English Language As A Barrier To Employment, Education And Training

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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PART 2

APPENDICES

GLOSSARY of Definitions

BET	Basic Employability Training (formerly known as Pre-vocational Training). It is TEC-funded and aims to prepare people for work or training.
CELTA	Certificate in English Language Teaching to Adults
CETS	Croydon Continuing Education and Training Service
DELTA	Diploma in English Language Teaching to Adults
DfEE	Department for Education and Employment.
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
English language courses	Courses which have the improvement of English language skills as their primary learning goal.
ES	Employment Services
ESF	European Social Fund
ESOL	English for speakers of other languages.
ESU Framework	The performance scales for English language examinations published by the English Speaking Union.
FEDA	Further Education Development Agency
FEFC	Further Education Funding Council.
Learners	The students or trainees who were interviewed for this research project.
LFS	Labour Force Survey
Mainstream courses	Courses which have an educational or vocational outcome as their primary learning goal, for example computing, carpentry or an 'A' level.
NARIC	National Academic Recognition Information Centre for the UK
NATECLA	The National Association of Teachers of English and Community Languages to Adults
NOCN	National Open College Network
NTO	National Training Organisation
NVQs	National Vocational Qualifications.
QCA	Qualifications and Curriculum Authority
Respondents	The members of staff who were interviewed for this research project.
Refugees	All people living in Great Britain who have indefinite or exceptional leave to remain
RETAS	Refugee Education and Training Advisory Service
Second language speakers	People for whom English is not their first language. This term is generally used in this document.
TEC	Training and Enterprise Council
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
WBLA	Work Based Learning for Adults

1.   Introduction

In the Summer of 1999 the Department for Education and Employment commissioned a research project to establish whether people whose first language is not English face barriers to the labour market; and into the local availability of ESOL provision. A representative sample of areas in England and Wales and organisations were selected to provide an overview of second language speakers (ie people whose first language is not English) and the provision available to them.

2.   National data on second language speakers living in Great Britain

There are no reliable data on the number of people whose first language is not English. This causes serious problems with the planning and delivery of provision. We know that:

♦   three million people living in Great Britain were born in countries where English is not the national language.
♦   Of these, between 1 and 1.5 million people are estimated to lack the English language skills required to function in society and employment.

3.   The five sample areas chosen for this study and their profiles of second language speakers

Area	Number of second language speakers	% of the local population
East London	151,430	12.8%
Birmingham	85,466	8.7%
South London	107,624	7.5%
Cardiff	13,138	4.7%
Manchester	96,994	3.9%

We also know two important facts about London:
•   London is home to an estimated 220,000 and 300,000 asylum seekers and refugees.
•   In 1999 30% of pupils in primary schools in Inner London had English as an additional language **and** were not fluent in English.

4.   Profile of the learners interviewed

The 178 learners interviewed for this study were all on education or training courses.

♦   They came from 53 countries and spoke 49 languages
♦   60% were women
♦   66% had completed secondary education and 45% were qualified at FE/HE level; 38% were still in education when they left their country of origin
♦   60% had learnt English in their country of origin
♦   66% had such low English language skills that they were unable to study on mainstream courses or find work

- ♦ 71% were learning English in order to find work; 19% to improve their job prospects, and 44% to study in FE or HE
- ♦ 41% intended to work in professional occupations
- ♦ 5% were in employment; all were working as unskilled labourers
- ♦ Only 23% had used their own community organisations for advice
- ♦ Motivation to succeed was high
- ♦ The major barrier to work for all but a handful of the learners: **insufficient English language skills**

5. The employers' perspective

Employers identified the following barriers to recruiting second language speakers:
- ♦ Inability to speak and/or write English to a sufficient standard
- ♦ Written job applications not produced in a standard format
- ♦ Over-reliance on academic qualifications rather than work experience
- ♦ Lack of ability to sell oneself at interview
- ♦ Difficulty in establishing equivalence of overseas qualifications

Employers wondered whether second language speakers had received sensible advice on job search.

6. Data on (un)employment and deprivation

There are no data on the number of second language speakers who are out of work and the impact of low English on their chances of employment. Anecdotal evidence shows that unemployment ranges between 50% and 95% of the target group. If people are in work, they are employed at a level below their qualifications and experience. As a result, second language speakers suffer from poverty which exceeds the levels of the native English population by a factor of two to four.

7. Data on participation in education and training

Apart from FEFC data, information on participation in education and training is poor. The following numbers were identified by funding type:

Funding organisation	Total
FEFC	up to 100,000
TEC	3,924
New Deal	1,010
Total	**up to 104,934**

The vast majority of second language speakers achieved either no language qualification or below NVQ level 2. Few achieved mainstream qualifications such as A' level, NVQ or GCSE.

8. Provision for English language learners found in the five sample areas

A host of organisations were involved with the delivery to English language learners, including adult and further education colleges, the careers service, ES, TEC and New Deal providers and voluntary sector projects. These organisations tended to work in isolation.

