excerpt below:

“Ms. Mina put up some cards with weather symbols on the whiteboard. She got the class's attention by letting them watch a video of a weather forecast. When the video ended, Ms. Mina asked a question while pointing to a card with a dark coloured cloud of rain; “who can tell me a word for this?”. Shahid raised his hand quietly, saying he knew it to his classmates and almost shifting from excitement in his place. The teacher said, “Yes, Shahid, what is it?”. Shahid responded by saying, “It is watery”. The teacher replied in rejection that the word she wanted was not water. Ms. Mina tried to elicit the answer from the other children. Hamda raised her hand and got the teacher's approval to answer. She said, “is it rainy?”. The teacher applauded her answer and confirmed it. “Yes, the word is rainy”, she wrote it under the card and sounded out for the class r-ai-n-y rainy. She then turned to Shahid, who looked puzzled, and told him, “Shahid, you cannot say it is watery; it does not make sense. It is rainy r-ai-n-y”. She asked him to repeat it after her, and he said it even though I could see that he did not appear to be comfortable saying it. I sat in the same row as Shahid and heard him saying to Faizal that it was water, *roobab* and that the teacher was unhappy with him. I asked Faizal what is *roobab* he told me that it meant rain. Shahid then corrected how I said it by saying the word a bit louder and clearer. However, he said it loudly, prompting Ms. Mina to tell him that she took 2 minutes away from his playtime. Shahid then muttered, “no, not again”. I later learned from the Year 1 teacher that *roobab* in Somali could be used for both water and rain” (Fieldnotes: 19/9/2018)

The above excerpt shows a typical interaction occurring at lesson time. Ms. Mina gets the children's attention to introduce the lesson and get the children to talk to provide opportunities for building language skills. The excerpt includes techniques of elicitation, correction and modelling Ms. Mina often uses for these purposes. The teacher seemed to have framed Shahid's answer as wrong because he did not provide the correct adjective intended to be taught by the teacher. Describing the word as ‘watery’ did not make any sense and was thus considered a mistake by the teacher. Later in the excerpt, Shahid was penalised for his use of Somali.

The class teacher dismissed the possibility that these children could be translating from their home languages. One interpretation of this occurrence could be that speaking loudly breached an important behaviour rule set by Ms. Mina. However, on many occasions, the teachers restricted the children's use of Somali in the classroom

but did not silence other children when they used Arabic, Urdu or French. Sometimes, the teachers silenced these children by ordering them to stop using their language during lesson time. In addition to restriction and silencing, the teachers appeared to implicitly marginalise the linguistic resources of these children by dismissing that they could be translating from Somali to make sense of new English words. The ways the reception teachers restricted, silenced and dismissed the Somali speaking children's use of their language across different activities could be interpreted as acts motivated by racism. Disapproving the use of Somali was even expressed by the teachers who were speakers of Somali, which they described as 'inappropriate' and a source of interference.

While the children used the Somali language to make sense of their worlds, their teachers expressed disapproval of its use based on an association between deficiency and race. This ideology of Somali as a source of deficiency in this particular context constitutes a raciolinguistic ideology (Flores & Rosa, 2015). Rosa (2016) argues that the interplay of race and language creates raciolinguistic ideologies which stigmatise the language practices of a particular social group based on imagined, ideological or material dimensions of differentiation. The ideology of Somali as a source of deficiency in this study is a case in point. This ideology intersects with racism reproduced by broader social discourses and popular imaginaries about Somalis as a social group in the British context (Puttick, 2016; Liberatore, 2017; Gillman, 2017). The Greater London borough in which Westwood Primary is located is characterised by having a concentration of residents from Somali backgrounds. In the British context, concentrations of Somalis led to forming socially segregated communities. The relative segregation of this population was one reason which led to the circulation of social

discourses on Somalis as ‘problems’ based on race, ethnicity, migratory status and religion (Jiwani & Al-Rawi, 2021).

Interestingly, the reception children reproduced racism about Somalis in this setting while they might be racialised for being Muslims in the broader context, as I shall explain in Chapter 7.

On the linguistic level, the Somali speaking children were racialised based on a raciolinguistic ideology in the following ways. The teachers considered the English utterances produced by many Somali speaking children to be deficient and ‘mistakes’. As a result, it was common to see these children become objects of modelling and correction techniques used by the teachers. The reception teachers often described the English language skills of the Somali speaking children as ‘weak’ compared to those of other children.

The labels ‘weak’ and ‘inappropriate’ were sometimes used to describe the creative constructions produced by the Somali speaking children in Elmer Class. Those children were penalised for using elements from Somali because they were ‘inappropriate’ for lesson time. When some Somali speaking children took time to sound out words in their guided reading activities with the teachers, the teachers regarded this as a problematic issue. Strikingly, the teachers did not make the same comments when the Arabic speaking children sounded out words in the same manner. These children were praised for ‘trying hard’. Dismissing the rich linguistic resources the Somali children brought to this classroom fits with the findings of Presiado and Frieson’s (2021) study on young African American preschool girls. Presiado and Frieson argued that while the preschool classroom these girls were present in encouraged translanguaging, raciolinguistic ideologies on the presumed deficiency of

African American English marginalised the translanguaging of these girls to a great extent.

In relation to the use of Quranic Arabic in religious education lessons, the Somali speaking children were often viewed and described as 'unable' to pronounce Arabic sounds correctly, which positioned them in a status of deficiency. It is raciolinguistic ideologies that positioned these children as 'linguistically inappropriate' and 'deficient' speakers and users of Quranic Arabic at the site of the religious education lesson, which restricted their participation to some extent and excluded them from 'good' Muslimness. In this discussion, I build on the discussion of 'linguistic inappropriateness' (Flores & Rosa, 2015) to understand how the Somali speaking children in this classroom were positioned as 'deficient' speakers of Quranic Arabic. I extend Rosa's discussion by applying it to these children's Muslim identities. Building on these points, I argue that 'the linguistic inappropriateness' of these children played a role in positioning them outside the category of 'good' and 'appropriate' Muslimness in the site of this study.

Ms. Jumana, the parent volunteer and Ms. Naima, the class teacher, often told these children that they must learn how to speak Arabic correctly to learn the Quran. Despite that some of these children displayed more knowledge of Quranic verses than the Arabic speaking children, they were positioned in a relatively inferior position as Muslims. The reception teachers often linked correct Arabic pronunciation and a good command of Arabic to being a 'good' Muslim. In the religious education lessons, the teachers and the parent volunteer used phrases in Arabic to show the 'deficient' language skills of the Somali speaking children. Ms. Jumana used the phrase "*oreedo man yatakalamu al fusha*", which means I want those who speak standard Arabic,

followed by “Arabic speakers, please” when those children raised their hands to participate in whole-class activities.

Similar views about Somali children appeared in the children’s interactions, which positioned speakers of Somalis as not ‘good’ or ‘real’ Muslims because they are not Arab Muslims capable of speaking Arabic as ‘natives’. I shall discuss this point in detail in Chapter 7. Hence, it could be said that the use of language in these interactions reflects an ideology of Somali as a source of perceived deficiency.

On a general level, this ideology of perceived deficiency stigmatised the language practices of the Somali speaking children as inappropriate yet connected this use to their families. Below is a striking interaction that occurred between the teaching assistant Ms. Fatia and some of the Somali speaking children:

“It was reading time. The children formed a circle around the teaching assistant Ms. Fatia. She held the book and read the title to the children. It was Harry and the bucket full of dinosaurs. The teacher started reading and asking the children questions about what they saw. The children were seated in a relaxed manner, and some had stuffed animals with them. Tahir and Faizal were giggling and pointing at the behind of a toy rabbit. They giggled, and I could hear Tahir say the word “*bari*”, and then they laughed again. Pointing at the rabbit, I could still hear Tahir saying “*bari*” again. Aminat whispered to me, saying that “*bari*” meant ‘bum bum’ and was not a good word to be said in class. Suddenly, Ms. Fatia can be heard scolding them, saying, “Tahir stop it! you say *bari* at home. You do not say it here”. They were now both quiet as they were given time out to think and reflect on what they had done. (Fieldnotes: 18/6/2019)”

The above fieldnote excerpt shows how the children, Faizal and Tahir, engaged in a playful act during which they used an inappropriate word. The teacher ordered the children to stop and reprimanded them by saying, ‘you say bari at home’. Linking the use of this word in the home sphere produces the ideology of perceived deficiency. This use can be interpreted as indicative of how the family sphere of these Somali speaking children does not provide them with models of good use of language. The

reception teachers often described these children's mothers as non-English speakers. The teachers also referenced the impact of low income on these children's families by exposing them to inappropriate language, as evident from the example containing 'bari' and poor language skills. During the information session that I organised for the families at the beginning of the autumn term, several mothers did not speak English, and since I did not speak Somali, I enlisted the help of Ms. Choudhary to act as an interpreter. Ms. Mina told me that perhaps I had my expectations a bit higher when I thought of the families as able to speak English. She explained to me that most of them do not, and she believed that the mothers' poor English language skills and lack of language development opportunities and resources have a negative impact on their children.

The reception teachers often referred to the Somali speaking children as academically underachieving. This label reproduced a general discourse about the academic underachievement of students of Somali origins in British schools (Gillman, 2017). The associations linking Somali as a language to inferior racial positions help explain the reasons for its delegitimation and stigmatisation in this classroom. This fits with Rosa's (2016) argument that the interaction of race and social class produces raciolinguistic ideologies that racialise the language practices of particular speakers as linguistically and socially inferior. This interaction promoted some of the reception teachers to dismiss the importance of Somali language for meaning-making by making statements such as "Somali will not get these children anywhere", (Ms. Fatia, quote from observations on 3/7/2019).

The ideology of Somali as a source of deficiency was produced in the interactions of the reception children. An example can be drawn from the following excerpt:

“The children were lining up to head to the playground. Ms. Naima went to get something from the classroom while the children formed a line in the corridor leading to the outside. Shahid was flipping himself around while Aminat, who was standing in her place, told him, “Shahid, we have to stand in register order!”. He yelled, “no!”. Ms. Fatia ordered him to stand where he should be. Mehmet uttered, “stinky Somali boy”. Abdul taunted him, “eeww; you are soo smelly. Did you have a bath?” Shahid protested. “I am not Somali. I am British. Stop it, or I will hit you”. Mehmet and Abdul seemed to be singing the words “go back to Africa, go back to Somalia, go back to Africa”. Shahid called the attention of Ms. Naima and told her what Mehmet and Abdul had just said. She was angry. “How dare you, you two will stay in class. You lost your playtime”. She also threatened them to explain this to Ms. Alam, the deputy headteacher. I could hear Mehmet saying in a loud voice “, but Miss Shahid is stinky,” with Abdul adding, “he never brushes his teeth” (Fieldnotes, 20/6/2019)

Shahid was the most Somali speaking child that could be heard during the day speaking Somali. The above extract shows an example of racialisation in action where Shahid was discriminated against based on his Somali identity. It also shows how other factors came into play in stigmatising Somali. Some children who spoke other languages such as Arabic and Urdu said that Shahid, who is from an asylum-seeking family, is a ‘stinky Somali’, thus connecting with poverty and smell for shaming. While Shahid tried to assert his identity as British, his efforts were entirely disregarded by the other children. Shahid was excluded from the claim of being British not only because he is ‘Somali’ but because he is ‘smelly’, which could indicate his low socio-economic background. The links associating race with poverty could motivate the ‘go back to Africa’ taunt. When I talked with some children during a play activity after that incident, I asked them why they taunted Shahid in that way. One child answered me matter-of-factly that they told Shahid to go back to Africa because it is the place where most poor people live. Some children also said that Shahid does not speak English properly, making it impossible for him to be British. It could be said that Shahid, who belongs to an asylum-seeking family, is considered ‘out of place’ by the other children

in this interaction since he did not meet the expectations of being British which results in an inferior identity ascribed to him by others (Valentine et al., 2008).

5.4. Conclusion

In this chapter, I offered an exploration of the ideological context of Elmer Class which is the site of this study. I have drawn on the use of Bakhtinian heteroglossia (Bakhtin, 1981) to capture the dynamism of the multiple language ideologies present in this classroom setting. The ideologies of standard English, Quranic Arabic, French, Urdu and Somali that I discussed in this chapter formed a heteroglossic language order where they are in a state of struggle for hegemony that is never achieved. The everyday classroom practices in Elmer Class reflected dynamically shifting ideologies with a constant state of pushing and pulling. I discussed how an ideology of 'good' standard English was internalised in the activities related to schooling and instruction. Notably, while this ideological promotion is part and parcel of educational socialisation in English schools, it appeared to express negative opinions about multilingualism which intersected with discourses of race and social class.

Additionally, the ideology of Classical Arabic as the language of Islam reflects the value ascribed to this language variety to do the 'correct' and 'good' form of Islam. The interactions between Zeinah, Ms Mina and Ms Naima reflected an ideology of French as a language of social prestige and high status despite its colonial history in some African countries. Some other languages, such as Urdu and Somali, were embedded in ideological conflicts. Urdu, which was seen as a source of ethnic pride by Abdul, was viewed by the other children as a source of racialised mockery. Somali was

viewed as a source of meaning-making and deficiency due to the interplay of language and race. These heteroglossic language ideological hierarchies demonstrate the complexity of the ideological context of this reception classroom which is characterised by tensions. In the next chapter, I start addressing the first research question of this study.

CHAPTER 6: The multiplicity of Elmer Class children's translanguaging practices and translanguaging spaces

6.1. Introduction

The previous chapter provided a detailed description of the ideological context of Elmer Class. I argued that multiple competing language ideologies in this reception classroom formed dynamically shifting language hierarchies, thus rendering this classroom a site of constant ideological struggle. This chapter seeks to address the first research question of this study which asks do young children translanguage in their everyday activities in the reception classroom? If so, how, when, where and with whom?

I begin the discussion by examining the different forms of translanguaging the Elmer Class children engaged in their daily informal activities. I then discuss how these multiple forms of translanguaging relate to particular spaces, activities and interlocutors, which results in the dynamic creation of multiple translanguaging spaces at the site of this study.

6.2. The multiplicity of Elmer Class children's translanguaging

“As the children were distributed between different activity stations, I moved around for a bit and immediately, I could hear Aminat calling me to join her and a few girls in the writing station. “Come, Miss,” she said. I felt uncomfortable with her calling me Miss as if I was one of the teachers, and I felt this urge to explain to her what I preferred to be called. I told her to call me by my name since I am not a teaching staff member. Mehmet told Aminat, “Give me the black marker”. She told him that he better use another marker since it has an “*uffing*” smell. He insisted, but she would not pass the marker to him. I naively remarked that she could give the marker to him if he would ask nicely. Aminat was adamant that she would not give Mehmet the marker because it was “*uffing*”. He got off his chair and snatched it from the pen holder placed close to her. She shouted in response, “I will tell you off!”. Ms. Mina, working with a

group of children at an adjacent table, promptly came to resolve the situation and asked the two children about what was going on. Aminat said she told Mehmet that the marker was ‘*smellingy*’ and that he better take something else instead, but he snatched it. Mehmet denied the whole thing protesting that he did not snatch anything. Ms. Mina asked Aminat why she would not pass the marker to Mehmet and then replied that she said it had an “*uffing*” smell. The teacher asked her, “what is *uffing*?”. The girl replied that the marker was “*smellingy*”. Ms. Mina understood that she meant the black marker was producing an unpleasant smell. She told Aminat, “don’t say *uffing*. No one will get what you’re saying. Say stinky”. I could hear Aminat saying ‘stinky’ several times after Ms. Mina, “Look, trash is stinky”. While I was quickly scribbling down in my notebook, I heard the teacher fretting loudly, saying, “I wish these children would just speak plain English. The words they use sometimes are puzzling”. I took my place close to Aminat and asked her what she meant by “*uffing*”. She did not tell me anything. I noted the word down and asked Ms Choudhary about it at lunchtime. She informed me that perhaps Aminat meant smelly since “*uff*” in Somali means stinky. While I was noting this in my notebook, I was interrupted by the loud noises of Abdul and Dale, with Abdul saying “*hak*”, which means take (some) in Arabic, while offering an open bag of crisps to Dale adding, “these are yummy”. As Ms. Choudhary instructed the children who finished having their lunch to go outside and play in the playground, I went outside as well. I was startled to have been nearly hit with a ball. Three boys, Dale, Faizal and Shahid, were running after Abdul. Shahid was shouting to the boys, “Hey, come *yameen* (to the right in Arabic). Come here!” ” (Fieldnotes: 08/10/2018)

This excerpt demonstrates what can be described as typical interactions in Elmer Class throughout the school day. It includes instances of flexible language use evident from the use of words such as “*smellingy*”, which appears to be an incorrect English form, “*uffing*”, a novel blended word using the Somali “*uff*” (smelly) and the English particle “*-ing*”, “*hak*” and “*yameen*” which are adopted from Arabic. At other times, the daily interactions of the Elmer Class children included using meaning-making forms beyond the linguistic, as shown in the excerpt below:

“The girls were running in the playground area, which was the closest to the rear entrance of the reception classroom. Lama informed the rest of the group that they would play ‘hide and seek’. Amira suggested that I do the counting and then look for them, so I agreed. I was ready to stand against the wall and start the counting, but Farida yelled “wait” as she was tying her shoelaces.

Hamda was eager to start playing the game, and she told me to start counting. I told her that we had to wait for Farida to join us. However, Hamda was slightly impatient and announced that she would count and join Lama, Amira, Zeinah and Aminat. Farida shouted “hey!” sharply that we all looked in her direction. She held up her right hand with the five of her fingers joined together, signalling a gesture. Hamda then replied, “we have to wait for Farida”. Within seconds, Farida joined us, and she showed me a place behind the water table to hide in, which would make it impossible for Hamda to find us!” (Fieldnotes: 7/1/2019)

In this excerpt, Farida could be seen to deploy a commonly used gesture by Arabic speakers in Middle Eastern countries, which connoted ‘wait’ to her peers. She used it to negotiate being a part of the play activity. Since translanguaging is defined as the communicative practices that enable people to communicate with the resources they have at hand (Blackledge & Creese, 2017), examples in these two excerpts show the different ways these children engaged in meaning-making in different activities.

These instances of translanguaging invite questions about how, when, where and with whom the Elmer Class children translanguage. What are the relations between their translanguaging, language ideologies, discourses and other practices across spaces? These questions frame the discussion in the following sections.

I have discussed in Chapter 2 that much work on translanguaging has directed attention to the active ways in which children, including the very young, responded to and interacted with their teachers’ interventions and strategies of pedagogical translanguaging (for example Neumann, 2012; Sayer, 2013; Gort & Sembiante, 2015; Duarte, 2019). Many studies in this body of scholarly work have offered rich insights into how children actively and creatively co-construct meanings by using pedagogical translanguaging in various classroom contexts (for example Axelrod, 2017; Axelrod & Cole, 2018; Kirsch, 2018). I have also demonstrated that a recent small number of studies have started to examine the agency of young children in their translanguaging in informal activities (Kirsch & Seele, 2020; Lourêiro & Neumann, 2020; Kirsch &

Mortini, 2021). The discussion presented in this chapter builds on this work to demonstrate the different and complex ways in which the young reception children translanguaged in their everyday classroom activities. By focusing on the reception children's translanguaging across different spaces and activities, this discussion aims to add to this work by dissolving the formal and informal binary in examining children's translanguaging.

I have pointed out in Chapter 2 that some concerns raised by some translanguaging scholars about the depiction of translanguaging as sets of fixed language practices based on the shuttling between multiple languages to make meaning could risk reifying translanguaging (Poza, 2017; Canagarajah, 2018). It is thus important to note that the detailed accounts I offer in this chapter about the multiple forms and features of the Elmer Class children's translanguaging are not intended to serve as a typology of translanguaging for the following reasons.

First, a typology of translanguaging would be similar to previous typologies of code-switching studies which have been described as restrictive for considering language as a set of distinct linguistic practices of predictable, structural features (García & Li, 2014; Cenoz, 2017). Additionally, a typology of translanguaging would describe the language practices of multilinguals as context-bound alternations between different languages where one code is used for a particular context (Poza, 2017). Contrary to code-switching, translanguaging could be informed by, but not bound to, a particular context, (see the discussion below on the multiple translanguaging spaces in Elmer Class). Second, a typology of translanguaging does not sit well with the repertoire approach to language I use in this thesis. Such a typology would emphasise that language practices are based on intact, fixed categories that belong to separate language systems, thus ignoring their complexity and fluidity (Vogel & García, 2017).

Therefore, a typological description of translinguaging practices would 'fix down' translinguaging and counter a view of language as a repertoire. A repertoire approach to language embraced by translinguaging scholars considers the language practices of multilinguals as belonging to a single system and dismantles boundaries between languages (Otheguy et al., 2015).

In this chapter, I describe some of the common ways in which the reception children of Elmer Class translinguaged with the aim to operationalise the study of translinguaging and address my first research question regarding if and how young children translanguage. This question now sits at the heart of a burgeoning field of scholarship, but young children's translinguaging practices had received very limited attention when I began my study.

At the beginning of fieldwork in Elmer Class, I had wondered about the possibility of identifying translinguaging in the reception children's daily activities and interactions. Identifying these practices, which were often described as fluid in the translinguaging literature, seemed to be a difficult task, especially after the assertions of the school headteacher that all the children in her school 'speak only English'. I witnessed the Elmer Class children's flexible language use in my observations, which seemed consistent with the definitions and characterizations of translinguaging in the literature. This flexible use did not adhere to the conventional use of English and included embedded elements from different named languages such as Arabic, Somali, Urdu and French. Processes of coding and analysing the observational data resulted in identifying a number of forms the reception children commonly used in their translinguaging in the reception classroom. However, it is important to note that this discussion does not intend to suggest that these were the only ways the Elmer Class children translinguaged. Rather, it offers insights into the common ways in which

these children used translanguaging in their everyday activities and interactions in the reception classroom. In the subsections that follow, I describe the features of these common forms.

6.2.1. Translanguaging by inserting words and phrases from multiple languages

The introductory fieldnote excerpts in section 6.2 show a number of utterances made by a group of reception children which included embedded words from multiple languages in their daily interactions in the reception classroom. The words “*hak*”, which means take and “*yameen*”, which means right in Arabic, are examples of this flexible language use. Inserting words and phrases from different languages in their classroom interactions was a common practice by the Elmer Class children.

This translanguaging is characterized by the insertion of words, phrases or verbal expressions from multiple named languages, such as Arabic, Somali, English and Urdu, which were the additional languages spoken by the Elmer Class children at the time of observations. The reception children appeared to insert words or phrases in their whole, intact form without breaking them down or blending them with words from other languages. It should be noted that these words from other languages had specific meanings and adhered to conventional language use rules. The intactness of these words or phrases made translanguaging relatively easier to identify because they were markedly different from English.

This combination of the languages used in this form of translanguaging was related to the languages predominantly spoken by interlocutors in a particular group. Children familiar with a particular language often use words and phrases from it in their interactions. For example, whenever a group of Arabic speaking boys which consisted

of Ahmet, Abdul, Dale and Jacob played together in the playground, it was common to hear them use Arabic phrases in their play activities. This group often used the Arabic word '*waqaf*' to signal stop. A group of Arabic speaking girls also included words and expressions from Arabic in their play activities. For example, Farida and Amira, who often played together in the home corner, used the Arabic word '*noubti*', which meant 'my turn', to signal taking turns playing with a baby doll.

The children familiar with Somali usually use it in their activities. In one interaction, Siddiq, a Somali speaking child, ordered Aminat to get him some chicken from the food pantry located in the home corner. Instead of using the English word for chicken, he told Aminat to get him the 'meat'. She brought him a toy steak and handed it to him. However, he replied that he did not want that; she should get him some '*hilib*', which means chicken in Somali. This request prompted Aminat to say: "Oh! Why didn't you say '*hilib*' in the first place?" (Interaction from fieldnotes 16/01/2019).

Notably, these forms in which the children translanguaged by inserting words and phrases from multiple languages in their everyday talk are consistent with the large volume of examples demonstrated in pedagogical translanguaging studies. These studies have shown that children, including young ones, actively interweave their formal classroom interactions and discussions with words and utterances from multiple languages (Johnson et al., 2019; Poza, 2019b). This use is an example of deploying the linguistic repertoire whereby speakers use elements from multiple linguistic and semiotic resources (García et al., 2011; Bauer et al., 2017; Makoe, 2018). This way of translanguaging concurs with the findings of a growing number of studies examining young children's translanguaging in early childhood education settings. The ways in which the Elmer Class children translanguaged by inserting words and phrases from the different languages and language varieties they spoke are similar to those found

by Bengochea and Gort (2020). Bengochea and Gort's study in an American preschool setting found that a group of Spanish speaking children inserted words from Spanish in their play activities.

As a reflection, my ability to identify this way of translanguaging relates to my privileged access to Arabic and Somali. As a speaker of Arabic, I possessed advanced language skills, which enabled me to understand standard Arabic. The assumption that I had about my advanced fluency in Arabic impacted the data generation and analysis processes of this study in several ways. In part, this assumption made me more attuned to instances of Arabic that I heard in the classroom, which demonstrated my interest in recording and understanding instances of Arabic closer to the standard variety. Being attuned in this way contributed to shaping what I heard.

Additionally, Arabic words for me seemed easier to identify and note down. However, by paying more attention while observing, I noticed that the children also used vernacular Moroccan Arabic, as evident from the examples in the introductory fieldnote excerpt that I did not speak in my social life but could understand. Over time, I heard the Arabic-speaking children use that particular language variety that I recorded, but it made me aware of the possibility of missing similar utterances despite my advanced proficiency in Arabic. I then started to seek the help of the parent volunteer, Ms. Jumana, who proved to be instrumental in explaining some Moroccan Arabic phrases that the children used, including key contextual information, given her fluency in that variety.

In relation to Somali, the situation differed because I do not speak the language. I depended on the help of the reception teaching assistants, Ms. Choudhary and Ms. Fatia, for translation. These teachers helped me translate some of the Somali words,

phrases, and expressions the Elmer Class children used, which I jotted down quickly in my field journal. These teachers offered contextual details and corrected pronunciation for some of the words I noted down. Additionally, Aminat, a Somali speaking child, volunteered to translate some of the Somali words that the children used whenever access to the teaching assistants was restricted due to the nature of the activity observed.

So far, this subsection presented one of the ways in which reception children translanguaged in their activities across different spaces at the site of this study. While translanguaging by inserting words, phrases and expressions from multiple languages confirmed the findings presented in the empirical translanguaging literature, it is only one of the ways the Elmer Class children translanguaged. In the subsequent section, I highlight another way these children are translanguaged, which I have termed mixed compounds.

6.2.2. Translanguaging using mixed compounds

As shown in the opening data excerpt, Aminat, a Somali-speaking child, used the word “uffing” in her interaction with a group of children to indicate that a marker produced an unpleasant smell to deter Mehmet from using it. This novel word contains merged features from Somali “uff”, which means smelly, and English, the “ing” particle indicating continuity, which created a new compound word. This example highlights the second commonly used form of translanguaging by the reception children, which I term “mixed compounds” identified in this study which this subsection seeks to discuss.

During my observations of the reception children’s interactions during their informal activities, I have noted many forms similar to “uffing”. Translanguaging by mixed

compounds can create novel forms resulting from mixing truncated elements or clipped parts of words from different named languages. An example of this translanguaging is the mixed compound “*sawered*” and “*sawering*” used by Amira, an Arabic-speaking child, in several interactions with a group of Arabic-speaking girls. Although these words appear to be English since they have an ‘-ed’ and ‘-ing’ verb ending used for regular past tense forms, they include an embedded verb root from Arabic “*sawer*”, which refers to capturing a photograph. The present form of this verb is “*yusawerr*”, which means to capture a photograph or a video. The past is “*sawara*”. The conjugation process in Arabic from past to present depends on changing the verb and not adding suffixes as in English. Additionally, Arabic does not have a continuous tense. Past and present tense verbs can indicate a past and a present continuous tense.

“Shipoop” is an example of another mixed compound used by a group of Somali speaking boys to tease each other during their playtime. I mistakenly recorded it as ‘poop’ in my fieldnotes the first time I heard it. However, the repeated use of this word brought to my attention that it was “shipoop”, not “poop”. Sometimes, this group of boys flouted this compound and changed to “shipoopy” to describe someone. This mixed compound is created using features from Somali and English; “shira” is a Somali word for poop, and children in English use poop to refer to bodily excrement. This mixed compound has undergone a morphological clipping process where only ‘shi-’ is adopted from Somali, ‘-ra’ is clipped, and then ‘shi-’ is mixed with poop. Blending helped create this form and made it appear as belonging to a single language.

The reception children’s translanguaging using mixed compounds demonstrates creativity and criticality, which are two key features of translanguaging practices where rules of named languages are flouted, and creative constructions are produced to

make meaning (García & Li, 2014). As shown in the previously mentioned examples, the children's creative use of elements from multiple languages highlights their ability to transcend the conventional use of named languages (Li, 2011). In these ways, translanguaging forms practices that contribute to linguistic creativity by synthesizing different linguistic resources brought together by children from different languages.

Linguistic creativity in translanguaging is documented in a wide range of translanguaging studies. Li Wei (2018) offers similar examples to the mixed compounds I documented in my study from a corpus of Chinglish he compiled where speakers creatively created forms that appeared to be English but have Chinese meanings and twists. Li Wei cites an example, *niubility*, where 'niubi' means special ability worth boasting about in Chinese merged with 'ability' in English (see Li, 2018, p. 12).

The examples of mixed compounds used by the Elmer Class children examined in this study fit with the findings on creative constructions of translanguaging. The growing research on translanguaging in early childhood settings has highlighted instances of translanguaging and creativity by young children in early childhood settings (for example Andersen, 2017; Panagiotopoulou et al., 2020).

The use of mixed compounds in the site of this study is similar to those documented in Axelrod's (2012) study. Axelrod (2012) examines the creative ways in which young American preschool children translanguaged using blended elements from English and Spanish to make meaning in their everyday interactions. For example, Axelrod mentions that one child in her study used 'rainbowli' and 'un rainbow' to refer to the word colourful in their play interactions. As Axelrod (2012) discusses, the support these young children received in their classroom played a significant role in

recognizing the creative processes of meaning-making they engage in, which could have been diminished in other settings.

Similar examples of these creative constructions can also be found in Seltzer, Ascenzi-Moreno and Aponte's (2020) study in a North American early childhood education classroom. The authors found that the young children in their study engaged in creative acts of translanguaging, which resulted in novel forms of Spanish and English as they were performing a play based on a story they read in their classroom. I should note that this way of translanguaging could easily be dismissed as meaningless utterances since it is produced by young children who are perceived to be in the process of developing their language capabilities. Seltzer and colleagues (2020) argue that assumptions about young children from particular racial and ethnic backgrounds as deficient could play a role in misunderstanding their creative language practices. Adding to their argument, developmentalist assumptions about young children and childhood could play a possible role in overlooking the possibility for these mixed compounds to be considered as acts of meaning-making (Seltzer et al., 2020). These examples of creative language use tend to be viewed as unintelligible. I found that the reception teachers expressed some developmentalist assumptions about young children. Whenever they heard some children translanguaging using mixed compounds, Ms. Mina and Ms. Naima referred to them as 'playful language use' that should not be taken seriously. In one occurrence, Ms. Naima stated that in play, children often do and say things that "make no sense" (from fieldnotes 3/5/2019).

I felt I was not paying enough attention to these forms when I first heard them in some situations. One possible reason was that they were produced by children who had limited proficiency in English at the start of my fieldwork. As an adult, I initially considered some mixed compounds meaningless. At first, in my reflexive journal, I

likened some of these words to incomprehensible mutterings and constantly asked the children to repeat what they said. This led some reception children to express how 'unkind' I was by not listening to them. In retrospect, I found the suggestion made by Kurban and Tobin (2009) about being empathetic in research practices insightful. They mention that while it can never be known why a person uses a specific word or utterance, researchers have to actively listen with empathy and think about what has been said.

In one occurrence, when one of the Arabic speaking girls created mixed compounds using the '-ing' incorporated in our interaction, I referred to the Arabic words she produced without the 'ing-'. My choice to refer to the 'correct' Arabic form led the girl to tell me that she did not produce the form the way I said it.

This section examined another common way of translanguaging using mixed compounds, which the children in their everyday interactions used, are examples of the intricate ways these young children are translanguaged. It demonstrated that in this way of translanguaging, elements from multiple languages could be dynamically mixed to create novel and creative utterances. In the following section, I discuss the features of another way the Elmer class translanguaged in their everyday classroom interactions.

6.2.3. Translanguaging by using morphological features from different languages

Conventional rules of English morphology are known for not applying the features of duplication in an English sentence. Prominent examples of duplicated utterances used by the Elmer Class children were phrases such as "see see" and "no no". It was common to hear "you will see see" by a group of children in the playground. The word

'see' is duplicated, which is a feature that is consistent with vernacular varieties of Arabic some of the reception children were familiar with. This duplicated form appears to be English according to the words used but seems to have an Arabic twist by utilizing the grammatical feature permitting word duplication common in colloquial Arabic varieties. This expression was used to connote that 'I will teach you a lesson' according to Dale, a boy in the group who uses this phrase. Dale explained to me that if someone tells him off for some reason, he uses this expression to threaten them. He said it corresponds to '*ba tshoof tshoof*, an Arabic phrase that translates to "you will see see."

These translanguaging forms can easily be dismissed as meaningless 'mistakes' which characterize 'normal' child language development. The responses of the Elmer Class teachers tended to show such a view about the children's use of these duplicated forms. In some conversations with the teachers, Ms. Mina and Ms. Choudhary referred to this use as developmental mistakes. Ms. Choudhary, the teaching assistant, talked about how children learn through adopting a "trial and error" approach and compared their language learning with "learning how to ride a bike", perhaps alluding to the constant falling before steady riding (Fieldnotes: 11/2/2019). She added that it is normal for children to make mistakes because they experiment with language and learn. However, this developmentalist stance towards young children's language mistakes seemed to be countered by linking these mistakes to broader discourses of deficit and racism about some children and families from particular social backgrounds.

The perceived 'lack of English proficiency' amongst Muslim families was a commonly voiced concern by the reception teachers. To the teachers, this 'lack' was the main reason the children persisted in making mistakes. Ms. Mina would sometimes express

her opinion by saying that the majority of the reception children have ‘nobody’ to develop their language skills at home. At other times, she attributed the ‘weak’ English language proficiency of the children to the exposure to “poor Englishes” (quotes from fieldnotes: 9/1/2019). The teachers often complained about how the ‘inability’ of the mothers of some reception children, especially those from Somali backgrounds, to speak English, which impacts their children's language learning in negative ways. For example, Ms. Mina associated Jacob’s ‘mistakes’ and ‘language delay’ with his mother’s poor proficiency in English. She also commented on the lack of response of Siddiq’s mother to the notes and handouts she leaves in the child’s book bag every Friday.

Similarly, Ms. Naima commented on how Lama’s mother did not comment on her child’s reading log, which she viewed problematic. I should note that the teachers expressed somewhat generalised opinions that did not apply to all of the reception children’s mothers. Some spoke English and did not enlist the help of their children to translate for them. The mother was the target of blame to the teachers for making the children ‘persist’ in making mistakes. One of the worst fears the teachers expressed about the reception children being in a state of ‘languagelessness’ (Seltzer et al., 2020) where they lack proficiency in all the languages they speak.

In consulting the relevant translanguaging literature, there is relatively limited empirical evidence on this translanguaging, particularly in early childhood education classrooms. While translanguaging theory explicitly refers to translanguaging as “an approach of language use” (García & Li Wei, 2014: p.2) and the “deployment of the speaker’s full linguistic repertoire” (Otheguy, García & Reid, 2015, p.281), the examples provided limit translanguaging. A possible reason for not including this translanguaging could be that some of its forms do not adhere to the conventional

English rules, which are difficult to identify or comprehend. Perhaps obscuring the creative and critical dimensions of these translanguaging practices occurs due to paying attention to the structural features of language, English in this case, as Li Wei (2018) argues.

This section has discussed another common way in which the Elmer Class children translanguaged which adopts morphological features from other languages and applies them to English. While applying the Arabic rule of duplication on English utterances can be seen as developmental mistakes, adopting a translanguaging epistemology views these instances as flexible use of the semiotic repertoire (Otheguy et al., 2019). The forms of translanguaging I discussed in the previous three subsections are examples of linguistic flexible meaning-making practices. Confining translanguaging practices within the linguistic parameters would demonstrate 'lingual bias' (Hua et al., 2020). Therefore, to overcome such bias, in the following subsection, I discuss the multimodal dimension of translanguaging, where resources such as gestures, facial expressions and gazes are actively deployed by the reception children and form essential parts of their repertoires

6.2.4. Multimodal translanguaging

The hand gesture, or the waiting gesture, which Farida used in the second introductory data excerpt in section 6.2, offers ways to think about translanguaging beyond the linguistic. Farida used the gesture as a means of multimodal communication to connote waiting. Notably, this gesture is an example of multimodal translanguaging because it is used in some vernacular varieties of Arabic, such as Moroccan, for the same purpose. The use of multimodal resources such as this gesture in the Elmer

Class children's translanguaging in their classroom activities is another common way of translanguaging I identified in this study.

In multimodal translanguaging, multimodal resources such as gestures, facial expressions, bodily movements and clicking sounds were used by the Elmer Class children to communicate specific meanings. These multimodal resources are deployed simultaneously with verbal interactions, especially at playtime. While it was noticeable that the reception children used non-verbal aspects of communication from English throughout the school day, they also used multimodal resources from Arabic and Somali, which are languages spoken by many of the Elmer Class children.

Salient forms of multimodal translanguaging the reception children used were gestures, facial expressions, and bodily movements. I should note that the provided examples of multimodal translanguaging in this section do not intend to limit the multimodality of children's language practices into specific formulations. Despite my efforts in my fieldwork to be attentive to the multimodality of young children's translanguaging, some interactions that included other multimodal resources tended to be overlooked. This was either due to my presence with a specific group of children or concerns raised by the children.

Gestures can be considered a form of multimodal translanguaging, commonly used at playtime. An example of this is the waiting gesture that Farida used in the opening episode of the chapter. However, this was not a simple visual phenomenon used on an 'ad hoc' basis (Goodwin & Kyratzis, 2007). According to my fieldnotes, this gesture was used several times by members of the reception girls group, Hamda, Amira, Lama, Zeinah, Farida and Aminat. It was employed to organize some interactions at their playtime. In observing a play activity of this group, the following took place in the

home corner. Amira, Aminat and Zeinah played 'mothers' and held baby dolls. Lama attempted to join the play activity, but the situation looked as if the other three girls were ignoring her. After a few silent moments, Lama declared her boredom, but there was no response. The three girls chatted while feeding their babies. Lama attempted to switch the play from 'mothers' to 'princesses' by verbally announcing her desire to the rest of the girls. While Lama did this, Zeinah deployed the waiting gesture to her, and their play continued. Lama attempted to change the play script again, but Aminat deployed the waiting gesture to her. Aminat, Zeinah and Amira shifted to changing nappies, and Lama saw there was no use in waiting, so she moved to the block area and joined Abraham (Fieldnotes: 14/2/2019).

This translanguaging combined more than one multimodal resource, such as the gesture and bodily movements, as shown below:

"Abdul put on a crown and a batman cape. He was striding back and forth in the block area, proudly declaring that he was "the king". <Who wants to be my helper, ha?> he said. Siddiq and Shahid both said that they wanted to be the helpers. Shahid said that he should pick them both. Abdul rejected this suggestion and determined that there must be only one helper. Siddiq said, <pick ME [with emphasis], your majesty[bowing]>, placing his right hand close to the left side of his chest and tilting his head slightly down in what seemed to be a bow. Shahid protested, <No (.) me>, adding that he could be an excellent helper. Abdul was seated on the floor, building a tall structure using the blocks scattered around the floor to make what resembled either a stick or a sword(?) Siddiq and Shahid were still arguing. Abdul rose and pointed with his 'stick' to Siddiq, saying, <Siddiq, YOU [loud voice and emphasis added] are my... helper>. Siddiq appeared excited and placed his hand near his chest in the same manner as before <let me hold your cape, your majesty>, and off they went striding all the way to the home corner; then, Ms Naima announced it was 'cleaning up time'. (from video recorded observation: 21/3/2019)

In the above excerpt, Siddiq indicated subservience through a combined gesture by placing his left hand on his chest and bodily movement by bowing his head down. This interaction can be considered multimodal translanguaging since it includes a form of

non-verbal expression typically used in Middle Eastern Arab culture to indicate respect and humility in greetings.

The reception children also translanguaged multimodally by using facial expressions associated with their languages to express specific meanings. For example, two Somali speaking boys made a facial expression by puffing out their cheeks to indicate 'go away' directed to a girl who attempted to join their play. I first dismissed this expression. However, after one discussion with Ms. Fatia, the teaching assistant, I later understood its meaning. Since she is a speaker of Somali, she offered helpful insight into considering this as a form of multimodal translanguaging. She informed me that the gesture of holding up one's breath for a few seconds with their cheeks full of air is mainly used by Somali speakers to indicate 'go away'.

The multimodality of the Elmer Class children's translanguaging echoes current directions in the translanguaging literature, which contends its multimodality. Recent theoretical and empirical work on translanguaging has broadened its conceptualization to include the multimodal as a crucial dimension of the repertoire of multilingual speakers (Blackledge & Creese, 2017; Li, 2018). The repertoire, which comprises speakers' multilingual knowledge, is now viewed as semiotic rather than linguistic because it includes non-verbal communicative aspects such as gaze, gesture, posture, and silence (Hua et al., 2017). Furthermore, there has been in the last few years, an increasing number of translanguaging studies that shine a light on the multimodal aspect of translanguaging, given the multimodal nature of language and communication (for example Li & Ho, 2018; Zhao & Flewitt, 2019; Hua et al., 2020). The gesture has received growing attention in this literature because it is considered a typical feature of the semiotic repertoire, commonly used in everyday

interactions (Blackledge & Creese, 2017). While they need to be used with speech, sometimes gestures can be deployed by themselves as signifiers.

I argue that young children's use of gestures such as "Arabic gestures" is one form of multimodal translanguaging the children use purposefully in their interactions. Considering that translanguaging studies mainly focused on adults' use of multimodal resources in meaning-making, there is emerging research evidence about how young children use multimodal resources when they translanguage (Zhao & Flewitt, 2019). While gestures show an exciting example of young children's translanguaging, there are other forms of this multimodal translanguaging that the Elmer children utilized to convey intricate meanings. Therefore, this discussion is consistent with these emerging studies by showing that young children use multimodal resources in their translanguaging. Indeed, using gestures, bodily movements, and facial expressions show that young children's communication does not only include multiple languages but involves 'diverse semiotic resources' (Canagarajah, 2013, p.6).

To conclude, this study advances the argument that young children in this classroom not only translanguage in their everyday informal activities but also engage in these practices in various ways. Four common ways of translanguaging were identified in this study to show the multiplicity of young children's translanguaging. However, multiplicity alone would not be sufficient to account for the complexity of these dynamic and fluid translanguaging practices (Blommaert, 2014; Zavala, 2019). In the next section, I argue that translanguaging does not occur in isolated spaces. Translanguaging intersects with everyday practices, discourses and specific spatial settings to produce multiple translanguaging spaces.

6.3. Translanguaging spaces: the intersection of translanguaging, language ideologies, practices, discourses and spaces

This section addresses the second part of this study's first research question, which asks when, where, and with whom young children translanguage. It examines and traces the reception children's translanguaging in the spaces of lesson time, play, the lunch hall and off-task talk to show the production of multiple translanguaging spaces within the classroom and around the school. This discussion seeks to extend Li's (2011b) conceptualization of the translanguaging space by demonstrating the role of translanguaging in producing heterogeneous spaces shaped by multiple practices, discourses, language ideologies and spatio-temporal configurations.