9.   Advice and guidance

Second language speakers who presented themselves to education & training organisations were routinely referred to English language departments without access to careers advice or information on the equivalence of their prior qualifications. Initial screening and diagnostic assessment were weak and BSA tests were seen as not helpful. Only half the organisations interviewed knew about NARIC, the organisation which offers advice on the comparability of British and international qualifications.

The government's initiatives to improve the comparability of qualifications were welcomed.

10.   English language provision

This study covered the following types of provision:

Type of Provision	Provided by	Summary of features
General ESOL courses	Adult education colleges Further education colleges Basic Employability Training New Deal	By far the most common type of course Low level, 'survival' English Lacking in occupational content Lack of progression to mainstream courses
English, IT and Maths courses	Further education colleges	Aimed at 16-19 year-olds Erratic progression to mainstream courses
Professional/ Vocational courses	Adult education Work-based Learning for Adults	Courses aimed specifically at second language speakers Useful for those who are already qualified
Mainstream courses	Further education colleges	Subject specific eg (G)NVQ or Care. Ideally offered with language support but this was rare

TEC and New Deal provision did not make adequate provision for second language speakers: they delivered low level, general English courses rather than job related training.

New Deal personal advisers were not equipped to assess or advise second language speakers.

New initiatives like New Deal were poor at incorporating learners with specific needs.

11.   Review of English language teaching

11.1   Quality
While 97% of the learners interviewed were positive about their language courses, they made many suggestions for improvement, many of which centred around the need for more systematic teaching.

Learners would benefit from much higher standards of delivery, systematic teaching, a more challenging pace and a curriculum which includes topics on home life as well as work and mainstream training/education. Teaching practice needs to be reviewed and in-service training provided to improve standards. Monitoring and evaluation of the quality of delivery should become standard.

English language teachers were unaware what employers expected in terms of communication skills requirements. In particular they underestimated the need for accuracy.

There appears to be no UK information on the time required to acquire English language skills, but Australian data provide an interesting projection: they forecast **1765 hours of teaching** to get from no English to the level of competence required for further study or a job.

Taking the figure of 1765 hours of tuition, the following projections will apply to learners who speak no English to get to the point where they could participate in further study or get a job:

♦   Full-time FE students (**450 guided learning hours** per year) would need almost **four years** of study
♦   Adult students who learn English **ten hours a week** over 30 weeks a year would need **five years and seven months** of study
♦   Adult students who learn English **four hours a week** over 30 weeks a year would need **14 and a half years** of study

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11.2   Current provision against the demand for language learning

Provision was inadequate to meet the needs of second language speakers because:
♦   there was insufficient provision to cater for the demand
♦   the number of hours taught was insufficient to enable individuals to make substantive progress
♦   general ESOL classes did not teach people to a sufficiently high level to enable them to find a job or study on mainstream education or training
♦   language support provision on mainstream courses was very low

For many people work placements provide the most appropriate introduction to the world of work but few second language speakers got access. Secondly, job preparation was not provided even though an introduction to the UK world of work was crucial for people who had a different cultural concept of job hunting and work practice.

Many English language learners felt socially isolated because they did not communicate with English people.

12.   Review of management

In many institutions ESOL provision was delivered in isolation and would benefit from more active management and better co-ordination of services. This should include the delivery of language support for learners on mainstream courses.

Language qualifications need pruning. The most popular choices were Pitman, the Cambridge Certificate in Communicative Skills in English and NOCN qualifications. The least popular was Wordpower because a qualification designed for native English speakers was not seen as suitable for second language speakers. So what do we need standards and accreditation of English skills to do?

♦ benchmark the development of skills from the pure beginner to the equivalent of a native English speaker
♦ be credible with employers and institutions of education and training
♦ provide a framework for the language teaching profession to plan and deliver a programme of learning

13. Marketing provision

42% of the learners found their way to classes through friends and family and made surprisingly low use of their own communities. While young people had little trouble in locating provision most adults found it difficult and some took years to discover it.

14. Funding

The multitude of funding sources has created a complexity which only the best-informed managers were able to manipulate. Staff in charge of allocating funding, eg TEC and ES managers, were not sure what criteria they should use to contract and monitor English language provision. On a positive note: FEFC's additional learning support funding provided a good vehicle for language support. This allowed learners access to mainstream education and training courses.

15. Conclusion

There can be no doubt that a lack of English language skills causes second language speakers to be one of the most excluded groups in society and the labour market. Yet many are able, well-motivated and well-qualified people with valuable skills which are transferable to the UK work environment. It makes economic sense to teach people English but society and the individual will benefit only if people learn English to a higher standard than is currently on offer. This can only be achieved if the quality and quantity of English language teaching is improved substantially.

What will happen if we do not tackle provision for people whose first language is not English?

♦ Exclusion from the labour market as well as social exclusion

♦ Continued dependency on the state

♦ Lives lived in poverty with implications for the next generation.

Chapter 2

The Office for National Statistics' census should record information on the respondent's first language.