It is worth mentioning that the spatial dimensions of translanguaging have received much attention in recent scholarly work on translanguaging (Creese et al., 2014; Pennycook, 2017; Canagarajah, 2018). This increasing attention resulted in advocating multiple conceptualizations of space, such as ecological (Makoe, 2018; Zheng, 2019; Vaish, 2020), scalar (Prinsloo & Krause, 2019) and social (Hua et al., 2017; Huang, 2018; Hua et al., 2020). A large volume of translanguaging studies draws on Li Wei's (2011b) concept of the translanguaging space, which is based on Lefebvre's conceptualization of space as socially produced and Bhabha's (1994) rendition of the third space as a contextual, liminal space between languages.

As discussed in Chapter 2, this study uses Massey's concept of space-time and geometries of power to consider how the spatial, temporal, material, relational, and contextual dynamically interplay to produce and shape multiple translanguaging spaces. This theoretical resource was productive in showing the multiple translanguaging spaces in the site of this study which extends current academic conversations on the translanguaging space (E. Moore et al., 2020).

In this study, I examine young children's engagement with translanguaging across different spaces in their classroom. This discussion aims to contribute to the translanguaging literature by dissolving the binaries made between formal and informal translanguaging in a large number of studies. Recent translanguaging studies which used ideas from the sociology of childhood offer helpful insights into the richness of young children's practices in the early years classroom within their informal spaces (e.g. Kirsch & Mortini, 2019; Louriero & Neumann, 2020; Fashanu, 2021). Some of these studies examine young children's translanguaging in relation to space. For example, Fashanu (2021) found that young children's use of flexible language practices in their play activities produced a 'third space'. Fashanu's discussion of the third space builds on Li Wei's (2011b) notion of the translanguaging space, which I critiqued in Chapter 2 (Section 2.2.4). She argues that the children's translanguaging practices opened a transformative space between languages that enabled them to communicate and make meaning without adhering to the conventional language rules set in their classroom. In the following sections, I discuss how the Elmer Class children's translanguaging intersects with relational, material, discursive and spatio-temporal elements across different school spaces that produce multiple translanguaging spaces. Therefore, this discussion extends Fashanu's argument that translanguaging produces multiple, not just singular translanguaging spaces. By analysing the reception children's interactions, I argue that these translanguaging spaces are informed by language ideologies, practices, discourses, spaces and relations between interlocutors.

6.3.1. Translanguaging in the formal space of schooling

Throughout this thesis, I adopt a context-sensitive approach to translanguaging, which necessitates its examination within interactions and across different spaces. I have argued in Chapter 2 that this approach is helpful to demonstrate the complexity of translanguaging. In the introductory fieldnote excerpt, it can be seen that Aminat translanguaged using “*uffing*” with one of her peers while she used English only with the teacher. This section aims to discuss how translanguaging is informed by the spaces and practices in which it occurred.

In Elmer Class, lesson time represents the reception teachers' formal schooling space directed and maintained. Both the teachers and the children use ‘carpet time’ and ‘lesson time’ interchangeably to refer to this space. The Elmer Class teachers accorded much importance to this space, given its cruciality in early childhood education settings in producing future human capital (Bollig & Millei, 2018).

The space of ‘lesson time’ in Elmer Class is spatially and temporally marked. This space has a specific temporal organization that adheres to the guidance of the EYFS using structured timetables. These timetables were often placed on the classroom notice board, which displayed weekly plans outlining the types and duration of the planned daily activities from Monday to Friday. Planned teaching and learning activities were spread throughout the day in specific time slots. For example, ‘lesson time’, which was the main teaching activity directed by the class teacher for the whole class, was usually arranged from 9:45 to 10:04 and from 11:45 to 12:15. Additionally, a specific time slot was allocated for guided reading activities from 1:00 to 1:30. This temporal structuring of the reception children’s activities reflects an intended regulation

and control of children's behaviours by instilling routines common in early childhood education settings (James & James, 2004).

A large dark blue carpet demarcated the spatial boundaries of the formal schooling space with beige borders placed in front of the whiteboard. During the activities of 'lesson time', the reception children took their seats on the carpet in four rows arranged according to register order. There were four tables close to this area, with five to six chairs designated for group work. The Elmer Class teachers usually arranged this group work area into different independent learning stations where the reception children are distributed to work on or encouraged to self-choose various learning activities such as reading, writing, maths, art, crafts and painting.

The formal space of schooling in Elmer Class had linguistic arrangements. These consisted of the rules teachers enforced in class regarding the use of 'good' standard English. Significantly, these arrangements reflected how this space intersected with the ideology of 'good' English as the privileged language of schooling that I discussed in Chapter 5, representing a centripetal pull towards standardisation. The rule of using 'good' standard English, which was enforced and maintained by the teachers and the children, reflected a valorisation of English as the language of schooling. This valuation could be seen as part of the institutional dynamics of the school as a site that socialises children into language and literacy practices for purposes of assessment and future educational trajectories of success. The teachers maintained this linguistic arrangement by reminding the children that they must speak appropriate, standard forms of English to promote this language variety as the language of schooling.

While the teachers demarcated a specific space within Elmer Class for teaching and learning purposes, the children did initiate translanguaging amongst themselves, as shown in the excerpt below:

“We were all seated on the carpet. Dale hurriedly entered the classroom and soon took his place in the front row, an action that announced his tardiness. Ms. Mina took the register and started to talk to the class about behaviour rules. She told the children to behave sensibly since they are in reception. “No pushing!” Ms. Mina cautioned. She then asked the children, “is pushing good?”. They all answered, “nooo!”. She then questioned the children, “why?” eliciting some answers. Abdul raised his hand and answered that somebody might get hurt. Dale added that somebody might fall, prompting some children to say what could happen if someone is pushed. Hamda exclaimed, “Miss, pushing is *no no* good!”. Ms. Mina asked her, “what?” amid all that noise. She clapped her hand twice and said, “are we listening, class? Everybody answered her enthusiastically: “Yes, we are!”. She shifted her attention to Hamda and asked her, “what’s *no no* good Hamda?” and Hamda replied that pushing is. The teacher then asked the children if it was all right to say *no no* good? Some voices mentioned, “not good”. At the same time, while I was asking Zeinah what she thought, Ms. Mina surprised me by saying, let us see what Ms. Sharifa says. I immediately responded that it is better to say ‘not good. Ms. Mina asked me to explain to the children. I said because it is correct. The teacher then told the children they are here at school because they learn to say things ‘in the right way’. While she turned her back to the whiteboard to write something, some children started chattering. She then said “class class!” and continued to write some math problems with the children immediately replying, “Yes yes, Miss”, announcing their silent attention (Fieldnotes: 5/11/2018)”

The excerpt shows an interaction during lesson time where the teacher talked to the children about a key behavioural rule they must follow. The use of the double negative, *no no*, by Hamda can be considered a form of translanguaging (refer to 6.3.3). While this form of translanguaging appears to be of a single language, the feature of duplication does not adhere to conventional English grammar. It could be interpreted as an adopted feature from colloquial Arabic to connote ‘not’.

Correcting the reception children to use proper English shaped this formal schooling space. Some children sometimes translanguaged by using morphological features from different languages. The class teacher often corrected and modelled the children’s translanguaging to replace the ‘deficient’ with appropriate forms.

Another strategy that Ms. Mina deployed for correction was asking other children to provide the correct forms. Usually, the children perceived as possessing higher proficiency levels in English, such as Abdul, are invited by the teacher to correct the children who produced mistakes that were, in fact, translanguaging. Here it could be said that the teachers' assumptions about the deficiency of particular children, usually based on race and social class, seemed to motivate these correction strategies. In my observations, I have noted that the Somali-speaking children, who were from low-income backgrounds, were the usual targets of correcting language use. For example, a Somali speaking child called Shahid was the common target for correcting language use and modelling even though he did not make mistakes.

On the other hand, a child such as Abdul, whom the teachers considered high-achieving and 'smart', made many mistakes when he spoke in English yet did not receive an equal amount of correction compared to Shahid. As discussed in chapter 5, deficit discourses about Somali children and their families led the teachers to racialise them as linguistically inappropriate. At other times, this correction process seemed gendered, where the boys were corrected more than the girls. According to Ms. Naima, correcting the children was because the boys were more 'out of control' than the 'good behaving' girls who always listened to instructions.

The class teacher's attempts to correct children's perceived 'language mistakes' took different forms. There were few occasions when Ms. Mina would enlist my help during lesson time to 'correct' the children, as shown in the above data excerpt. Responding to Ms. Mina's call seemed to breach my non-authoritative position in Elmer Class. It seemed that Ms. Mina was addressing some of my interactions with some children in Arabic. She told me that talking to them in their native language will 'mix up' their learning and that language proficiency is an issue that teachers are struggling with,

particularly in Islamic schools (conversation from fieldnotes 10/2018). Before this incident, she explicitly asked me to correct the children. While I expressed my lack of interest in correcting the children, that moment signified when my identity as a school teacher surfaced by providing the 'correct' form to children.

Conversely, I have also an obligation to the teacher to correct the children to make my presence more acceptable in her classroom. Interestingly enough, the phrase used at the end of the fieldnote excerpt by Ms. Mina to direct the children's attention illustrates an example of translanguaging, which adopts features from other languages. Notably, this translanguaging uses a duplicated form to draw the attention of the teacher; a form that Ms. Jumana, the parent volunteer, constantly interpreted as a 'translation' of a phrase used for the same purpose in Arabic speaking schools in many Arab countries where 'class' is substituted with "children children '*awlad awlad*'", with children saying in response "yes yes '*na'am na'am*'". The reception teachers strikingly denied that this use corresponded with duplication in Arabic and insisted that the repeated words are used to direct the children's attention. Ms. Naima stated it is such a 'coincidence' that this form that they used corresponds to a similar one used by Arab teachers in some middle eastern countries.

In the formal space of 'lesson time', the use of 'good' English is given a relatively higher status in the language hierarchy, which could be due to its position as the formal language of schooling. While the production of the 'lesson time' space reflects how broader discourses and certain language ideologies intersect with the use of language practices contributing to its delineation, the reception children have 'undone' the delineation of this formal space by translanguaging. As the discussion seeks to demonstrate in the remainder of this chapter, translanguaging practices do not occur in uniform ways across all spaces within this reception classroom.

6.3.2. Translanguaging in the play space

At the beginning of the chapter, the opening data excerpts showed the different ways in which some reception children translanguaged in their playtime. Shahid used “*yameen*” to indicate the direction of his play group, while Farida deployed an Arabic gesture to connote wait. This use of translanguaging in these examples leads to examining translanguaging in the play space in relation to space, language ideologies and everyday practices in the classroom, which will be discussed in this section.

The play space in Elmer Class refers to the informal space designated for play and the reception children’s self-initiated activities. It is a child-centred space where children engage in play activities by roaming free between different play stations arranged by the reception teachers.

This space is physically arranged into indoor and outdoor play areas. The reception teachers physically arranged these areas into several stations following the recommended guidelines of early years practice according to the EYFS. A physical boundary in the form of a partition wall separated the indoor play area from the ‘lesson time’ space close to the whiteboard and the teacher’s desk. In this indoor play space, several play stations were set up: a workbench with carpentry tools, a home corner, a small food stall, a blocks station, an imaginative play station with costumes and an automobile station. The outdoor play area was located in an enclosed area outside the classroom, designated for the reception and nursery children during breaks and outdoor playtime. This outdoor space has a small green fence that separates the outdoor play area of the young children from the playground of the older children in the school. This outdoor space includes tricycles, a mud kitchen, a block area and an enclosed sandpit.

Despite physical demarcation, which sought to contain the children's play activities, especially in the indoor play space, the children's play activities invaded other spaces in the classroom. Some children played under the group work tables, while others went to play in the coat hanging area. For example, a group of boys occasionally constructed an enclosed place using pillows in the book corner and warned others, including myself, from getting close to their 'bad boy' areas.

The play space of Elmer class was also temporally marked. The Elmer Class teachers allocated several time slots for the children ranging from fifteen to thirty minutes to engage in play activities in the daily timetable. The time slots for indoor play activities ranged from fifteen to twenty minutes, whereas outdoor play activities, which often took place after lunchtime, lasted up to thirty minutes. The last few minutes of indoor play involved cleaning up time which the teachers announced by clapping their hands and calling everybody's attention to tidy up. One of the teachers declared the end of outdoor play by telling the children to return the play equipment and line up in register order to enter the classroom.

On the linguistic level, I found that the reception teachers tended to relax the language rule they had set, which privileged the use of 'good' standard English in the formal space of 'lesson time'. The reception children visibly translanguage by using multiple languages in this space. In some conversations with the reception teachers, Ms. Mina mentioned that they overlooked different languages in the play space because it is not the "official language space". She also added that children could use any language in play as long as they behave appropriately. Ms. Naima also relaxed this rule for the children when she took over the classroom after Ms. Mina left the school for similar reasons. It could be said that the comments made by the teachers reflected some

discourses about play as space or a realm that is located outside the everyday world, which justifies the play space escaping this rule (Strandell, 1997).

I have noted that the children translanguaged primarily by using three common types of translanguaging: translanguaging through adopting words from languages other than English, translanguaging through using mixed compounds and multimodal translanguaging. The following data excerpt shows an occurrence of translanguaging during a play activity in the outdoor play space, the playground:

“We were in the outdoor play area after lunchtime. I asked a group of seven kids close to where I was standing if they wanted to play a fun game. Dale suggested that we play ‘What time is it, Mr Wolf? Five children, Jacob, Faisal, Abdul, Aminat and Lama, ran to the opposite wall. While Ahmet, Hamda, Amira and I stood close to each other, facing them. Hamda whispered, saying to me, “You be the wolf, ok?”. I was delighted to be chosen and thanked her. The game began: Abdul shouted, ‘what time is it, Mr Wolf?’. It was my turn now, so I said in a husky voice, trying to enact a real Mr Wolf, “It’s six o’clock”. The kids facing us counted from one to six and took six steps toward us. Ahmet was very excited he told me to do it again. Aminat asked, “what time is it, Mr Wolf?”. I answered, “Seven o’clock”. They were getting close to me. Hamda reminded me it was going to be ‘eating time’ soon. Faizal shouted, “what time is it, Mr Wolf”. And then it was the time to say, ‘it’s dinner time!’ I ran after them trying to ‘eat’ them, and the whole place turned into bursting laughter and shouting. Hamda and Amira enthusiastically demanded that we should play the game again. I asked the girls what they wanted to play instead; suddenly, they ran around and shouted. I was running around with them as well. Dinner time was playfully flouted into lunchtime, breakfast time, snack time, *and lahma time, which means meat in Arabic*. Amira said, ‘what clock is it, Mr Wolf?’. Not far from us, Ms. Mina watched us play, and I could see that she was laughing. Amira ran towards her and hugged her. She then started playing the same game with the children. (Fieldnotes 7/11/2018)”

In these interactions, the children translanguaged using the word ‘*lahma*’ from Arabic to flout the usual phrase of ‘it’s dinner time’ in the game of What time is it Mr. Wolf?. Striking in this example was the lack of Ms. Mina’s intervention to correct as she would do in the pedagogic space. Instead, her smiling seemed to indicate a tolerance of what she sometimes referred to as ‘language mistakes’.

I should note that the use of translanguaging by the children seemed to be infused with certain language ideologies such as the ones already discussed in Chapter 5. I have also found that the configuration of languages used in translanguaging depended on the languages spoken by a dominant group of children in a play activity. For example, I have witnessed Abdul, a speaker of Urdu, translanguage by using Arabic and English during his interactions with a group of Arabic speaking boys. Similarly, Aminat translanguaged by using Arabic and English in her play activities with a group of Arabic speaking girls.

In several other interactions, the previously mentioned types of translanguaging were used for purposes of exclusion and inclusion, which will be elaborated on more in the next chapter. I have seen that the play space tended to be 'pedagogised' by the class teacher during some interactions. Ms. Mina and Ms. Naima enforced this pedagogisation by intervening to correct the children's language use which they perceived as 'mistakes' or inappropriate. For example, one day during playtime, Dale played on the workbench with Jacob, who made 'farting' sounds and laughed. Dale told him to stop '*fruting*', an example of a mixed compound flouting the Arabic word for fart "*dhraʿ*" with '*frut*' and adding an -ing suffix. Ms. Mina immediately intervened to stop Dale from saying inappropriate words. In another example, Shahid once used the word "*shira*" during clean up while he chanted "clean up, clean up, it's *shira* time" in a playful manner. Notably, Ms. Fatia, the teaching assistant who took over after Ms. Choudhary in March, admonished Shahid for using this word which meant 'poop' in Somali. This admonishment occurred despite the teachers' statements about permitting the children to use any language they spoke during playtime, which was considered separate from the real world. Notably, the teachers permitted the use of multiple languages in this space, with Ms. Mina saying, "it is ok as long as they are not

saying something inappropriate”, which could indicate that perceiving inappropriateness changes according to space (quote from fieldnotes 2/12/2018).).

This section shows how the children’s translanguaging practices within the play space produced another translanguaging space within Elmer Class. These practices were shaped by spatial, temporal arrangements and shifting ideologies about languages such as Arabic and Somali based on the children who participated in some play activities. The discourses about play as separate from the real world impact the tendency of the teachers to scrutinize the enforced language ideology privileging the use of English.

6.3.3. Translanguaging within the lunch hall space

Examples such as the one in the opening data episode when Abdul, an Urdu speaking child, translanguaged using the word “*hak*” to Dale, an Arabic-speaking child, show how translanguaging operated amongst other practices to create a translanguaging space in the school lunch hall.

The school lunch hall is a space allocated for the children to have their snacks and lunches. It is also one of the informal spaces in the school because it is not associated with formal learning activities. Usually, the reception children go to the lunch hall space, which is located near the main school hall, twice a day to have their snacks and their lunch. The children must line up, leave the reception classroom and walk a small distance to reach this space. The lunch hall space has specific physical arrangements. Upon entrance, there are about twelve large tables with seats for children. There is an area for food serving which includes cooking and food heating equipment. Usually, this space is attended by lunchtime support staff. Ms. Ilham and Ms. Hana were the two lunchtime support staff responsible for supervising the nursery

and reception at lunchtime. The reception class teacher and the teaching assistant usually supervised the Elmer Class children at snack time.

The landscape of the lunch hall space was focused on maintaining healthy snacking and eating habits with a promotion of a good standard of hygiene, as is the case in many educational settings. However, in this school site, the food space seemed to be infused with religious references in relation to food practices. As I mentioned in Chapter 5, as an Islamic school, the school spaces of Westwood Primary appeared to include elements of religion that stemmed from the belief that Islam is a way of life reflected in everyday practices. This observation reflects what Shah (2019) observes about how Muslims view Islam. Eating was considered a religious practice in the food space where Muslims are expected to start and end with prayers. In this sense, the food space is not only a space of physical and spiritual sustenance.

Posters marked the religious features of this space hung across the hall, which was in English and Quranic Arabic transliterated into English. Some posters displayed a few sayings by Prophet Mohammed about food manners and hygiene in English. Other posters included Arabic supplications related to food practices transliterated into English. In this space, the children are permitted to choose where they sit at the allocated four tables on the right side of the hall. There are three washing basins located at the entrance where children take turns washing their hands and then taking their seats to have their food.

It should be noted that the food space is marked temporally. The teachers specified when the children could have their snacks, from 9:30 to 9:45. The time allocated for lunchtime is from 10:45 to 11:45. The children who finish having their lunch are permitted to go outside to play in the playground until one of the teachers announces

the end of playtime with a whistle and calls everybody's attention to line up and enter the reception classroom from the backdoor.

In this space, the children get to choose the places they sit. The children's seating choice was primarily influenced by membership in friendship groups. For example, I have seen that all the girls, Hamda, Amira, Lama, Zeinah, Rena and Farida, tended to sit together during snack and lunchtime except for Aminat, who usually sat with Siddiq, who is one of her relatives. On the other hand, the boys were divided into different groups. Abdul, Ahmet, Mehmet, Shahid, Tahir and Faizal had their meals together. Whereas Dale, Fawzi and Jacob usually sat to have their meals close to the girls' group. At other times, however, they joined Abdul's group forming a larger gathering of boys.

Whenever the reception teachers were present in this space, their attention was focused on the children's hygiene practices, healthy eating habits and the types of foods brought into the school. While the school provided healthy snacks, Ms. Mina encouraged the reception children to bring their favourite snacks. Some children brought snacks that Ms. Mina considered unhealthy, such as fried snacks. These foods would be confiscated and replaced by a piece of fruit. Additionally, Ms. Mina and Ms. Choudhary worked to familiarise the children with the religious prayers that have to be said before and after eating food to develop their knowledge about Islam. The teachers often used Arabic to say these prayers rather than English. For example, Ms. Mina would encourage the children to start eating by saying "*bismillahi al rahmani al raheem*" rather than in the name of Allah, the most gracious and the most merciful. The use of Arabic in prayers before and after food reflected the ideology which valorised the use of Quranic Arabic as the liturgical language of Islam. Considering

the practice of eating as a form of worship goes in line with the Islamic ethos of the school.

In relation to the linguistic arrangements in this space, the teachers rarely corrected children's translanguaging. The teachers encouraged the using Quranic Arabic in translanguaging, which seemed to be connected to religion. The teachers even encouraged the non-Arabic speaking children to use it to learn how to be a Muslim. In my observations in this space, I have seen that the Elmer Class children mainly tended to translanguage by inserting words and phrases from other languages in their talk. Strikingly, some of the children who did not speak Arabic used Arabic to translanguage with the Arabic speaking children, even in instances that did not strictly relate to religion.

During mealtime, the reception children translanguaged to talk about the religious appropriateness of food they brought to school. To draw an example of this, Shahid, a Somali speaking child, examined the food that the children he sits with bring to school during lunchtime. Once Abdul brought a mortadella sandwich for lunch which he took a bite of and uttered, "mmm, it's yummy". Shahid, who was unfamiliar with cold sandwiches, shouted, "Abdul is not eating halal food!". Abdul refuted that and confirmed that his food is halal and that his parents never buy anything that is not halal. Shahid offered an interesting response "that's *kafir* food. You are eating pig" *kafir* refers to non-Muslim in Arabic. Abdul was angry, and then Ms. Ilham intervened to resolve the situation (Fieldnotes: 24/10/2018).

In another interaction, Siddiq was sitting next to Aminat, having their lunch. Sometimes, when I get invited by these two children to sit with them, they talk about their mothers' food preparation for their lunches. They informed me that they usually

bring Somali food because it is delicious and healthy. Siddiq brought some mashed fava beans called “*fol*” in Somali with some flatbread. When Ahmet got off his place and went to get some napkins, he saw Siddiq’s food and commented on it by saying that his food looked like poop. He laughed at him and said, “you eat poop, *khara khara khara*”, which prompted Siddiq to cry (Fieldnotes: 12/2/2019). When some of the teachers hear such taunts, they often reply by telling the children to stop it, or they are going to lose minutes from their playtime.

This section thus far has shown how the ideology of Arabic shapes the food space as the language of Islam. In this space, eating was viewed as a form of religious practice. Given that it is one of the informal spaces within the school, English was not as privileged as it was in the formal ‘lesson time’ space.

6.3.4. Translanguaging in the liminal space of off-task talk

In this section, I discuss how the liminal, fleeting space of off-task talk is another translanguaging space produced in Elmer Class through translanguaging practices.

Throughout the day, the children would typically have to line up in various spaces in the school as they set to move from one space to another. They line up in their classroom to head to the school assembly, the playground, the computer room, and the lunch hall. The teachers’ control of lining up time manifested in how they routinized and orchestrated the practices of waiting in a line according to register order. From the start of the school year, Ms. Mina cautioned the children about the importance of quietly walking in a straight line. “This is what adults do” was a common refrain said by Ms. Mina to answer the children’s questions about the importance of lining up. At the beginning of the school year, there were many occasions when some children pushed each other because they wanted to line up behind someone they preferred.

However, this seemed to occur less after receiving warnings from teachers and other supervising adults such as parent volunteers.

In relation to the temporal configuration of lining up time, teachers would allow up to five minutes at the start and end of activities outside the classroom. Ms. Naima carried out a stringent measure to control this space by carrying an electronic stopwatch to count how much time the children spend. It could also be noted that the teachers took advantage of the lining up time to teach children useful skills and brief lessons at some points. For example, Ms. Mina encouraged the children to use polite requests to ask a child who was 'not listening' to join the line.

During this time, the teachers wanted the children to be as quick and quiet as possible since they were transitioning to other spaces within the school. Usually, the teachers responded to the children's off-task talk using silencing techniques. When the class teacher was checking if all the children had successfully put on their P.E. shoes and it happened that a child took more time in doing so, she would stay until they headed to their place in the line. As a result, some children, especially those at the back of the line who stood relatively far from the teaching assistant, would engage in off-task talk until the class teacher approached them for silencing. I witnessed a few instances of translanguaging at that time, which seemed to display the flexible use of multiple languages for meaning-making.

However, translanguaging in this space was sometimes informed by broader social unequal relations. An example of this is the racialization of Somalis, especially Somali boys, as possessing a 'stinky' smell. Once, Aminat asked Faizal to keep his distance because of his smell. He laughed while getting closer to her, and she replied, "*uff uff* stay away", which meant stinky in Somali.

The discussion in this section has demonstrated how translanguaging practices occurred within the liminal space of off-task talk. The children's translanguaging with their teachers and peers in this space shows that specific ways of translanguaging were salient such as seemingly monolingual English translanguaging. However, this space was permeated by other ways and forms of translanguaging, different discourses and practices which resulted in its production.

6.4. Conclusion

In this chapter, I demonstrated that the young children of Elmer Class translanguage using multiple forms based on a variety of semiotic resources from different languages. It demonstrated that children's translanguaging does not occur uniformly across spaces despite their young age.

I have argued that the Elmer Class children's initiated translanguaging has a complex dimension and that multiplicity alone would not account for a sufficient understanding of these dynamic and fluid practices. The 'lesson time' space, the play space, the food space, and the liminal off-task talk space are shaped by translanguaging practices informed by specific language ideologies, discourses about children, childhood, and unequal social relations. Thus, this chapter has contributed to the conceptual conversation on translanguaging regarding its multiplicity and complexity in relation to space. It heeds recent calls made by scholars such as Kramsch (2018), who called for the importance of moving current understandings of translanguaging forward from the dialectic of a 'spatial utopia' and placelessness. It offers insight into translanguaging practices embedded within spatio-temporal specific contexts. Following Canagarajah's (2018) cue, such orientation will enable seeing these practices as 'situated' rather than an insignificant context. In the next chapter, I unpack further the

complexity of these translanguaging practices in understanding their social implications and their potential in negotiating intersections of Muslim identities.

CHAPTER 7: Translanguaging and negotiations of intersectional Muslim identities in Elmer Class

7.1. Introduction

The previous chapter offered a contextualised discussion of the Elmer Class children's translanguaging and its affordances in producing multiple translanguaging spaces. It examined the relations between the reception children's translanguaging and particular language ideologies, discourses and practices across spaces within this setting. In this chapter, I seek to show the complexity of the translanguaging of the Elmer Class children. The chapter addresses the second research question of this study, which explores the implications of the reception children's translanguaging in relation to negotiating intersectional Muslim identities. Taking Muslim identities as a core lens to view intersectional subject positions, I argue that translanguaging interplays with power relations to produce particular and highly local meanings of Muslimness. Core to this chapter is the argument that translanguaging is one social practice among others that needs to be taken into account in identity negotiations, power and inequalities but one that heretofore has been less prevalent in the translanguaging literature. I extend the discussion of heteroglossic language ideologies and translanguaging spaces to show how they are formed through power-laden identity negotiations.

In this chapter, I focus on translanguaging, which employs elements from English and Arabic, based on the momentary ideological valorisation of Arabic as the liturgical language of Islam and religious practices. I argue that the children's translanguaging reproduces this ideology in the setting. I examine how the reception children

translanguaging operates among other social practices and resources in their daily interactions to negotiate, maintain and police intersectional Muslim identities.

This analytical discussion aims to contribute to the academic debates on translanguaging and intersectionality in the following ways. Firstly, this discussion aims to contribute to translanguaging theorisations by advancing the complexity of young children's translanguaging by offering a closer look into their implications for the intricate processes of identity negotiations. Core to this chapter is the argument that translanguaging and power relations are inextricably linked. By considering translanguaging in relation to questions of identities, power and inequalities, this discussion adds to the nascent work on translanguaging, which explores its mobilisations for inclusions and exclusions in school settings (for example Panagiotopolou et al., 2021). Secondly, the intersectional analysis presented in this chapter seeks to enrich intersectional analyses of young children's identities by shedding light on how the social categories of language, generation, religion and national origin intersect to create complex forms of Muslim identities.

I begin this chapter by examining how translanguaging is used to imagine gendered and generationed idealised Muslim identities in Elmer Class and around Westwood Primary. I then offer a detailed account of how a group of Elmer Class children mobilised translanguaging, among other practices, to negotiate being the ideal 'good' based on language, 'race', gender and generation. I conclude this discussion by considering the complex social implications of translanguaging in relation to Muslim identities. I argue that while translanguaging produced an effect of asserting a sense of collective Muslimness in a broader Islamophobic context, at some interactions, its use produced an exclusionary form of the 'good' Muslim based on language, 'race' and generation, which reproduced broader unequal social relations.

7.2. Translanguaging and the negotiations of Muslim identities

“Westwood Primary aims to promote a British Muslim identity to ensure its pupils are well equipped for and can contribute to life in modern Britain” (quote from school prospectus for the school year 2018-2019)

In the previous chapters, I have shown the children in Elmer Class to translanguage using multiple forms across different spaces within the classroom and around the school. The above quote shows one of the explicitly stated aims of Westwood Primary as an Islamic school which represents its ethos. In school assemblies, the school senior leadership team members iterated this aim to all school children. The emphasis on British Muslim identity in the school advertising materials and the school assemblies raises several questions such as the following: what does a British Muslim mean in the site of this study? How does it play out in practice? How do the children of Elmer Class understand it? Furthermore, what is the role of translanguaging in the negotiations of these identities? These are the questions that this chapter seeks to investigate by examining translanguaging using Arabic and English across multiple school and classroom spaces.

7.2.1. Translanguaging and intersectional imaginations of the ideal ‘good’ Muslim

In this section, I argue that the forms of translanguaging, which drew on Arabic and English, produced “locally specific meanings” (Prinsloo & Krause, 2019, p. 162) specific to this school site by their interplay with heteroglossic language ideologies, which were related to particular forms of Muslimness. This discussion of translanguaging and its relation to localised identities aligns with the findings of Huang (2016). Huang (2016) found that the use of translanguaging in a Chinese

complementary school interplayed with the heteroglossic ideologies associated with different varieties of Chinese and a local form of diasporic Chineseness. Huang argues that the promotion of Putonghua over the different Chinese varieties spoken in the school setting was associated with negotiating an ethnic identification of being Chinese. The discussions I present in this section fit with Huang's discussions of translanguaging, heteroglossic language ideologies and identities. I extend this discussion by focusing on the complexity of translanguaging practices by discussing their mobilisations in relation to intersectional identities. I argue that the locally specific meanings of translanguaging, which relate to Muslim identities, are promulgated by the language ideology of Quranic Arabic as the language of Islam and religious schooling.

During my fieldwork, the school headteacher Mrs. Jones constantly asserted that *everyone* speaks English at Westwood Primary. This assertion seemed important to the headteacher to distinguish her school from other Islamic schools that presumably do not teach English to their students. The Elmer Class teachers made similar statements that resonated with this assertion. The reception teachers expressed that the children who started the school year with limited English proficiency would 'absorb' it fast and speak 'perfect' English soon. While these assertions reinforced the emphasis on promoting English proficiency amongst Muslim children due to perceived assumptions about their performance (see for example Miah, 2017; Shah, 2019), they appeared to be momentarily undone in some school spaces. As I discussed in Chapter 5, Quranic Arabic appeared to be given ideological value in the activities related to religious practices and education in the main hall, prayer time and religious education lessons.

Indeed, as it appeared, everybody seemed to speak English inside Elmer Class since it was the formal medium of schooling in the school. However, the children translanguaged in their everyday school activities within the classroom by using words, phrases, expressions and multimodal resources from languages such as Arabic and Somali.

It was common to hear the Islamic greeting of “*assalmu alaikum*”, which means peace be upon you, and everyday expressions such as “*inshallah*” and “*mashallah*”, which mean God willing in Arabic. The headteacher commonly used the phrase “*mashallah*” to express how impressed she was when entering the reception classroom. Additionally, religiously infused gestures were used. An example was the gesture of thanking Allah by joining both palms upwards. These examples, albeit brief and relatively decontextualised in this presentation, show that the use of these instances of translanguaging suggests specific meanings associated with being a Muslim in the classroom and around the Islamic school. The present section builds on these meanings and aims to examine the mobilisations of translanguaging amongst other resources and practices in imagining idealised intersectional forms of the ‘good’ Muslim. I begin by explaining the reasons for focusing on the multiple types of translanguaging, which primarily draw on English and Arabic. I then direct the attention to how these forms of translanguaging operate in conjunction with other practices and resources to produce gendered and generationed forms of ‘good’ Muslimness.

7.2.1.1. Translanguaging using English and Arabic

In my observations in Elmer Class, I have noted that many children translanguaged in multiple ways by drawing on elements from English and different varieties of Arabic. Their translanguaging, as discussed in Chapter 6, included inserted words, phrases, mixed compounds and multimodal resources from multiple languages. Notably, the reception children of Elmer Class primarily appeared to draw on two varieties of Arabic and English in their translanguaging. The children's translanguaging included elements from Quranic Arabic and Moroccan Arabic. As discussed in Chapter 5, some languages were valorised based on the spaces, activities and interests of the interlocutors, which assigned them a higher position in the language hierarchy. Quranic Arabic was ideologically valorised in the school setting in relation to religious practices and education based on its position as the liturgical language of Islam.

The use of this standard variety of Arabic appeared to be highly valorised in some activities at the school level. An example is the opening of the school assembly, which included Arabic recitations for the Holy Quran and the Hadith Sharif, the sayings of Prophet Mohammed, was considered an important segment. Sometimes, some teachers, such as the Arabic language teacher, took much effort into preparing the children to present this segment. This variety of Arabic was highly promoted in religious education lessons at the classroom level. Whenever some children in Elmer Class who were speakers of languages other than Arabic, such as Somali and Urdu, asked their class teacher Ms. Naima and the parent volunteer Ms. Jumana about the reasons for learning to recite the Quran in Arabic, "it is the language of Quran" was a typical response by the teachers. When Abdul, an Urdu speaker, informed Ms. Jumana that his parents used a translation of the Quran for worship purposes, she replied that they should read it in Arabic; otherwise, its original meaning would change.

The instances of translanguaging I recorded in my fieldnotes which used elements from Arabic, connoted specific meanings associated with Muslimness which seemed to appear across different spaces within the Islamic school. Moments of struggle occurred between Quranic Arabic and the Moroccan vernacular, where it seemed to occupy a lower status than the high-status standard variety. To draw an example, Ms. Zuha, the school's Arabic language teacher, reminded the children at the school assembly to use "*Al Fusha*", which referred to Quranic Arabic, whenever they discussed religious texts of the Quran and the Hadith rather than the vernacular to display religious appropriateness and respect. Similarly, languages other than Arabic, such as Urdu and Somali, were restricted and frowned upon in religious practices. The children used elements from their home languages to establish being a 'good' Muslim. For example, Abdul, an Urdu speaking child, referred to the Muslim prayer using the Urdu word "*namaz*" to express his knowledge about this practice in the religious education lesson.

Additionally, several Somali speaking children used the Somali word "*tukania*" to refer to the Muslim prayer. The reception teachers and the parent volunteer responded to the use of these non-Arabic words by explicitly stating that good practising Muslims would not use them. These brief occurrences show that languages other than Arabic in relation to Muslim religious practices were not valued the same way Arabic was.

7.2.1.2. Translanguaging to imagined ideals of 'good' Muslimness

In the previous subsection, I mentioned that focusing the present discussion on translanguaging, which draws on Arabic, stems from its ideological valorisation as the language of religious practices and education based on its known status as the liturgical language of Islam. In this section, I examine how translanguaging practices

considering this ideological valorisation are mobilised to produce multiple imagined ideals of Muslimness based on gender and generation.

As Kanno and Norton (2003) argue, imagination is a social process where language practices play a significant role in creating images of the world and ourselves. Drawing primarily on Anderson's (1991) work on imagined communities, Kanno and Norton state that identities can be imagined by a series of social and language practices based on imagined commonality, affiliations, and expectations. Research on Muslim identities has directed attention to the multiple and complex ways these identities are constructed, negotiated and imagined (for example Modood, 2009; Shah, 2009; Nayel, 2017; Panjwani, 2017; Sulaiman, 2018). Imagining Muslimness occurs in its construction according to ideals of Islamic faith, religious practices and an imagined affiliation to a global Muslim *Ummah*, the global Muslim community in Arabic (Panjwani, 2017). Some studies in the Muslim identities literature shed light on how the imaginations of Muslims in the multicultural Western world operated to produce a monolithic social category of the Muslim by emphasising only religion which leads to marginalising their differences based on the social categories of race, gender, social class and ethnicity (Dwyer, 1999). Another volume of studies examined how the creation of imagined Muslim identities in social practices foregrounded the gendered religious ideals of femininity such as modesty (Yaqin, 2007; Siraj, 2011; Karimova, 2014) and piety (Mahmood, 2011; Abu-Lughod, 2013). However, little is known about how language practices such as translanguaging operate to create imagined ideals in everyday life.

Considering the significance of translanguaging in imagining and negotiating identities (Li Wei, 2018), this discussion examines how translanguaging is used along with other resources and practices to imagine idealised ways of being the 'good' Muslim in this

school setting. I argue that translanguaging operates, among other practices, to imagine ideal Muslimness in complex, intersecting ways with other social categories such as gender and generation across different spaces. Specifically, this practice produced an imagined ideal Muslim female and an ideal Muslim child. It is thus important to discuss how translanguaging is related to being a practising Muslim in the school setting to ground the understanding of imagined ideals.

Tracing the school linguistic landscape and the children's interactions, I argue that Muslimness pervades different spaces of the setting, albeit that how it is practised, understood and valued may shift across space. As I mentioned in Chapters 4 and 5, the linguistic landscape of the school and the reception classroom appeared to be mainly English since it appeared to dominate as the formal medium of communication. Upon a closer look, many displayed materials such as posters that included anglicised utterances from Arabic transliterated into English related to Islam.

Upon entering the school and passing by the school's administrative office, one can see a plaque hung in the main corridor leading to the nursery, the reception and Year 1 classrooms. The plaque states, "make time for *salat*¹¹", where *salat* is the Arabic word for the Muslim prayer. If one moves straight to the school's main hall, a large painting on the wall beautifully portrays the five pillars of Islam, which have a saying by Prophet Mohammed stating that "*arkan*", pillars in Arabic, of Islam, are five, which refer to the central five core beliefs of the Islamic religion. These beliefs were displayed in the form of artwork as five petals of a large sunflower. Inside Elmer Class, a colourful

¹¹ While "salat" and "salah" appear to be spelled differently, both are used to connote the Muslim prayer. The last letter of the word salah is called *taa marboota* which can be pronounced as a "h" at the end of the sentence and can be pronounced as "t" if it was followed by another word.

poster hung on the classroom's bulletin board which shows a daily timetable outlining the planned activities for the reception children. Notably, in this timetable, the time for the noon prayer was marked by the reception class teachers as "*Salah* time", and the segment planned for religious education lessons was marked as "*Qura'an* time". During the children's playtime, after lunch, it was common for some children to ask me what the time was to see whether it was *Salah* time.

Using words such as "*salah*", "*arkan*", and "*Qur'an*" are examples of translanguaging. The potency of this translanguaging lies in its connotations of central beliefs and practices in Islam, which suggest religious commitment. Adhering to religious practice and commitment was vital because it aligned with social expectations that determine religious appropriateness.

Religious commitment was promoted in Westwood Primary in many ways and in different activities. In school assemblies, the headteacher urged the children to maintain "*iltizam*", the Arabic word for religious commitment, not only for Ramadhan but also for the whole year. Otherwise, she cautioned, their faith will be lost.

Being a practising Muslim, which was one of the faith-based criteria set by Westwood Primary for children to gain admission, was another way to indicate religious commitment. The school supplementary information leaflet appended to the application form provided information about this specific criterion and defined being a practising Muslim as living according to Islam and engaging in all religious practices at home and in the mosque. The admission process included a 'religious practice test' that families must take, which comprises a form for families to confirm their belief in Allah and bring up their child according to the Islamic faith. This form must be supported by the signature of an Imam of the local mosque attended by families.

When I asked the reception teachers about what constitutes a practising Muslim in practice, Ms. Mina and Ms. Naima stated that it refers to engaging in the religious practices of Islam such as praying, fasting, performing pilgrimage, eating halal foods, giving charity in addition to wearing the hijab and modest clothing in the case of women. Ms. Jumana, the parent volunteer, emphasised the knowledge of primary religious texts, the Quran and the Hadiths, and participating in congregational religious practices such as Friday prayers and Ramadhan evening prayers. Since modesty was one of the emphasised elements of being a practising Muslim expressed by the teachers and the parent volunteer, I discuss how translanguaging produced an imagined gendered ideal that placed modesty as its core. I start by explaining the centrality of modesty to this imagined ideal.

Understanding gendered ideals of Muslimness can best be done in light of Connell's analytical concept of emphasised femininity (Connell, 1987). Connell argues against hegemonic femininity and maintains that multiple femininities exist and operate within a socially constructed gendered hierarchy. Emphasised femininity is filled with expectations about ideal femininity often associated with white, elite, heterosexual, and feminine women. Applying this concept in this discussion shows that multiple Muslim femininities exist in relation to Muslim identities. However, idealised or 'emphasised' Muslim femininity is the one that is filled with expectations about modesty, religious commitment, honour and the feminine female amongst Muslims in general (Siraj, 2011).

Translanguaging using specific words from Arabic in the interactions of the teachers and the children in the setting produced an imagined, ideal Muslim femininity. One typical example was using the Arabic word for modesty, "*sitr*", and its derivatives. The word "*sitr*" has a literal meaning which refers to the act of covering. Its religious

connotations signify modesty as bodily comportment divinely ordained by Allah (Yaqin, 2007). According to Islamic teachings, a female who dresses modestly covers all her body except for the face and hands while wearing the hijab (Siraj, 2016). In the teachers' informal conversations inside the teachers' lounge, the word "*sitr*" was a frequent occurrence and was commonly invoked. The teachers' conversations about modesty would include descriptions of modest clothing or people to whom the quality of modesty was assigned. At other times, the teachers would talk about the correct ways to 'do' "*sitr*" to mark themselves as Muslim women in the broader Western context and, most importantly, to subscribe to religious appropriateness.

Inside the reception classroom, instances of translanguaging, using Arabic elements which connoted modesty, occurred in the interactions of the teachers and reception girls. The class teacher, Ms. Mina, used to join the reception girls at their playtime in the home corner. While she told me that her primary motive was to model the girls' play to what she thought 'appropriate' for girls, her talk produced an imagined ideal of Muslim femininity. At one time, Lama asked her, "Miss, why do you wear the *hijab* in this way?". Lama perhaps referred to the large *hijabs* worn by Ms. Mina, which covered her hair and were often draped on her chest, fastened by a safety pin under the chin. Ms. Mina responded that it is how "good" *Muslimat*, which refers to Muslim females in Arabic, observe their "*sitr*" so they go to "*Jannah*", paradise in Arabic. In another interaction, Ms. Mina demonstrated how to wrap the *hijab* in an 'appropriate' way. She also told the girls that showing parts of the hair is "*haram*", religiously prohibited in Arabic, and "*ghalat*", wrong in Arabic, connoting a sin. In our conversations, Ms. Mina informed me that the girls need to learn to observe modesty in 'the right' way because God will hold them accountable for their actions when they grow older. Ms. Mina's translanguaging worked alongside dress and hijabs to reinforce this ideal of Muslim

femininity by emphasising the importance of modesty to being the ‘good’ Muslim female, which she linked to the eternal reward according to Islamic beliefs.

The theme of modesty occurred in the interactions between Ms. Naima¹², the reception class teacher and the reception girls. Ms. Naima once read a book to Farida and Zainah about one girl’s activities during Ramadhan, the month of fasting. Ms. Naima described the girl as “*satira*” and “*muhtashima*”, two synonyms for modest in Arabic. She told the girls that modesty is as important as fasting and praying for the ideal Muslim girl. Similar instances of translanguaging occurred when Ms. Jumana took charge of the religious education lesson in the holy month of Ramadhan. She often started the lesson by requesting the girls to wear their *hijab* using the phrase “*ya banat tasatarna*”, which means ‘girls be modest’ in Arabic. Notably, Ms. Jumana praised the girls wearing the hijab already and did not have to get it from their backpacks that they are just like “*al banat al satirat wa al mo’adabat*”, which is a phrase in Arabic that means modest and well-behaved girls.

Similar instances of translanguaging that indicated meanings related to modesty occurred in the informal interactions of the reception girls. In their lunchtime conversations, Amira and Hamda talked about modesty. I was taken aback by their statements when they mentioned that a modest female who observes modest wear is ‘respectable’ by using the Arabic word “*muhtarama*” and that a female who does not conventionally cover her hair is considered the opposite. Linking *hijabs* to respectability was evident in their talk about how their teachers wear their *hijabs*. They talked about how one teacher wore the traditional hijab and how the other one wore her *hijab* in the form of a turban, thus exposing her neck. Farida added that all Muslim

¹² Ms. Naima took over the reception classroom in Spring, 2019 after Ms. Mina left the school.

females must be modest and well-behaved by using “*hishma*”, a synonym for modesty in Arabic, and “*adab*”, good manners in Arabic. These instances of translanguaging are potent for invoking meanings of modesty that are important for ‘good’ Muslim femininity. Furthermore, this usage of translanguaging suggests being a practising Muslim female in which modesty plays the role of upholding the religious norm.

Translanguaging was mobilised to imagine the ideal ‘good’ Muslim child. This imagined ideal was produced using specific translanguaging forms, which emphasised the active participation of the child in religious activities. Children’s religious participation primarily included attending weekend religious schools and displaying good behaviour in performing religious practices. The interactions across multiple school spaces and the reception classroom included using the translanguaged form “*madrasah*” and “*kuttab*”, which refer to a religious institution that children attend during the weekend to learn the basic elements of Islam and the Quran.

In broader scale activities on the school level, particular instances of translanguaging occurred, which produced the imagined ideal Muslim child. When the headteacher addressed the children in the daily school assembly, it was not unusual to hear her advise the children about the importance of attending weekly madrasahs. She advised them that going to these schools is important to prepare them to be a ‘good’ Muslim when they grow up, not to satisfy their parent’s wishes. Some of the older children who took part in these assemblies and were praised for their excellent knowledge of Quranic Arabic and religious texts mentioned to the other children the importance of the “*madrasah*” plays in enabling them to learn about Islam the ‘right’ way. The headteacher usually praised one child from Year 6, of Somalian background, for his beautiful recitation of the Quran using the phrases “*mashallah*” and “*tabaraka Allah*”. In one assembly, the headteacher revealed that the mosque adjacent to the school

invited this boy to announce the call for prayer, which warranted the praise of the Imam of that mosque.

Similar interactions occurred during religious education lessons in the reception classroom, where this imagined ideal of the 'good' Muslim child was produced. Ms Jumana, who sometimes took charge of the religious education lessons, usually talked to the reception children about the importance of the "*kuttab*", the weekly religious school, in learning about Islam. She also emphasised the importance of going to these schools for their 'future' as Muslims. In some lessons, Ms. Jumana also told the children that the ideal Muslim child displays "*adab*", which means good behaviour and manners in Arabic. While this word generally refers to being a well-mannered child, the way it is used in this local setting can be interpreted to have religious connotations. Ms. Jumana commonly used it to refer to children's good manners and behaviours with adults, especially while performing religious practices such as the daily prayers.

The word "*adab*" appeared to construct an imaginary "good" Muslim child when the reception teachers performed a group prayer activity despite the sporadic occurrence of this religious activity inside the classroom. When Ms. Mina led the class prayer and stood in the front, the children were organised three rows behind her. Ms Choudhary stood in the second row, and I stood in the third row. The presence of adults in these positions was to keep an eye on 'misbehaving' children during prayer time, according to the explanations provided by the reception teachers. Once, Dale started to playfully hit Ms. Naima on the back while she was prostrating, causing the other children to burst into laughter and lose concentration on praying. When the prayer ended, Dale was given some time alone to reflect on what he had done. Ms. Naima reprimanded the whole class for this incident and talked about how "*adab*" is important for the "good" Muslim children because they respect Allah *and* other people.

The theme of the “*madrasah*” also came up in the children’s informal conversations. When six children from the reception classroom took me on a guided tour of the school, they talked about how Westwood Primary is different from the “*madrasah*”. Amira mentioned that in the school, everyone “talks” English. Lama and Mehmet talked about how the children who go to the “*madrasah*” are excellent in their Quran reading, and they even know some long verses by heart. Hamda also mentioned that some of the non-Arabic speaking children who go to “*madrasahs*” learn how to speak Arabic ‘better’ than Arabs, stressing how this makes them ‘good’ Muslims.

According to a register kept in the school office, not many children in Westwood Primary attended the “*madrasah*”. When I asked the school’s administrative assistants about children’s attendance in such schools, they mentioned that many families feel that enrolling their children to attend these religious institutions puts them under financial strain due to hefty amounts of weekly religious tuition. They mentioned that there are Quranic schools with subsidised tuition for children. However, these are located far from the local school community and are mainly affiliated with Shia Muslims, which does not seem to fit the denomination of the Sunni majority families in the school.

To sum up, Translanguaging using the word “*madrasah*” and “*kuttab*” worked to produce an imaginary Muslim child who attends these religious institutions to become saturated with religious knowledge. Significantly, while not many children attended “*madrasahs*”, the Elmer Class children often talked about the importance of attending these institutions for being a ‘good’ Muslim child. This ideal around “*madrasahs*” seems to be permeated with specific discourses of children as malleable, formidable subjects that are easily shaped into religious subjects knowing the Quran by heart. Additionally, being religious for children is linked with having a sense of discipline to

display good manners while engaging in religious practices that assign them the label of being 'good'. The children's interactions also appeared to reproduce the ideal by talking about the children's tasks at the "*madrasah*". The religious knowledge of this ideal child extends that of the average adult and is exemplified in knowing one of the longest verses of the Quran. Added emphasis is placed on the excellent knowledge of Arabic to achieve a near native-like proficiency that some of the Elmer Class children described as being better than Arabs.

To conclude, this section has discussed how translanguaging becomes one of the key ways to produce imagined ideal Muslimness in complex ways. It highlighted particular forms of translanguaging, namely those that draw on using Arabic elements due to its ideological valorisation of the liturgical language of Islam. The production of these imagined ideals aligns with being a practising Muslim who engages in individual and collective religious practices and possesses knowledge of the primary religious text of Islam. Hence, being a practising Muslim forms the base for the multiple forms of the 'good' Muslim in this local context.

The following discussion shows that ideal Muslimness is not created singularly or equally for everyone. The imagined ideal of Muslimness intersected with gender and generation to produce an ideal 'modest' Muslim femininity and an ideal Muslim child. The following section examines how gendered ideal Muslimness seems to inform the negotiation of a local form of Muslim girlhood in the children's interactions by mobilising translanguaging.

7.2.2. Translanguaging and negotiating the idealised 'good' Muslim

This section examines the role of translanguaging in negotiating Muslimness in the reception children's informal interactions. It focuses the discussion on three fieldnote

excerpts that include linguistic and multimodal forms of translanguaging, drawing on different Arabic and English varieties. By zooming into the translanguaging of a group of young reception girls, the discussions examine how they mobilised translanguaging along with contradictory discourses and material resources to negotiate Muslim femininity informed by local idealisations.

An everyday interaction in one of the play activity stations inside the reception classroom runs as shown in the fieldnote excerpt below:

“Amira, Lama and Hamda hurried to choose the princess costumes. Amira said, “I will get the Elsa dress,” but it looks like Hamda got hold of it before Amira and said, “this beautiful dress is for me”. She immediately wanted to put it on and asked me to help her with it. Amira complained that Hamda always takes the Elsa dress and that it is not fair because it is “the prettiest”. She and Lama got the other two princess dresses hung in the mini cupboard. Lama put the Snow White dress on her and notably took off her hijab showing her long brown hair while the other two girls were still wearing their hijabs. She then said how ‘beautiful’ and ‘lovely’ she looked, waving her head from side to side. Amira then commented that Lama’s dress has short sleeves and that Hamda’s dress is better because it has long sleeves. Hamda spun around and said, “I have the best dress”. Amira, leaning back to the wall close to the mini cupboard, further commented on Hamda’s dress “*mashallah satir woo mezyan*”, An Arabic expression that means ‘praise be to God; it is modest and beautiful’ in reference to the dress. Siddiq passed by the girls and said to Lama that her dress was beautiful. Lama smiled, but Amira abruptly said, “*ayb!* in Arabic, it means shame on you! your arms and hair are showing! your arms and hair are showing!”. Lama immediately started touching her arms and looking at them. She went hurriedly, got her cardigan, put it on, put her hijab on and then the girls went off to play in the home corner”. (Fieldnotes: 16/01/2019)

The above excerpt includes examples of translanguaging which occurred in the interactions of three Arabic speaking girls, Hamda, Lama and Amira, during a dress-up play activity. The beginning of the excerpt shows the three girls competing over a particular Disney Princess dress, the one of Elsa, which they justified by the beauty of the dress. As the events unfolded, one of the girls expressed her admiration for the Elsa dress using translanguaging, which shows more to this dress than its beauty. The

use of translanguaging in this interaction prompts several questions: What does this translanguaging instance seem to produce? Why was Arabic invoked in this interaction? When was this, and with what effects? Within these questions, I guide my discussion to examine how translanguaging operates to negotiate a highly gendered form of Muslimness shaped by the ideal of modest Muslim femininity.

As the excerpt shows, Hamda, Amira and Lama appear to be engaging in a dress-up play activity using some of the available costumes in the cupboard located in this play area. The competition over the Elsa dress ended in Hamda's favour which left the dresses of Snow White and Anna for Lama and Amira. The girls put on their dresses. However, while Hamda and Amira had their *hijabs* on, Lama took off hers. Before explaining the implications of using the hijabs with these dresses, I should explain what the presence of these dresses and the hijabs indicates in this play area.

The three princess dresses mentioned in the previous excerpt are located in a cupboard in this play area, including other occupational costumes such as police officer, astronaut, and chef. Closer to this cupboard, two pieces of glittery cloth were placed in a hamper. The teachers informed the girls that they could use these pieces of cloth as *hijabs*. I should note that the teachers and the girls in these activities used the Arabic pronunciation of the word hijab. The use of the Arabic pronunciation of the word hijab could serve purposes related to articulating a gendered Muslim identity that links with ideal Muslim femininity. This way of translanguaging, which used elements from English and Arabic, is consistent with that which is documented in the study of Auleear Owodally (2016). The reception girls' use of the Arabic pronunciation of the *hijab* is similar to how a Muslim child used the Arabic pronunciation of Joseph. The Mauritian child in Auleear Owodally's study used 'Yousoff' to articulate her Muslim

identity as a Muslim child who possesses religious knowledge in the spheres of the madrasah and home.

During playtime, the teachers carefully monitored the children's use of the costumes and hijabs by showing them what to choose or discouraging them from choosing 'inappropriate' costumes to their gender. For example, the girls were not allowed to wear the police officer costume, and the boys were not allowed to wear the Disney princess dresses. When Aminat once chose the police officer costume, the teachers immediately intervened to discourage her and instructed her to choose from 'girl appropriate' costumes such as the chef or the Disney princesses.

Similarly, Dale was strongly reprimanded by the class teacher when he took one of the pieces of cloth placed in the hamper next to the cupboard and put it on as a 'hijab'. He was told to use one of the boys' costumes instead. The reception teachers' intervention regarding costumes could be interpreted as an attempt to regulate 'gender relations' by directing the children to engage in what they considered as 'gender appropriate' activities. Furthermore, it also shows that policing the gender binary becomes momentarily of higher importance.

The presence of Disney princess dresses and the hijabs located in an Islamic school signifies two contradictory discourses around femininity in Elmer Class. The Disney princess dresses signify western-based emphasised femininity that places a value on whiteness, unrealistic beauty ideals and beauty through display and bodily ornamentation as documented in a large body of scholarly work (for example Blaise, 2005; Wohlwend, 2009; Blaise, 2014). By contrast, the presence of the hijabs symbolises an emphasised Muslim femininity that places values on modesty and religiously appropriate forms of dress in Islam (Siraj, 2016). The girls' use of the

dresses and the hijabs can be seen as an attempt to fuse contradictory ideals of two forms of emphasised femininities which generated different, conflicting responses by the reception teachers and girls. Ms. Mina and Ms. Naima commented on the useful presence of the Disney princess dresses, which they believed was important to encourage the girls to engage in what they thought to be ‘appropriate’ forms of play for girls, such as princess play and home corner activities. For example, Ms. Mina often described the play activities of the home corner as ‘girl activities’ and the play activities of the carpenter bench as ‘boy activities’. Ms. Naima once said that teachers are responsible for encouraging the girls to engage in ‘girly’ play activities so that “they don’t behave like boys” (quote from a conversation on 14/02/2019).

I should note that I do not intend to impose a particular form of propriety to describe the children’s play activities. Gendering play in these ways reflects reproducing dominant discourses of gender based on the social expectations for girls and boys by socialisation through play activities. For example, playing with dresses was associated with femininity and constructed as an ‘appropriate’ activity for girls. Based on this, the reception boys were told they could not use the dresses for play.

However, there were times when the teachers mentioned that the Disney princess dresses are unsuitable for Muslim girls and alluded to some themes they considered inappropriate for Muslim children in the Disney Princesses stories. The reception girls also expressed similar contradictions regarding the use of these dresses. The girls admired the dresses and described them as ‘good’ for girls and often chose to play with them. At other times, they referred to their inappropriateness for Muslim girls by using the word “*haram*”, which means religiously forbidden in Arabic. These contradictions reflect the collision of gendered discourses of appropriateness versus a religiously appropriate one which is similar to that pointed out by Pike (2018) in her

study about negotiating gendered contradictions of Disney Princess stories in a Middle Eastern context.

The girls' navigation of these contradictory discourses of gendered appropriateness in relation to their feminine Muslim identities shows that tensions are involved in their intersectional identity negotiations. Their fusing and appropriating of these gendered discourses align with the study of Lytra and Ilankuberan (2020). Lytra and Ilankuberan argue that processes of identity negotiations are filled with moments of tension and struggle, which children navigate through the creative use of language practices amongst other resources, which they refer to as syncretism. Syncretism refers to the creative processes children use to 'reinvent' new practices as they bring together the familiar and unfamiliar (2020, p. 436). They further discuss that children's creative use of languages reconciles different elements to create highly personalised and open-ended religious identities. While I appreciate Lytra and Ilankuberan's (2020) acknowledgement of the tensions involved in identity negotiations, I did not find similar evidence about the 'open-endedness' of religious identities in this study. Localised forms of Muslim identities are informed by the context in which they occur. The children's policing of these identities shows that restrictions and constraints dictated by pressures of broader discourses limit the openness of the children's localised Muslim identities. This study, therefore, complicates the discussions around the tensions associated with children's Muslim identities by highlighting the complex and multifarious processes of inclusion and exclusion, a point that has received relatively limited attention (Lytra, 2020).

If we return to the excerpt, Hamda was still wearing her hijab and the Elsa dress with long sleeves, while Lama took off her hijab while wearing Snow White's dress with the short sleeves which revealed her arms. Amira expressed admiration of Hamda's dress

through translanguaging by the phrase “*mashallah satir woo mezyan*” (praise be to God, it is modest and beautiful in vernacular Moroccan Arabic). However, this translanguaging seems to function beyond admiration purposes where it could be understood to perform Muslim femininity as informed by the ideal of modest Muslim femininity. The first part of this translanguaging, “*mashallah*”, reveals an expression of wonder that indicates being a practising Muslim. The phrase “*satir*” indicates that modesty *is* the reason for preferring the dress since it covers the arms. “*Mezyan*”, which means beautiful in Moroccan Arabic, adds another reason for favouring the dress: it is beautiful since beauty in modest Muslim femininity is expressed in sartorial forms. Hence, translanguaging aligns with a powerful social ideal about Muslim femininity. The dress works with specific words that index Muslim modesty to produce a highly gendered form of the ‘good’ Muslim.

As this interaction unfolds, translanguaging becomes one way to police Muslim femininity by this group of girls. When one of the boys happens to pass by this group of girls commenting on Lama that the dress she is wearing is beautiful, something interesting occurs. Amira translanguages by using the Arabic word “*ayb*”, which means shame on you in vernacular Moroccan Arabic, followed by the warning “your arms and hair are showing!”. The use of this instance of translanguaging to reprimand Lama for exposing her arms was striking because it was common for Lama to attend school wearing a short-sleeved polo shirt under her pinafore and a hijab usually put inside her backpack. The way Lama dresses for school was not unusual, and only on rare occasions did it invite comments from other children. The Elmer Class girls were allowed to come to school wearing short-sleeved polos without hijabs, and in fact, there were instances when Ms. Mina would make it clear to the girls that they did not have to wear their hijabs all the time during the school day. When I asked Ms. Mina

about this, she mentioned that if the girls wear their hijabs and a surprise OfSTED inspection occurs, the inspectors might assume that the girls are being forced to wear the hijab by their families to do so. However, Ms. Mina explained that the case is entirely different in playtime because children can wear it if they want to. I believe Ms. Mina was alluding to the association between playtime and free choice, as stated in the EYFS policy. In this case, perhaps wearing the hijab would not be seen as a sign of 'coercion' that warrants questioning by incoming OfSTED inspectors. Instead, it would be viewed as a sign of free choice.

It can be said that Amira's translanguaging operated to police and draw boundaries of Muslim femininity in this activity in light of the created ideal of modest Muslim femininity. The use of translanguaging operates to determine what is inappropriate and assign the label of 'shameful' to maintain the imagined ideal. Perhaps Amira's wearing of the hijab and the long sleeves shirt on most school days assigned her a relatively authoritative position to engage in this policing because wearing such shirts exposing the arms and hair were regarded as contrary to modesty. Translanguaging by using the phrases "*mashallah satir woo mezyan*" and "*ayb*" can be understood to create binaries of Muslim femininity as either 'good/acceptable' or 'bad/unacceptable' as informed by religious, social expectations and ideals that are highly valued in this setting.

As a result of this policing act, Lama hurriedly put on her cardigan in an attempt to include herself in another activity. There were many play activities among the girls from which Lama was excluded. The other girls used excuses such as Lama cannot be a "mummy" and not wear a hijab. These interactions show that particular idealised forms of Muslim femininity are put to work by the reception girls to exclude those who do not 'fit'. If a girl like Lama becomes included in the girls' group, then the way she

dresses before inclusion would be called upon by other girls to show that she cannot fit in. These shifting boundaries show that the idealised form of Muslim femininity that the reception girls produced in their activities is unachievable.

In another informal interaction, the reception girls mobilised translanguaging to police good Muslim femininity in ways that appeared to intersect not only with the marker of gender but also with generation:

“Hamda, Amira, Lama and Aminat called me to join them to pick ‘princess dresses’ from the imaginative play station. Hamda took Elsa’s light blue dress. “I’m princess Elsa!” she enthusiastically said. Amira got Anna’s dark blue and green dress, the sister of Elsa saying, “I’m Anna”. Aminat quickly got hold of Snow White’s dress. However, Lama did not get any dress because there were not any left. We went to a corner between the book corner and the teaching materials storage cupboards with a mirror. The dresses were made from soft silky fabrics, and I could see that they had long capes attached to them. While the three girls were busy putting on their dresses, Lama rushed quickly to the imaginative play station, picked up a set of purple butterfly wings and returned. She asked for my help to put them on. The girls took turns to see how they looked in the mirror. I said that I wanted to be a ‘butterfly princess’ too, but then Lama told me “*laa*” (no in Arabic) because I have a dark hijab that is not brightly coloured and because I am “not a girl”. Hamda said, “we are beautiful princesses”, Aminat echoed “, we are very beautiful”. Laughter was accompanied by the rustling of the dresses and the spreading of the capes in the air. Amira adjusted her headscarf and made fluttering movements with her eyelashes, saying: “I have the prettiest *hijab* (saying it with standard Arabic pronunciation)”. Lama said: “I’m the butterfly princess, and I have a sparkly *hijab*”. Hamda said that they needed tiaras to be ‘more’ beautiful; I offered to get the tiaras for them. Once I did, all the girls put them on. Hamda said, “we are the butterfly princesses”. Aminat said, “*eewa* (yes in Arabic) butterfly princesses”. The girls moved to show Ms Mina ‘their beauty’.” (Fieldnotes: 4/4/2019)

The above excerpt shows Hamda, Amira, Lama and Aminat engaging in princess play, one of the typical activities for this group. Three girls got hold of the available Disney princess dresses leaving Lama with no dress. To resolve this situation and to include herself in the play, Lama got a set of butterfly wings, put them on with my help and thus announced herself as “the butterfly princess”. Since the girls invited me to

participate in this activity, I intended to join the girls in their play by announcing that I, too, wanted to be a butterfly princess. Surprisingly, my attempt was rejected by translanguaging using the word “*laa*” (which means no in Arabic), citing that neither the colour of my hijab nor my age would be suitable. In this example, the “butterfly princess” is created through Lama’s use of the butterfly wings and the sparkly hijab, yet it could be understood as symbolising the performance of modest Muslim girlhood as informed by ideal Muslim femininity.

In section 7.2.1, I have explained that translanguaging was one of the core ways an ideal Muslim girl child was created by using specific phrases that imagined the ideal Muslim girl child as observing modesty to grow up to be a ‘good’ modest Muslim female. The girls’ interactions produced a local form of Muslim girlhood, which I was excluded from based on my age and my hijab colour. During my fieldwork in the school, most teachers commented on the dark colours of my hijabs and told me that I should wear something more colourful since these colours were considered more ‘feminine’. Ms Mina’s silky hijabs, which were brightly coloured, garnered the attention and admiration of the other teachers. Once, Ms Mina and I were standing near the back door of the reception classroom at home time, and she attracted my attention to how a seemingly limited number of women wore black or dark coloured hijabs. She commented that these colours look ‘unfeminine’. I was taken aback once by a comment from one teacher whom I met in the playground. The teacher said how depressing it is for women in the Arabian Gulf countries to wear black, which downplayed their femininity. I tried to explain to her that these women wear colourful clothing underneath the abaya and that black connoted modesty. I also said that many women wear colourful abayas in these countries. Surprisingly, the teacher seemed unconvinced and uttered the same comments.

It should be noted that the change of colour in hijabs or the move towards favouring brighter colours reflects a historical change that led to the rise of modest fashion in recent years (Lewis, 2019). The rise of this modest fashion promotes colourful hijabs and modest wear to show the fashionability of Muslim women, especially in diasporic communities in Western contexts. Translanguaging using the word “*laa*”, which might seem a brief, fleeting occurrence, appears to show how the performance of Muslim femininity intersects with generation in the following ways. I have previously mentioned that the reception teachers place glittery pink and purple pieces of fabric in a hamper in the imaginative play activity area. The reception teachers mentioned that pink and purple are more suitable for young girls and represent an attractive way to teach them how to be ‘good’ Muslim women in the future. Ms Mina, for example, stated that providing these pieces of cloth and demonstrating to the girls that they can be used as hijabs would make the girls get used to the presence of these hijabs and might incorporate them into their play. Ms. Jumana expressed that young girls need more ‘attention’ and more familiarisation with principles of Muslim modesty because they will be ‘future mothers’ citing a verse from a famous poem by an Egyptian poet called Ahmed Shawqi that “ a mother is a school, if you prepare her well, the best nation will be prepared”. In light of this discussion, translanguaging plays a significant role in policing Muslim girlhood in ways that intersect with age. Being the modest Muslim girl appears to be informed by ideals of ‘good’ Muslim femininity; however, it is permeated with specific discourses of children as easily formed to be the ‘good’ Muslim subjects. Furthermore, considering children as ‘future becomings’ interweaves with how girls are considered ‘future mothers’ important for nation-building (Yuval-Davis, 1997).

Using the standard Arabic pronunciation of the word “*hijab*” is notable in this excerpt. In this instance of translanguaging, the girls negotiate Muslim femininity by

emphasising the *hijab* as a potent symbol of ideal modest Muslim femininity. The *hijab* becomes one way of embodied beauty and a condition to be a beautiful princess in this setting. As the events unfold in the excerpt and the girls put the tiaras on to become 'more beautiful', it was interesting to see Aminat, a speaker of Somali, translanguaged by using the Arabic word "eewa", which means yes in vernacular Moroccan Arabic. The use of this instance of translanguaging can be read in two ways. First, it can be understood as a way in which Aminat shows her awareness of what constitutes a butterfly princess, an image as I have discussed that symbolises modest Muslim girlhood. Second, it can be read as one way of including herself in the activity.

In many interactions, the Arabic speaking girls usually excluded Aminat, using the excuse that she cannot speak Arabic 'like them' or the rule that 'only Arabic speakers can join'. The excerpt ends with the girls running to show 'their beauty to the reception class teacher, who often praised the girls for using the hijab in their play activities. The teacher praised the girls using Arabic phrases such as "*shatoora*", which means good in vernacular Moroccan, and "*amoorat*" (which means pretty in the same variety of Arabic. This translanguaging can be interpreted as one way of reinforcing ideal Muslim femininity and ideal Muslim girlhood. For the reception boys, the teachers used words that included masculine references such as "*rijal*", a man in Arabic, "*batal*", a hero in Arabic, or "*sheikh*", a person of high social standing in Arabic. Using the word "*shatoora*" can be understood in light of the word "*adab*" that I have discussed in the previous section, which plays a significant role in producing the imagined ideal Muslim child who is seen as well-behaved and religiously respectful in relation to religious practices.

In other interactions, translanguaging using multimodal resources from Arabic was used to negotiate Muslim femininity as informed by ideal Muslimness, which places

high value on being a practising Muslim. In one interaction, a group of children were at the home corner and used three common ways of translanguaging. These translanguaging forms drew on Arabic and connoted meanings related to the Muslim prayer. Hamda started a play activity in the home corner by asking who wanted to have dinner. When we informed her of our desire to start the play, she assigned herself the “Mummy” role. Before she started cooking, it was interesting that Hamda picked a scarf to express her disfavour for the brown one and chose the purple sparkly hijab instead. Hamda’s choice garnered praise from Farida, who translanguaged through the word “*he/wa*”, which means beautiful. This translanguaging can be understood to reflect the value of this colourful hijab as something beautiful and suitable for the ideal Muslim female. Hamda’s lack of preference for the dark coloured hijabs can be understood due to its association with ‘older people’ in the local context. For example, in the previous excerpt, I was denied entry to a play activity because of my age and dark coloured hijab. It could also be understood as an attempt to ward off a stereotype of Muslim women generally represented as wearing dark colours, most notably austere black garments arising from state-imposed dress codes of Iran and Saudi Arabia, which have been interpreted as a sign of oppression (Afshar, 2008; Mirza, 2013a).

After Hamda put her hijab on, she started making and serving dinner. Calling the others to help, she started serving tea to Shahid however interrupted this activity to announce that “we have to *saly*” and gestured the sign of the Muslim prayer with her hands. Translanguaging verbally using the Arabic word “*saly*” and multimodally through deploying the gesture of “*salah*” shows how Hamda appears to perform Muslim femininity as informed by the ideals of being a practising Muslim. Being a practising Muslim is seen as one way to uphold norms around Muslimness which are

motivated by a desire to maintain faith. This translanguaging connotes meanings linked with ideal Muslim femininity in how the ideal Muslim female is expected to maintain the core religious practices of Islam, such as “*salah*”.

As already explained in section 7.2.1, translanguaging through the use of the word “*salah*” contributed to creating an imagined Muslimness infused by notions of religious commitment “*iltizam*”. Notably, “*salah*” is one of the core religious practices performed five times daily. The Elmer Class children and teachers often used the translanguaged form “*salah*”. It was commonly understood even amongst children from other linguistic backgrounds. For example, I have never heard Abdul, an Urdu speaker, refer to the Muslim prayer using the Urdu word “*namaz*” except once.

Furthermore, the multimodal gesture of “*salah*” that Hamda has done shows another way she produced being the ‘good’ Muslim female. The order of the gesture reflects her knowledge of this religious practice. This multimodal translanguaging is a gesture done by holding the palms upward close to the head to signify “Allahu Akbar”, which means Allah is great, a phrase used to open the prayer and folding the arms close to the chest to signify the physical start prayer. Here, the value of “*salah*” is its position as the second pillar of Islam and its importance in ‘shaping moral conduct’, which is vital for ideal Muslimness (Mahmood, 2011, p. 30).

Translanguaging multimodally and verbally, which indicated “*salah*”, could be relevant in intergenerational relationships. In the previous section, I mentioned that translanguaging operated in the school to create an imagined ideal child by emphasising their participation in religious activities and maintaining good behaviour in performing them. The “*dhuhr*” collective prayer in the reception classroom, which refers to the noon prayer in Arabic, is conducted sporadically. At the beginning of the

school year, Ms. Mina performed the prayer with the reception children weekly. However, the occurrence of incidents of misbehaviour led Ms. Mina to stop this collective activity and choose the best behaving children to gain the privilege of performing this prayer with the older children and other adults in the school hall. Usually, Aminat, Hamda and Abdul were the ones who often got this privilege due to displaying a significant deal of “*adab*”. The reception teachers considered the children who misbehaved as not yet having the cognitive ability to understand the meaning of prayer. The teachers expressed that these children were only ‘imitating’ adults in religious activities. They used a common word, “*juhha*”, which means ignorants but is used in multiple colloquial varieties of Arabic to refer to children.

Later, Hamda pulled her scarf further down in what can be seen as an attempt to cover herself adequately, followed by the declaration to everyone that they have to go “*salying*”. It could be said that Hamda’s translanguaging by using this mixed compound shows one way to perform Muslim femininity as shaped by ideals around maintaining core religious practices, which also refers to religious commitment, “*iltizam*”, or piety. Piety in Islam refers to religious observance through committing to sets of practices based on the exemplary behaviour of Prophet Mohammed and submitting to Allah (Mahmood, 2011). Observing *salah* and being familiar with its performance and importance, as shown from Hamda’s translanguaging in this excerpt, can be interpreted as an everyday expression of piety that equates one with being a ‘good Muslim’. Hamda was described as a “good” girl by Farida. At the end of the excerpt, Ms. Naima praised Hamda as a “*shatoora*”, which means ‘good girl’ in Arabic. This example shows how *salah* as an expression of piety seems to have a gendered value. Displaying knowledge about *Salah* and wearing the hijab was one reason why the reception girls were being praised in front of the other children and adults present

in the setting, including the deputy headteacher and their families. It was rare to see one of the boys praised for praying since the boys were the ones who misbehaved. The gendered value embedded in observing prayer for females links to the ideal Muslim femininity and the central role females play in the social reproduction of religiosity in Muslim families in Western contexts (Soehl, 2018). Ms Mina, the class teacher, informed me that it is easy for men to 'get away' with not praying because no one will talk about them as not respectable. While for women and girls, it is important because it indicates their religiosity and respectability. Ms. Jumana, the parent volunteer, also talked about the importance of observing prayer for women. She said that women will eventually be mothers and have a great responsibility to transfer religious knowledge to children, whereas fathers do not have the same level of responsibility.

Thus far, the discussion in this section showed how various forms of translanguaging, which draw on using elements from Arabic and English, became central in negotiating local forms of being the 'good' Muslim in their classroom interactions. Notably, these negotiations were informed by gendered and generationed idealisations of Muslimness. In the next section, I consider the social implications of these translanguaging practices in relation to intersectional identity negotiations.

7.3 The complex implications of translanguaging

The preceding two sections discussed the significance of translanguaging in imagining and negotiating intersectional Muslim identities. Section 7.2.2 examined examples of the reception children's translanguaging, which occurred in their informal interactions. It highlighted how these practices operate alongside other resources such as dress in producing, policing and reinforcing Muslim identities based on gender and generation

and shaped by imagined ideals. By going back to the provided excerpt in that section, it can be seen that the children used particular forms of translanguaging to praise the dress with the long sleeves, thus assigning the hijab a central role to be the 'butterfly princess' while shaming the short-sleeved dress. In revisiting these examples, it becomes crucial to ask: what is the importance of producing these intersectional Muslim identities that emphasise the 'good' ideal in practice in this particular site? Who was included and excluded? Moreover, what reasons could motivate these inclusionary and exclusionary practices? These questions frame this discussion to uncover the complex and dialogised social implications of translanguaging to broader everyday social relations.

Although I discuss the social implications of translanguaging in negotiating intersectional Muslim identities in separate sections, I do not intend to suggest that such implications are distinctly separate. Instead, I view these implications in light of the Bakhtinian principle of dialogism that is central to heteroglossia (Bakhtin, 1981). As explained in Chapter 2 (see 2.2.3), dialogism offers productive ways to consider the effects of translanguaging as not only singular and mainly emancipatory but as simultaneously interacting, which could include other negative impacts. In this sense, considering translanguaging as only producing transformative effects would confine understanding of this practice to a singular form of implications.

7.3.1. Translanguaging to assert Muslimness and resistance

In this section, I argue that the translanguaging of the children and the adults in this school setting was used to assert Muslimness by treating it as valued or desired, which served as acts of resistance. I argue that these acts of resistance are not intentional, organised or visible. They are those acts that occur in people's everyday lives in their

experiences with unequal social relations using the creative tools available to them (Murru & Polese, 2020). In this sense, translanguaging is one of these creative tools.

To guide my discussion, I use Katz's theorisation of resistance (2004) to conceptualise how using translanguaging to assert Muslimness could serve as an act of resistance. For Katz, resistance is a form of oppositional consciousness, the modest and the quiet actions that can destabilise power relations. In other words, any "independent initiative no matter how small" can be understood as resistance to unequal social relations (Katz, 2008, p. 248). This understanding of resistance pays attention to the 'gently subversive, interpersonal or creative acts' existing within everyday social relations rather than predetermined, intentional ones (Katz, 2008). In this section, I argue that the use of translanguaging served to produce acts of resistance on general and individual levels.

On a general level and in a context of Islamophobia, where Muslims are often rendered suspect, treating Muslimness as desired and valued served as an act of resistance. The efforts by children and adults in school towards creating Muslim identities that were valued thus stand out as acts that disrupt more oppressive ideas about Muslim identities, which are dominant in the UK context more broadly (Seddon, 2010; Shams, 2018). Crucially, I am not claiming that the children or teachers were necessarily intentionally resisting Islamophobia or even in many cases, that they were intentionally trying to create valued Islamic identities.

As I mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, the ethos of Westwood Primary is centred around promoting and developing a British Muslim identity for all school children. On numerous occasions, the school headteacher, Mrs. Jones, mentioned that working to develop this identity is important for the school children to live in a non-

Muslim Western context such as the United Kingdom. Emphasising this British Muslim identity seemed to distinguish Westwood Primary from other Islamic schools, which the teachers and the headteacher described as promoting values incompatible with living in the English context.

One of the important aspects of the British Muslim identity promoted by the school was being open to religious differences. Mrs. Jones stated that Westwood Primary is open to families of all faiths. She proudly talked about the school children's activities in their religious education lessons to learn about other religions. For example, the school once invited a local Rabbi to speak during the daily morning assembly. Some children from different year groups visited a church and a Gurdwara to learn about Christianity and Sikhism as part of their religious education. Whenever the headteacher talked about these activities, which displayed religious openness, that she thought were appropriate for living in a modern country such as Britain, she equally commented that Westwood Primary is not a 'fundamentalist enclave'. However, it should be noted that this Islamic faith-based school is located in a broader Islamophobic context on the social, political, policy and institutional levels.

In Chapter 4, I have mentioned that discriminatory discourses infuse the institutional practices of school inspections. This school faced what senior leadership team members thought was unfair treatment during OfSTED inspections. During these inspections, Ms. Khan, the deputy headteacher, mentioned that inspectors check the visitor logs and question the school administration if they notice that members of Muslim religious institutions visit the school. Inspectors also check the content of religious education lessons. For example, texts from the Holy Quran have to be translated into English. Teaching Islamic history is not permitted because it is assumed to promote messages contradictory to British values and inappropriate to living in

'modern-day Britain' (Lander, 2016). Furthermore, Ms. Khan often talked about how the OfSTED inspectors ask young girls about wearing the hijab to check that they are not forced to wear it by family members in other schools. Many racist incidents occurred close to the school gates. During my fieldwork, a group of children and teachers of another year were verbally abused and told to 'leave the country' as they were getting ready for a school trip.

Mrs. Jones and Ms. Khan often addressed the children during morning assemblies that being a 'good' Muslim will not only benefit them and their families when they grow up. They constantly informed the children that being a 'good' Muslim will impact their broader world since it will change the stereotype of Muslims as 'radicals' and 'terrorists' in their broader context. Notably, changing this entrenched stereotype, as she often said during assemblies, occurs by showing the other people the good side of Islam and Muslims.

In the process of constructing oneself as a good Muslim, the people in Westwood primary school join together to do so and link to broader ways of understanding 'good Muslimness'. One such way is their belonging to a global Muslim '*ummah*' which can be understood as an expression of a collective Muslim identity that serves to resist islamophobia. This form of resistance resonates well with Shain's (2011) work on Muslim boys' masculinities. Shain argues that while broader discourses reproduce classed, ethnicised and racialised positionings of Muslim boys as 'under-achievers', they asserted their belonging and identification with the global *ummah* to challenge these positionings. Shain further argues that the boys' expression of this collective identity which foregrounded being a Muslim first does not indicate an increase in religiosity. Rather, she maintains that this expression is a response to the broader discourses and racism which represents a 'form of empowerment'. Since broader

discourses about Islamic schools as fundamentalist enclaves position the children in Westwood Primary at risk of being radicalised and in need of safeguarding, these children expressed a collective Muslim identity by mobilising translanguaging amongst other practices that served to counter such discourses.

On the individual level, asserting Muslimness by using translanguaging produced a sense of resistance for the children who were negatively racialised and excluded from being a 'good' Muslim. The use of translanguaging, which produced a sense of asserting Muslimness, resonates with a point made by Kenner, Kwapong, Choudhury and Ruby (2016) in their ethnographic study on children's religious identities. Kenner and colleagues argue that children's engagement in religious practices and articulations of their religious identities is one of the ways in which they navigate tensions and inequalities. A case in point is Aminat's use of translanguaging which could be understood as a way in which she countered her racialisation and exclusion from 'good' Muslimness. Aminat, who is a speaker of Somali, sometimes translanguaged using phrases from standard Arabic to indicate her rich Quranic knowledge in the girls interactions to augment her position as a 'good' Muslim. Once, she recited the longest verse in the Quran to counter what the other girls said about her that she is not a 'real' Muslim. Some of Aminat's translanguaging included Arabic words with religious connotations that some Arabic-speaking girls were unfamiliar with, such as "*ihitisham*", another synonym of modesty and "*taqwa*", which means piety. In these ways, Aminat's translanguaging produced an effect of resisting her racialisation from Muslimness.

Therefore, considering translanguaging as producing an effect of resistance shows that everyday practices and their effects must be examined, not simply considered claims of acting for social justice. Due to the complexity of translanguaging and identity

negotiations, the following discussion sets to discuss how translanguaging became one of the ways in the site of this study to show that the Muslimness of the reception children were not viewed equally. I argue for another implication of translanguaging and its mobilisation to position some children as 'good' Muslims than others.

7.3.2. Translanguaging to reproduce broader social inequalities: who gets to be the 'good' Muslim?

In this part, I discuss the implications of translanguaging practices in relation to reproducing wider social inequalities related to who gets to be the 'good' Muslim. In this subsection, I focus on how the children and the adults present in the reception classroom drew on translanguaging, which utilised elements from Arabic for inclusion and exclusion from good Muslimness. These practices show that specific children were included where certain others were excluded, thus creating a hierarchy of 'good' Muslimness based on gender, race, and generation markers.

Using translanguaging for inclusion and exclusion was evident during formal and informal interactions between the children and the teachers in Elmer Class. In my observations, I have noted how some instances of translanguaging by incorporating Arabic elements tended to position some children on top of the hierarchy of being an appropriate Muslim and specific others at the bottom. In examining some of the interactions between the reception teachers, the parent volunteer, Ms. Jumana, and the children inside the classroom, translanguaging was used to exclude particular children during class activities in the religious education lessons, which focused on teaching children the basics of Islam. Exclusion mainly targeted the children who spoke other languages than Arabic, mainly Somali. I have noted that this exclusion

took the form of silencing these children, ignoring them or using specific phrases to rush them whenever they interacted during lesson time.

During the observations I conducted in May 2019, which coincided with the holy month of Ramadhan, I noticed that whenever Ms. Jumana took charge of the religious education lesson instead of Ms Naima, she tended only to allow the Arabic speaking children to participate and recite verses. Typically, the religious education lesson would include a whole class recitation of the shortest chapters of the Quran, namely the last two pages of the Quran, due to their centrality in performing the Muslim prayer. However, Ms Jumana appeared to either ignore the Somali speaking children who raised their hands to participate or quickly end the child's participation by reciting in Arabic through translanguaging using the phrase "*yallah yallah*", which means hurry hurry in colloquial Arabic. To cite an example from my fieldnotes, Faizal is a Somali speaking child who tried hard during the religious education lesson to memorise the Quran verses taught by heart but was constantly subjected to such exclusionary practices. As a result, he would always raise his hands and repeat the Quranic verses to the whole class loudly and enthusiastically in chorus with the other children. Because of the perceived high status of Quranic Arabic, only children who speak Arabic appropriately are 'allowed' into the practice of reciting the Quran.

However, one day the class were doing a whole class recitation of the "*Falaq*", Dusk in Arabic chapter, which includes short verses containing uvular sounds of "q" and "kh" that Faizal found difficult. Faizal raised his hand to volunteer to recite the chapter by heart to the whole class. Faizal rose from his place and sat on a chair facing the whole class to recite the chapter. Before he even started, Ms. Jumana looked at me while I was sitting in the front row with some children; she surprisingly said in Arabic, "*shihal bas yeqra? ma yerafsh al Fatiha!*" which means in Arabic "how can he recite? He does

not even know the Fatiha (the opening chapter of the Quran)". She then allowed him to recite the chapter and hurried him by making a gesture of moving her right hand in a circular manner which indicated hurry in vernacular Arabic compared to the time that she took with the Arabic speaking children who were allowed to read at their own pace. Strikingly, when Abdul, a speaker of Urdu, recited some Quranic verses, he mispronounced some of the Arabic sounds in the verses. Ms. Jumana praised his effort by translanguaging by saying "*mashallah*" and talking about him being an 'exemplary child'. Ms. Jumana, a few days later, explained to me how it is difficult for the Somali speaking children to learn how to read the Quran properly, which is a serious cause of concern as it affects their Muslimness and the acceptance of their prayers.

Similarly, Ms. Naima, the class teacher, tended to silence specific children repetitively during the Quran recitation and used excuses such as "you don't know how to say it right" and "let's choose one of the Arabic speaking children". Once, Ms. Naima silenced Shahid, a Somali speaking child, who was enthusiastic about getting his turn to recite "*Al Fatiha*" by uttering the word "*bas*" (which means stop it in Arabic, a word used commonly for silencing), it will be your turn later. As I used to sit next to Aminat, she often told me how unfair it is that she rarely gets chosen to recite the Quran. She told me she knows more verses than some Arabic-speaking children who 'always' get picked up. Translanguaging in these examples could be seen to racialise the Somali speaking children as linguistically inappropriate subjects whose Arabic is viewed as deficient, which fits with the findings of Seltzer (2017). In keeping with Selzer's study, the linguistic inappropriateness of the Somali speaking children was restricted to their perceived deficiency in using standard English 'appropriately' and was extended to their ability to speak and use Quranic Arabic. The 'linguistic inappropriateness' of the

Somali-speaking children as those whose Quranic Arabic is 'deficient' impacted how they were positioned as Muslims in the context of the reception classroom. It could be argued that based on this inappropriateness, the Somali speaking children were excluded from the category of the 'good' Muslim.

This racialization led to reproducing inequalities by using language and race as markers of difference. Translanguaging practices operated to render the Muslimness of some children appropriate because they are not only Muslims but also Arabic speaking children or children such as Abdul, who are viewed 'as high achieving' by the teachers. The Muslimness of the Somali speaking children in such activities were not recognised as appropriate due to the interplay of broader discourses of racism against Somalis (Gillman, 2018). These children were excluded from 'good' Muslimness because they do not speak Arabic like Arabs.

By re-examining some of the reception children's informal interactions, translanguaging practices were used to make inclusions and exclusions. Returning to the 'butterfly princess' fieldnote excerpt in section 7.2.2., Aminat's translanguaging using the word "eewa", which means yes in Arabic despite, is a fleeting example of using this practice to include herself in the play activity, including three Arabic-speaking girls. This example is not the first time Aminat translanguaged drawing on the use of Arabic to include herself in the activities of these girls. In her translanguaging, Aminat drew on two varieties of Arabic: Quranic Arabic and Moroccan Arabic, which was interesting to note given that she is a speaker of Somali. These interactions usually included all of the reception girls at playtime and lunchtime. Aminat was excluded from the girls' activities during the autumn term, citing excuses that she is not an Arabic speaker and would not understand what they would say. However, in some of these exclusions, Aminat was assigned the label of being an

inappropriate Muslim because she is not a speaker of Arabic, the language of the Holy Quran.

In one informal activity, I read a book with Hamda, Lama, Amira and Aminat in the book corner. The book included useful phrases Muslims use in their everyday interactions aimed at young children. Each English phrase had its counterpart in standard Arabic. The girls took turns in repeating the Arabic phrase after me. Aminat's turn to repeat the phrase "jazak Allah khairan", which means may Allah reward you, a common expression used for thanking someone. She pronounced the /kh/ in "*khairan*" as /k/ without producing the laryngeal sound pronounced in Arabic. The other girls teased Aminat that she was not a 'real' Muslim due to her mispronunciation. It was striking to see Aminat replying to this apparent attempt of exclusion through translanguaging using phrases from standard Arabic, asserting that she is a good "*Muslimah*" (a Muslim female) and that she knows by heart one of the longest verses of the Quran, the verse of the throne "Ayat al Kursi" that she recited beautifully to me despite the young of her age. Although I expressed my admiration for this, the other girls still laughed at how she mispronounced the Arabic letter causing her to cry and complain to Ms. Mina about this incident. Ms. Naima also put down Aminat when she participated in the religious education lesson by saying phrases such as "you can't read like an Arabic speaker". When I told Ms. Naima about Aminat's Quranic knowledge to allow her to participate in quranic recitation, Ms. Naima said that she needs a 'good' model for the Elmer Class children to learn the correct Arabic pronunciation of Quranic verses. Otherwise, they would spend the rest of their lives mispronouncing it, thus jeopardising their Islam.

The Elmer Class teachers used translanguaging to reproduce generational inequalities. This reproduction mainly took place at prayer time. At the beginning of

the school year, Ms. Mina performed this prayer with children inside the classroom once a week. This practice sought to familiarise the children with the 'correct way' to do their prayer. Ms. Mina led the prayer while the children were organised in three rows behind her. Adults usually look down, recite the Quran, and perform specific movements. There were times when some children misbehaved by hitting, pulling girls' scarves, and laughing. After the recurrence of misbehaviour incidents, Ms. Mina decided that the prayer would no longer be performed in the class. Instead, the 'good behaving children' will be chosen every day to perform it with the older children and the other adults in the school hall. The children often asked Ms. Mina to pray inside the classroom, but she insisted on refusing. She mentioned that the children 'do not have to do the prayer because they are "not yet held accountable like adults"'.

Another reason for not allowing the children to pray in the classroom seemed to be another reason. During the conversations between Ms. Mina and Ms. Choudhary and later on, Ms. Naima and Ms. Fatia, the children were often talked about using the translanguaged form "*juhha*", which means ignorants. This form is commonly used to refer to children in many vernacular varieties of Arabic. In their play activities, the Elmer Class children reflected their familiarity with prayer, which included using the correct order of gestures and bodily movements and knowing how people from other Islamic sects pray. For example, the children were attentive to the fact that whenever I prayed, I never folded my arms the way Sunni Muslims do, and they questioned me, "where is your rock?" alluding to Shiite Muslims who use this object in prostration. The reception teachers reduced the children's participation in the daily morning assemblies to twice a week. The teachers justified this measure by saying that the children do not yet understand the detailed religious knowledge in these assemblies. Whenever I told the teachers that some children displayed sophisticated knowledge about the basic core

practices of Islam, this tended to get brushed away by saying utterances like ‘they are only young children’ and that probably ‘they were just copying what adults in their families do’. It is interesting to note that while the ideal Muslim child was imagined in this setting as possessing knowledge about Islam and displaying proper “good” behaviour in relation to Islamic practices, which was permeated with discourses around children as malleable and easily formed subjects, this was contradicted by positioning children as ‘future beings’ and lacking cognitive ability to understand religion. It could be said that the generational positioning of ‘good’ Muslimness seemed to be at a distance from children. I have shown in the previous interactions that no matter how much the children strove toward being the ‘good’ Muslim, there is something about their biological immaturity and their status as ‘Muslims in the making’ which denies them this position.

7.4. Conclusion

The discussion in this chapter examined how translanguaging becomes one of the ways to imagine and negotiate being a ‘good Muslim’ based on multiple intersecting social categories. The ideological power of Arabic as the liturgical language of Islam informed the use of translanguaging in Westwood Primary in relation to Muslimness. Examining the interactions of the children and the teachers in this school setting showed how translanguaging was used to imagine idealised forms of Muslimness based on gender and generation. These local ideals informed the negotiations of the children’s Muslim identities. The chapter has also discussed the complex implications of translanguaging. Translanguaging to assert Muslimness in an Islamophobic context served as acts of resistance. It also reproduced broader social equalities by creating a hierarchy of appropriate Muslimness based on language, ‘race’ and generation.

In the next chapter, I bring together the themes from this study, demonstrating the possible ways they contribute to advancing academic conversations in translanguaging and intersectionality.

CHAPTER 8: Concluding comments

8.1. Introduction

In this final chapter, I summarise and evaluate the findings of this study to discuss its contributions to knowledge and its possible implications.

This thesis began from a series of questions that arose from my personal experiences as a language support volunteer, language teacher, and parent to a young Muslim child who attended an English reception classroom. In the introductory chapter of this thesis, I highlighted the translanguaging that Hamad, an Arabic-speaking child, used in his everyday talk with his siblings in the language support sessions I organised. The way Hamad used translanguaging ignited my curiosity to see whether this flexible use of multiple languages also occurs in other school settings in English speaking countries. This question became more pressing to me when my older son started reception in an English primary school, and his use of Arabic in his everyday interactions was 'not allowed' and deemed a sign of 'concern' in the context of rampant Islamophobia. By contrast, languages other than Arabic were accepted and even supported in the same classroom. Why was the use of Arabic in English utterances considered a cause of concern by my son's teacher? Moreover, why were Muslim children, as young as four years old, referred to 'deradicalisation' programmes as part of the UK Prevent Duty for their use of brief utterances of Arabic? Most importantly, what do young children do with this context in negotiating their Muslim identities?

By taking up young children's translanguaging and Muslim identities as a topic for my doctoral study, I found myself motivated to seek answers to the following questions: what are the links between translanguaging and the context in which it occurs? What

are the relations between translanguaging, specifically using elements from English and Arabic and Muslim identities?

Upon reviewing the literature on translanguaging, I found that much of the academic discussions primarily focused on its application as a pedagogical practice. The wealth of translanguaging studies which researched children's experiences in pedagogical translanguaging provided rich empirical examples of the children's active engagement and creative co-construction of meanings with their teachers. Dynamic developments in translanguaging research saw the emergence of studies that began to look at translanguaging using different disciplinary resources. A growing line of work started to use ideas from the sociology of childhood to address questions of young children's agency, especially in their informal activities inside the classroom. My study builds on this work yet aims to dissolve the binaries between the formal and informal in examining young children's translanguaging by exploring how young children translanguaging in different activities and across different spaces.

In relation to the studies on Muslim identities, I found that much work examined these identities to demonstrate their complex intersections; however, little remains known about the role of practices such as translanguaging in the processes of negotiating these complex Muslim identities. Sociolinguistic work which examined young children's religious identities highlighted how children make sense of religion in their everyday lives. While this work paid attention to how children engage with liturgical faith literacies to promote their identities, little work examines how language practices are mobilised to produce exclusionary forms of religious identities.

This study has set out from these gaps to examine how and in what ways young children's translanguage and its implications for negotiating intersectional Muslim identities in complex and contradictory contexts.

I start this concluding chapter by addressing the research questions of this study and summarising the emerging themes. I evaluate the findings of my study to consider the contributions to the theoretical discussions on multilingualism, translanguaging and intersectionality. I then present the implications of this study followed by suggestions for multiple stakeholders, including the wider public, early years teachers, school leaders, researchers, and Muslim community leaders. I follow these suggestions with recommendations for further research.

8.2. Addressing the research questions and summarising emerging themes

Given the gaps in knowledge about young children's translanguaging and intersectional Muslim identities (see Chapter 2), this study sought to explore the possible interface between young reception Muslim children's translanguaging and intersectional Muslim identity negotiations in the context of an English Islamic primary school. The following research questions have informed this study:

1. Do young children translanguage in their everyday classroom activities in the reception classroom? If so, how, when, where, and with whom do they translanguage?
2. What are the implications of everyday translanguaging on the imaginations and negotiations of unequal and intersectional Muslim identities?

These research questions underpinned the theoretical and analytical directions for this study. The theoretical resources of Bakhtinian heteroglossia and intersectionality informed the analytical framework I used in the linguistic ethnographic approach I

adopted to examine the research material. Drawing on Bakhtin's (1981) conceptualisation of language, I considered the reception children's translanguaging practices grounded within broader, local and ideological contexts. Based on this understanding, translanguaging practices are contextualised practices that bear highly specific and local meanings. Making central the importance of the context is consistent with the commonly held view amongst ethnographers, including linguistic ethnographers, about the centrality of the context for research and how it co-constructs the experiences of children and adult researchers in particular ways (James, 2007; Konstantoni & Kustatscher, 2015).

Chapter 4 sets the scene for this study. I offered an exploration of Westwood Primary, the Islamic school in which this study took place, by locating it within the broader, institutional and local context. I explained that while Westwood Primary appeared to be a sign of diversity and the growing Muslim population in the English context, it is deeply embedded within broader discourses of Islamophobia, especially after 9/11. These discourses inform institutional practices in schools, leading to ambivalence in relation to practices related to Islam.

Chapter 5 presented the ideological context of the site of this study. I argued that multiple competing language ideologies are present in this reception classroom which are in a state of constant struggle. The interactions of the reception children and their teachers produced particular ideologies that reproduced broader social and ideological discourses related to the languages spoken by the children. These ideologies informed language hierarchies that were dynamically shifting based on activities and spaces in this setting. Given that the school is located in the English context, an ideology that privileged the use of standard English in relation to formal schooling activities was promoted based on the position of this variety as the formal

mode of communication in English schools. In other spaces, the ideology of Quranic Arabic as the language of religious practices and education was promoted by the children and the teachers, which reproduced the ideological valorisation of this variety as the liturgical language of Islam. At other times, French was valorised as a language of social prestige. The conflicting ideologies of Urdu and Somali in this setting show that racism and processes of racialisation inform language hierarchies. At some times, Urdu was a source of ethnic pride, and Somali was used as a meaning-making resource. At other times, Urdu was a source of mockery, and Somali reflected an ideology of deficiency informed by racialisation processes.

Chapters 6 and 7 addressed the two research questions of this study. In Chapter 6, I focused the analytical discussion on the first research question. I offered detailed accounts of the common ways the young reception children of Elmer Class translanguaged in different activities and across various spaces. I argued that the children's translanguaging produced multiple translanguaging spaces by examining how these practices intersected with spaces, activities, discourses and ideologies.

Chapter 7 focused the discussion on the second research question of this study, which explored the implications of translanguaging for intersectional Muslim identity imaginations and negotiations. I focused the discussion in this chapter on translanguaging, which uses linguistic and multimodal elements from English and Arabic based on its ideological valorisation in this setting as the language of religious practices and education. Taking Muslim identities as a core lens to view intersectional subject positions, I argued that translanguaging became implicated within power relations at the site of this study to produce particular local gendered and generationed ideals of the 'good' Muslim. Upon examining the reception children's interactions within the classroom, the children used translanguaging, amongst other practices, to

negotiate, police and maintain different forms of being the 'good' Muslim based on 'race', gender and generation, which were informed by the local imagined ideals. I argued that translanguaging produced complex social implications in light of this discussion. First, it was used to assert Muslimness in this setting, which served to produce the effect of resistance on individual and collective levels. On the general level, translanguaging in the school setting produced an effect of resistance in a broader Islamophobic context. On the individual level, translanguaging is used to assert the Muslimness of particular children, which could be understood to suggest their resistance to their negative racialisation.

The previous analytical discussion can be summarised in the following themes, which are briefly stated below:

1. Young children actively engage with translanguaging in their formal and informal activities across different spaces in the classroom.
2. Translanguaging produces heterogenous translanguaging spaces.
3. Translanguaging is a practice for communication, meaning-making and world-making.
4. The implications of young children's translanguaging are complex.

In the following four subsections, I discuss and evaluate these themes in the light of their contributions to advancing the conceptual conversations in the areas of translanguaging and intersectionality.

8.2.1. Young children's active engagement with translanguaging across activities and spaces

As discussed in Chapter 2, I used ways of thinking about young children and childhood informed by the sociology of childhood in order to show its synergy with translanguaging studies. In this use, I built on a nascent line of work on translanguaging, which uses ideas from the sociology of childhood to examine young

children's translanguaging (for example Kirsch, 2018; Lourêiro & Neumann, 2020; Fashanu, 2021). In ways similar to this line of work, I found that using ways of thinking about children as 'beings' helped show the activeness of young children in using translanguaging in different yet complex ways (Qvortrup, 2004; Corsaro, 2011). In this study, I found using these ways of thinking about young children to be consistent with the view of pedagogical translanguaging studies which shows that children are not only socialised into using language practices by adults but also are capable of engaging in dynamic processes of meaning-making. Children's use of novel, creative constructions, such as the mixed compounds identified in Chapter 6, is an example of their engagement in meaning-making and not simply mistake making.

The Elmer Class teachers seemed to hold the prevalent view of childhood as a time of development and young children as 'adults in the making'. This view was expressed in the ways Ms. Mina, Ms. Naima and Ms. Choudhary created a dualism between children and adults in terms of their language skills. The idea of dualism is a point of contention debated in the social studies of childhood. Describing adults as capable of speaking implies a sense of 'completeness', showing that adults are 'mature', 'rational' and 'competent' (Mayall, 2002). Whereas describing young children as unintelligible and 'not making any sense' suggests that these children as not yet complete as adults; they are 'incompetent', 'incomplete' and 'irrational'. Significantly, such views are considered problematic because they suggest endorsing a hierarchy that places adults at the top and children at the bottom (Cannella & Viruru, 2004; Liebel, 2004). With the increasing emphasis in Elmer Class on promoting the use of 'good' English in relation to literacy, the children's use of translanguaging was flagged by the reception teachers either as linguistic mistakes or signs of interference by the reception teachers. Therefore, this shows that young children are active translanguagers and possess the

capabilities to engage in these flexible meaning-making practices on their own and are not only socialised into them by adults.

Throughout this thesis, I have identified the activeness of the Elmer Class children in using and engaging with translanguaging in the following ways. The children used multiple forms and different combinations of languages to translanguaging in ways particular to spaces and activities. Most significantly, the reception children's translanguaging produced and reproduced specific ideologies across the different spaces of the classroom and the school. Therefore, this thesis generated rich insights into how young children use and engage with translanguaging in formal and informal activities in multiple spaces.

In terms of contributions to knowledge, these insights add to the existing body of work on young children's translanguaging. Firstly, the discussions of this thesis contribute to this work by dissolving the binary between young children's translanguaging in formal and informal activities in the classroom, which was covered in an increasing number of studies. As conceptualisations of translanguaging maintain, translanguaging is a process whereby children make sense of their worlds (García, 2009b). This process of sense-making and meaning-making cannot be confined to a particular space, set of activities or student-teacher relationships. Furthermore, young children's translanguaging, which occurs in informal spaces, cannot be separated nor is isolated from local classroom practices in the classroom and broader language ideologies and discourses.

Secondly, the detailed accounts of the different ways the Elmer Class translanguaged contribute to operationalising the study of young children's translanguaging. While this discussion does not intend to 'fix' or restrict such a fluid practice as translanguaging,

identifying the different ways in which children translanguaging could help in distinguishing these forms and understanding them. As Poza (2017) argues, the general presentation of empirical examples in pedagogical translanguaging studies portrayed translanguaging as distinct forms of different languages inserted in classroom interactions. I found this representation of translanguaging somewhat restricting and challenging to understand the forms of young children's translanguaging. Hence, using the different ways the Elmer Class children translanguaged offers useful answers to important questions in the translanguaging literature about the possible forms and nature of these practices (for example García & Li, 2014; Otheguy et al., 2019).

8.2.2. The heterogeneity of translanguaging spaces

Rather than viewing translanguaging as shaped by and shaping a contextual space between languages (following Li, 2011b), this study has shown that considering social spaces' spatial, temporal, and relational aspects leads to the production of multiple translanguaging spaces. In this thesis, I used Massey's (2005) conceptualisations of space and power geometries to consider the possibility of translanguaging in producing multiple translanguaging spaces. Using Massey's ideas to inform the understanding of translanguaging spaces speaks to recent conceptual debates about the translanguaging space and the situated nature of translanguaging in relation to space (Canagarajah, 2017; Pennycook, 2017). Kramsch (2018) has called for different ways of thinking about space in relation to translanguaging to extend its current contextual conceptualisation of the translanguaging space. Kramsch argues that using "spatial metaphors" (2018, p.108) confines translanguaging within a singular, omnipresent space that counters a 'trans' perspective.

My analysis of translanguaging space was informed by the resources of Bakhtinian heteroglossia and Massey's (2005) conceptualisation of space-time. I combined the use of these resources to consider how language ideologies and spaces are forged through power relations. The use of these resources resulted in viewing how the translanguaging of the Elmer Class children produced multiple translanguaging spaces within the classroom and around the school.

While Elmer Class may be perceived superficially as a space where English appeared to dominate, considering translanguaging as a practice contingent on space, interlocutors, and activities enables a view of this classroom as comprising multiple translanguaging spaces. The analytical discussions provided in Chapter 7 showed multiple translanguaging spaces in Elmer Class. In the formal teaching and learning space, the children used mainly English utterances, especially in their interactions with the reception teachers. I have argued that this use produced an ideology that privileged the use of 'good' standard English as the language of schooling. However, this ideology was undone by the reception children's translanguaging in the liminal space of off-task talk. In the play space, the reception teachers relaxed the rules demanding the use of 'good' English' for interactions, resulting in the visibility of children's flexible and creative use of elements from multiple languages. Within this space, the combinations of languages used in translanguaging depended on the dominant languages spoken by group members. In the lunch hall space, the reception children's translanguaging mainly used elements of Arabic to display the appropriate Muslim manners of eating. The liminal space of lining up time was similar to lesson time in some ways. While the children mainly tended to use English in this space, they translanguaged using elements from different languages. Therefore, it could be said that the multiple spaces of translanguaging in Elmer Class show that these practices

are indeed “mobile signifiers that are located in space and time”(Canagarajah, 2017, p. 35). Considering translanguaging spaces as heterogenous shows that translanguaging forms a spatial repertoire that operates to mediate and co-construct activities (Canagarajah, 2018).

The heterogeneity of translanguaging spaces contributes to advancing the conversations on the translanguaging space in the field of translanguaging. Understanding how translanguaging produces and is produced by multiple translanguaging spaces contributes to knowledge by extending Li's (2011b) notion of the translanguaging space primarily described as contextual and singular. Furthermore, the multiplicity of translanguaging spaces addresses recent debates about the notion of the translanguaging space that have raised the issue of considering the different dimensions of spaces in which translanguaging practices occur. Straszer, Rosen and Wedin (2020) point to the importance of considering the material and social dimensions of spaces and the interplay of language ideologies in examining the role of translanguaging in the production of the translanguaging space. The analytical discussion provided in Chapter 6 demonstrated the interplay of translanguaging and different dimensions of space, including the material, ideological and relational within the classroom.

8.2.3. Translanguaging as a practice for communication, meaning-making and world-making

In this study, I suggested using the theoretical resources of Bakhtin's heteroglossia in order to show the complexity of translanguaging as a world-making practice, especially in relation to intersectional identity negotiations. In this section, I discuss how this

theme contributes to recent academic knowledge in the areas of multilingualism, inclusion and exclusion in school settings.

The analytical chapters of this thesis have shown that translanguaging operated as a world-making practice in relation to identity negotiations. The detailed accounts of how the Elmer Class children mobilised the use of translanguaging to produce imagined ideals about the 'good' Muslim and to negotiate gendered and generationed Muslim identities contributes to translanguaging and identity studies by foregrounding the agency of young children and offering insights about their translanguaging in relation to Muslim identity negotiations which are relatively under-researched. I addressed this gap since it relates to the relatively limited research which explores the implications of translanguaging in producing complex social identities of translanguagers and the power relations embedded in these productions (Poza, 2019). Translanguaging is not simply a way of talking across different languages to promote linguistic understanding, nor it is a singular way of meaning-making. The young Elmer Class children used translanguaging for world-making in two ways. Firstly, the young children of Elmer Class used translanguaging to produce particular language ideologies, which produced dynamically shifting hierarchies across multiple spaces within their classroom (see Chapter 5). I have discussed in Chapter 5 that some language ideologies were favoured and privileged by the interlocutors during specific activities. For example, Quranic Arabic was highly valued as the liturgical language of Islam. Processes of racialisation, raciolinguistic ideologies and deficit discourses about specific children played a role in producing ideological disfavour of some languages such as Somali and Urdu.

As shown by this study, the children's translanguaging to negotiate intersectional Muslim identities contributes to existing knowledge by enriching academic discussions

on the use of multilingual resources in relation to inclusions and exclusions to identities in school settings. This contribution relates to the complexity of young children's translanguaging, which can be mobilised to negotiate multiple ways of being a Muslim. García (2020) notes that the use of translanguaging as pedagogical practices in educational settings involves contradictions and complexities. She points out that pedagogical translanguaging practices do not always result in social justice and challenging broader inequalities, which is supported by a large volume of studies in the translanguaging literature. García further discusses that the particularities of the socio-political contexts in which translanguaging practices occur result in complexities where translanguaging plays a role in minoritizing and racialising multilingual speakers from particular social backgrounds.

The insights generated by this study demonstrate complexities associated with the use of translanguaging, which are similar to the point raised by García (2020). This study showed how translanguaging often operates as an act of racialisation which contributes to emerging work within the translanguaging and raciolinguistic literature by advancing academic conversations on the role of language practices in reproducing broader inequalities (Alim et al., 2016). Using a raciolinguistic lens to translanguaging in this study highlighted the complexities of racialisation through examining the interplay of language practices and raciolinguistic ideologies, among other practices in these processes. The detailed accounts of the reception children's mobilisation of translanguaging to racialise others by positioning them outside the category of 'good' Muslimness contribute to enriching current discussions in raciolinguistics. These accounts add insights about racialisation in conjunction with other axes of social differentiation, such as religion and generation, which have received rather sparse attention in this area of research (Dick, 2020). Therefore, this study contributes to this

literature by shining light on the role of translanguaging practices in relation to the complex racialisation of the Somali speaking children's Muslim identities.

Secondly, translanguaging as a world-making practice potently manifested in the complex and dynamic ways the young children of Elmer Class mobilised its use to produce local idealisations and negotiations of the 'good' Muslim. The analytical discussions I provided in Chapter 7 showed how translanguaging becomes one of the ways to create different exclusionary forms of the 'good' Muslim, which were based on the social categories of language, gender, race and generation. This exclusion was evident in the translanguaging of a group of young reception girls who translanguaged to produce an exclusionary form of the good Muslim female and Muslim girlhood, which emphasised the importance of modesty as central. Notably, these girls' translanguaging highlighted the dimension of speaking Arabic as necessary for being considered a 'good Muslim female. It should be noted that modesty was considered an important element to forge inclusions and exclusions due to its high importance for the imagined, idealised feminine Muslim identity.

8.2.4. Beyond reifying the implications of translanguaging

Another theme that arose from the analytical discussions in this thesis is the complexity of the social implications of translanguaging. This complexity of these implications extends the reification of translanguaging as a practice of emancipatory potential. By examining how the reception children mobilised translanguaging practices to imagine and negotiate Muslim identities, it became evident that the children's translanguaging produced multiple implications.

In the literature review chapter, I have mentioned that a large volume of translanguaging studies primarily foregrounded the positive effects of translanguaging, commonly referred to as transformative effects. I argued earlier in this thesis that allowing or recognising the practice of translanguaging was seen as an act of social justice since it has taken into account and valued the meaning-making resources multilingual speakers bring into the classroom. In this sense, translanguaging produces positive, emancipatory effects which open up spaces, identities and possibilities for multilinguals. However, the dynamic developments in translanguaging research in recent years have shown that translanguaging can be as any social practice, not simply an act of social justice but equally an act that reproduces broader social inequalities (Nagashima & Lawrence, 2020). García (2020) observes that while translanguaging has been praised as a transformative practice yielding benefits, there are contradictory ways in which translanguaging has been utilised as “an instrument of oppression” to increase the minoritisation of some multilingual speakers by using it as acts of racialisation (2020, p. 12).

This study enriches the current discussions of the implications of translanguaging by arguing for their complexity and extending their reification as mainly positive in the current literature. The use of translanguaging in the complex processes of negotiating intersectional Muslim identities showed that translanguaging results in producing positive and negative implications. Viewing the implications of translanguaging as complex and simultaneous results in extending the dialectic of ‘either/or’, which would be reductive and limiting in understanding the operations of such a complex practice as Moore, Bradley and Simpson (2020) caution. This contribution speaks to current debates about the ways in which translanguaging studies tended to depict it as a ‘panacea’ addressing a wide range of broader inequalities (Block, 2018)

This thesis contributes to the literature on children's religious identities and language practices in the following ways. I discussed how translanguaging, especially that which draws on using elements from English and different varieties of Arabic, results in complex implications. I have demonstrated that translanguaging produced an effect of resistance by asserting Muslimness on the general and individual levels. On the general level, translanguaging in the school and classroom context could be interpreted as a form of asserting Muslimness. In a broader context characterised by Islamophobia, translanguaging involving Arabic served to treat Muslimness as valued and desired, which served as an act of resistance. On the individual level, some children used translanguaging in ways that seemed to assert their Muslimness and membership in the 'good' Muslim category to counter their racialisation and exclusion. These effects of translanguaging which served to challenge the broader and complex inequalities Muslim children face, can be seen as ways in which these children navigate the unequal terrain of the British education context post 9/11. Furthermore, this discussion adds to the ongoing academic conversations in this body of work by adding insights into the complex ways in which young children navigate tensions and contradictions in their Muslim identity negotiations.

These implications of translanguaging in relation to intersectional Muslim identities contribute to knowledge in intersectional scholarship in the following ways. Firstly, this study offers enriching insights on young children's intersectional Muslim identities by showing how translanguaging becomes mobilised with power relations to produce complex and exclusionary forms of being a Muslim based on the social categories of 'race', gender, generation and language. In these ways, this study builds on the small yet growing work on Muslim identities, which foregrounds the role of multilingual practices in the processes of intersectional Muslim identity negotiations and

construction (Mitha et al., 2020). Secondly, this study enriches intersectional analyses of young children's identities by discussing how generation intersects with being a good Muslim and how the generational positioning of young children intersects with Muslimness to reproduce particular social inequalities related to the Muslim child. Hence, using generation as a relational category that intersects with other categories of difference offers enriching insights into Muslim childhoods: how the 'good' Muslim child is imagined and negotiated.

8.3. The implications of this study

This study has offered detailed and contextualised accounts of how the reception children of Elmer Class use translanguaging practices to negotiate different ways of being 'good' Muslim. Considering Westwood Primary as a "site of struggle" (Heller, 2006), the reception children and their teachers faced a multitude of tensions regarding encouraging a Muslim identity and promoting linguistic diversity while complying with the statutory requirements set by the British Department of Education. Additionally, the ideological context of the Elmer Classroom comprised multiple language ideologies which interplayed with everyday classroom practices and discourses to produce dynamic language hierarchies where not all languages are equally accepted or valued. This study has also demonstrated that not all reception children in Elmer Class were equally considered as 'good' Muslims based on race, language, gender and generation and that translanguaging played a role in negotiating and policing these identities.

In light of the themes that have arisen from this thesis and my engagement with this topic for my doctoral study, I discuss the implications of the study for multiple

stakeholders, including early year teachers, school leaders, Muslim community leaders, and researchers. Building on the insights generated by this thesis about the complexity of young children's translanguaging and its implications in relation to negotiating multiple forms of Muslimness, this study makes the following suggestions:

1. An ambitious recommendation begins at the general public level. It is hoped that this thesis offers new ways of thinking about young Muslim children's translanguaging. The translanguaging of these children should be seen as an everyday practice that is part of their routines in similar ways to the translanguaging of children who speak different languages other than Arabic. This study calls for the importance of not decontextualising these practices and interpreting them out of the context in which they occur. As this study has shown so far, the young Muslim children in this Islamic school engaged in translanguaging practices to make sense of their worlds.
2. The findings of this study show the complexity of young children's translanguaging. They have demonstrated how the young children of Elmer Class engaged with translanguaging in formal and informal activities across different spaces, which produced particular language ideologies. The complexity of children's translanguaging reflects how children make sense and make meaning of their linguistic and multimodal resources. An implication based on this discussion would encourage early years teachers to consider the complexity and meaningfulness of young children's language practices, especially in the hidden spaces and corners of the early years classroom. A possible suggestion would encourage teachers to provide more opportunities for children to engage with their peers in informal activities. Another

suggestion would be to offer some home language support for young children to enrich their home languages in the classroom to enrich their repertoires.

3. The analytical discussion in this study has pointed to how translanguaging produces ideological hierarchies and unequal relations related to identities. The Elmer Class children used translanguaging to produce and reproduce particular language ideologies associated with the elements they use from the different languages and linguistic varieties they speak. An implication based on these findings could be encouraging early years teachers to reflect on how the use of some languages, including allowing this use or restricting it, could generate discourses that result in unequal relations. This study suggests using anti-discrimination practices in teaching and classroom management for early years teachers. These practices would be helpful to recognise aspects of social justice by paying attention to how unequal social relations interplay with language ideologies and broader social discourses. Teachers could use these practices to encourage children to challenge the taken for granted assumptions about the gender binary in relation to Muslimness. One possible way for teachers to promote anti-discrimination is through the use of literacy materials in the classroom and at home to introduce diverse narratives of being a Muslim which enables children to question certain social 'givens'.

4. For school leaders, this study suggests promoting anti-discrimination in the school community by organising workshops for parents and carers on anti-discrimination and how to talk to their children about the different forms of racism.

5. In Chapter 7, I have discussed how the reception children used translanguaging to negotiate multiple ways of being the 'good' Muslim that produced inclusions and exclusions based on different social categories. This study suggests that collaboration be forged between teachers, families, and Muslim community leaders on promoting inclusive and more accessible versions of Muslimness. Muslim community leaders can make 'good' Muslimness more accessible by creating resources supported by religious texts and Islamic history highlighting Islamic principles of equality and inclusion. This study suggests that early years teachers could promote inclusion and diversity in Muslimness by incorporating a reading series that promotes this theme into their reading programs. This study also suggests further engagement between Muslim community leaders and school leaders by arranging talks, visits, and activities to spread awareness that being a 'good' Muslim is an inclusive category that welcomes everyone despite language, race, nationality, or religious denomination.

6. A possible suggestion for researchers relates to designing interactive materials such as animated films or comics to disseminate the research findings to participants. These materials would be helpful to engage those participants with low literacy levels.

8.4. Suggestions for future research

One of the most important recommendations that relate to suggesting future research on translanguaging is the importance of including translanguaging as an important practice in framing research on identities. This recommendation stems from the relatively limited scholarly attention on examining how translanguaging practices could operate to construct and negotiate identities. It also heeds the call made by Mazzaferro

(2018), which necessitates translanguaging research to pay attention to the ways in which translanguaging might operate as an everyday social practice amongst others to construct local meanings.

Future research could examine some relatively underexplored identity dimensions by considering the centrality of translanguaging in framing research on identity. Since a large volume of identity research generally focuses on the intersections of Muslim identities and femininities and older boys' masculinities, as Gökarıksel and Secor (2017) note, one possible area to explore could be young boys Muslim masculinities. Since in this study I offered insights into the ways in which translanguaging was used in the process of negotiating modest, feminine Muslimness, future research could focus on exploring the relations between translanguaging and the negotiations of young Muslim masculinities and their intersections with the social categories of language and nationality in the context of early years classrooms.

Another suggestion for future research on translanguaging and identities relates to the importance of focusing on translanguaging spaces. The insights that emerged from this study could enlighten future studies on how differences and similarities across spaces could offer reasons to understand why particular language ideologies and positioning practices sediment in particular spaces. For example, future research could examine young children translanguaging across home and school spheres to explore how different translanguaging spaces are formed within the context of the family in addition to that of the classroom.

Another area would be to examine young children's translanguaging and Muslim identities beyond Anglophone contexts to understand how translanguaging operates in configurations that use different languages. For example, future research could look

into young children's translanguaging and Muslim identities in Muslim-majority countries and how they use it to negotiate the intersecting imaginaries of Muslim children with generation and nationalism in the English language curriculum in broader societies. Furthermore, this research could examine the translanguaging of young children in the context of Quranic supplementary schools and the possible ways to relate to the intersections of the generationed 'good' Muslim. Such studies could examine how the imaginaries of the generationed 'good' Muslim are created in the religious education curriculum and supporting media of these schools and how it is negotiated in intersecting ways in the everyday practices and interactions of the children who attend these Quranic schools.

8.5. Conclusion

This study has shown the interface between young Muslim children's translanguaging and intersecting imaginations and negotiations of Muslim identities. It has offered insights into the ways in which translanguaging practices are used to produce particular meanings associated with being a Muslim in a broader context rife with Islamophobia. The children actively used translanguaging practices to imagine and negotiate idealised, intersecting forms of Muslim identities. In this way, translanguaging produced subtle acts of resistance by asserting a sense of Muslimness in a broader context characterised by a rising anti-Muslim sentiment. At the same time, these practices were mobilised to reproduce inequalities to create a hierarchy related to the 'good' Muslim. As this study has shown, translanguaging does not occur in isolation from broader social relations.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Letter and consent form for the school headteacher

To the headteacher in Westwood Primary School

RE: About conducting a research project

Dear Mrs Jones,

I am a doctoral student at the Institute of Education at University College London. I am writing to get your consent to use your school as a research site for my study. I have a five-year of experience as an English language teacher in Oman, where I worked in two public schools. I have the experience of dealing with young, multilingual children. I also have a DBS clearance so I can work with children.

My study intends to examine reception children's use of different languages at the same time when they play. To further explain, I aim to see how they use these two languages simultaneously or create new forms when they talk. The majority of studies have focused on how children use these language practices mainly for learning and teaching purposes. However, my study intends to focus is on the use of these different languages in their playtime. By doing so, I want to find out why children use different languages when they play and what might result from that. This study will take 12 months (from July 2018 to June 2019). I will be conducting observations in one of the reception classrooms twice a week for the whole school day. I assure you that my observations will not interfere with the flow of lessons and classroom-related activities.

Furthermore, I will not take part in any teaching or other responsibilities that the teachers do. I will introduce myself as a university student who wants to learn about children's talk and play. For this purpose, there will be times where I will use a video camera to record the interactions of the reception children when they play. These video recordings will only be used by me for language analysis and will be stored safely. Additionally, children, teachers and the school will not be identified in the research as names will be anonymised for maintaining confidentiality.

If you give permission to include your school as a research site for my study, we will determine suitable times to come to the school. Your acceptance will mean a lot to

me, and I think it will be an enjoyable experience. I want to let you know that this study does not aim to assess the school or the educators by any means and that it is a part of a doctoral research project.

I hope that you complete the attached consent form and send it to me via email. If you have any questions related to this, then you can contact me anytime by email at s.battashi.16@ucl.ac.uk

Looking forward to hearing from you and thank you for your consideration

Sharifa Al Battashi

Consent form

Please read the following statements and tick all that applies (✓):

	YES	NO
I consent to allow Sharifa Al Battashi to use our school as a research site for her doctoral study.		
I consent to the use of video recordings (consent from parents and children will be obtained before doing this)		
I understand that the study results will not contain any personally identifiable information about the school, the school staff and the children.		
I give permission to Sharifa Al Battashi to use the results for her PhD project for publications directed to academic audiences.		

Name _____ Position _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Appendix B: Information sheet and consent form for families

Children's Use of Different Languages in Play

Information sheet for Families

My name is Sharifa Al Battashi, and I am here inviting you to take part in my research project. I am currently a doctoral student at UCL and will be conducting this project to complete my degree. I have a five-year experience of working as an English language teacher in a primary school.

Please take your time in reading the following information as it will try to answer any questions you might have. Do not hesitate to contact me if anything needs more clarification or if you would like to know more. Take your time to decide whether you want to participate or not. If you are interested and do give permission to your child to participate, read the information sheet to your child and discuss whether they want to participate. I will also organize an information session for the interested children and ask them if they agree to take part. If they want, they can drop out if they wish with no negative consequences.

What is this project about?

My project is about investigating children's use of different languages when they play. Previous studies show that the use of different languages helps people communicate and understand more. However, there is little to know about children.

By doing this study for 12 months, I want to know if reception children use different languages simultaneously. Also, I want to find out why do they use them when they play with each other.

Why am I being invited to take part?

Families of multilingual children in the reception stage will be notified about the project. The project will focus on speakers of Arabic. If you are interested, you will be given a short and simple questionnaire to see what languages you speak besides English. After you give permission for your child to participate, you will be given a child-friendly information sheet to read with your child. If your child agrees to participate in the study, I will invite him/her to an information session to check their understanding and get their consent.

What will happen if my child takes part?

This study is observational. This means that I will be observing the children in their classroom twice a week. I will be mainly looking at children's talk and the use of different languages in their playtime. Sometimes, I will use a video camera to take some video of the children participating in the study when they play.

Will anyone know that my child has been involved?

All the information I collect about your child throughout the year will be kept private and confidential. Your child will not be identified. Your child's name will be changed. Nobody will see the video recordings except for myself.

Could there be problems for my child if s/he takes part?

While there are no risks associated with this study, if you and your child feel uncomfortable, you can talk to me, and you are entitled to stop at any point.

What will happen to the results of the research?

The data collected will be used for a PhD project. Your child will not be identified in the findings as all information collected about him/her will be anonymized. **The data will be kept during the course of the project, will be securely stored.**

Does my child have to take part?

It is entirely up to you and your child whether or not you choose to take part. I hope that if you do choose to be involved, then you will find it a valuable experience.

Thank you very much for taking the time to read this information sheet.

If you would like to be involved, please complete the following consent form and return it to me. If you have any further questions before you decide whether to take part, you can reach me at s.battashi.16@ucl.ac.uk

Children's Use of Different Languages in Play

Dear parents and carers:

If you are interested in this study, please complete this consent form and return it to the school office.

	Yes	No
I have read and understood the information sheet about the study		
I have read the children's information sheet with my child.		
I understand that I can contact Sharifa at any time for any clarifications or further information.		
I give permission for my child to participate in this study.		
I agree to have my child observed.		
I give permission to Sharifa to sometimes take videos of my child in his/her play time.		
I understand that if any of my child's words are used in any reports, they will not be attributed to him/her.		
I understand that my child can withdraw from the project at any time, and that if we choose to do this, any data my child have contributed will not be used		
I understand that videos of my child will not be shared with anyone; that they will be kept in a safe place and will be deleted after the end of the study.		
I understand that the results will be used for a doctoral project and will be available to academic audiences.		

Note: if any of the information above is not clear, I can explain more

Name _____

Signed _____

Date _____

Researcher's name Sharifa Al Battashi

e-mail: s.battashi.16@ucl.ac.uk Signed _____

Appendix C: Brief language questionnaire

Language Questionnaire

Dear parents and carers,

As this project will focus on how multilingual children use language when they play, you are invited to complete this brief questionnaire. This will help me to identify which language(s) you speak. Please fill in the appropriate answer and return the form to me when done.

- What languages do you speak beside English?

----- *(Please specify)*

- What language(s) do you use at home?

----- *(Please specify)*

Thank you for your time

Sharifa Al Battashi

Name-----

Signature-----

Date-----

Appendix D: Information sheet and consent form for children

Dear parents and carers,

After you have given consent that your child will take part in the project, please read the following information sheet with your child. Discuss with them whether you would like to take part in the research project.



Hello!

My name is Sharifa. I study in a college in London.

I want to learn about children and play for my school. I am interested in how children use different languages when they play, why they do this and what teachers think of this.

I will be in the Reception class with you for the whole year.

What is your name?



I want to learn about how children talk at their play time.



I will be in your class from two to three times every week. You will often see me writing about how you talk when you play.



I will video record you at play time using a camera like this. Don't worry! I will use these videos to learn more about play and talk. No one else will see them. I will do this once a week.



Whatever you say to me will be kept safe. Nobody is going to know about your name or your school. Nobody will see the video recordings I take of you except for me.



Sometimes we do not want to talk to anyone or we do not like to be in a video recording. It is ok. You do not have to talk if you do not want to.

Other times we might change our minds. If you first say yes to take part of the project and the video recordings, you can say 'No' if you no longer wish to.



If you have any questions, feel free to ask me or the headteacher and we will be happy to answer.



Talk with your parents if you want to take part in this study. Then decide if you agree or not. If you do not want to take part then do not worry.

Would you like to take part in the study?

If so, then please tick or color below:

	YES	NO
Do you want to take part?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Can I write about you?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Can I record you when you Play using a video camera?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Thank You! 😊

Appendix E: Transcription conventions

<utterance>

[multimodal features]

(.) brief interval

(2) interval for a few seconds

(translation from Arabic, Somali or Urdu)

CAPITALS utterance in louder voice

(...) missing or incomprehensible part of the conversation

Italic utterance in different language