DfEE should discuss with other government departments the feasibility of adopting new categories for ethnic minorities. These should represent current immigration patterns rather than the outdated New Commonwealth categories.

To assist with the planning of learning provision the Home Office should provide data on the number and age groups of all asylum seekers and refugees including dependants.

Chapter 5

Organisations which prepare people for work must provide:
- job search training which makes explicit the process of job search in the UK and which makes people aware that job search in their own country is not necessarily the same as in the UK
- sufficient practice for people to really understand what is required in the UK labour market

Language teachers should be given the opportunity to explore what standards of English employers look for through teacher placements in the work place. And they must incorporate this knowledge into their teaching.

The Home Office should simplify documentation on permission to work.

Chapter 6

The Employment Service should collect data on second language speakers and the impact of a lack of English on people's unemployment.

The Labour Force Survey should collect data on people who face unemployment because English is not their first language.

Chapter 7

Local Learning Skills Councils should:
- establish a baseline of language communities in their catchment area
- ask providers of education and training to collect annual data on:
  - their learners' first language by programme area and gender
  - the need for additional learning support on mainstream courses
- monitor provision against the language community baseline and, if necessary, set targets for providers

Studies on ethnic minorities should take into account race, language and culture as factors which have an impact on unemployment.

Chapter 9

Organisations which refer or place second language speakers on courses should assess occupational skills and experience as well as English language skills.

Awarding, examinations and professional bodies should review whether the criteria set for English language performance match the level of language required for the job.

All organisations advising second language speakers – such as FE and adult education colleges, Job Centres and New Deal providers - should have access to information on academic equivalence provided by NARIC.

The government should continue to promote the development of frameworks to equate British and foreign qualifications.

The Adult Basic Skills Strategy Unit should review as soon as possible the practice of using literacy standards and tests which were designed for native English speakers to measure second language speakers' performance.

Chapter 10

Providers should make sure that second language speakers have access to a broader spectrum of courses than is currently available, in particular high level general English, mainstream courses and professional/vocational courses.

FE Colleges delivering English courses to young people should make sure that:
♦ their language, maths and IT provision matches the needs of the individual
♦ learners are able to progress onto mainstream provision as soon as their language skills are sufficient.

Vocational training and New Deal providers should deliver occupational training and work placements to second language speakers. They should leave basic English language provision to the education sector.

The Learning Skills Council and the Employment Service should include provision for second language speakers when planning new initiatives such as New Deal.

Chapter 11

The Adult Basic Skills Strategy Unit/DfEE should implement the recommendation in the Moser report on the entitlement to English language learning. This should include provision up to a level where people are able to function independently in work, further education or training intensive provision; and flexible access to language learning for those who are in work

The local Learning Skills Councils and Employment Service should:
♦ ensure sufficient provision to meet demand for general ESOL courses
♦ ensure provision from absolute beginner level up to NVQ level 3
♦ provide specialist courses which enable people to adapt their existing occupational skills and experience to the United Kingdom environment as well as improve their English language skills;
   or provide access to mainstream provision with additional learning support
♦ promote quality of delivery on general ESOL courses and a curriculum which covers topics on home and family life as well as the occupational/educational context.

The Learning Skills Council should create a system which monitors the uptake of additional learning support by individual target group: ESOL, disability, learning difficulty, and basic skills.

The Further Education NTO should consider adopting the CELTA & DELTA as suitable teacher training qualifications for English language teaching.

Providers of education and training should:
♦ deliver general ESOL provision which enables the learner to progress to work, study or training
♦ drastically increase language support provision on mainstream courses
♦ monitor and evaluate teaching practice against quality standards and curriculum requirements
♦ improve standards of delivery by providing in-service training
♦ provide work placements which suit the learner's occupational needs and which take place in an English-speaking environment.

Chapter 12

QCA should make sure that standards and accreditation of English skills:
♦ benchmark the development of skills from the pure beginner to the equivalent of a native English speaker
♦ are credible with employers and institutions of education and training
♦ provide a framework for the language teaching profession to plan and deliver a programme of learning.

The Learning Skills Council and Employment Service should:
♦ radically simplify the funding and accreditation of English language provision
♦ make sure that local organisations work together to deliver a continuous service to second language speakers
♦ ensure that their own staff dealing with funding and monitoring of provision are adequately trained

Education and training providers should:

♦ ensure that senior managers are actively involved with the management of English language delivery. This should include the delivery of language support.

♦ ensure that in-service training for teachers is mandatory and part of continuing professional development

♦ consider employing more staff on fractional and full-time contracts.

Chapter 13

Organisations delivering mainstream as well as English language courses should develop a marketing strategy for second language speakers which makes use of community networks, radio and newspapers as well as English media of communication.

New arrivals would benefit from course information written in their own language, if they can read; and otherwise an opportunity to discuss their needs with a guidance worker who can speak their language.

Chapter 14

Employment Service should consider targeting funding as follows:

♦ use vocational training and New Deal budgets for occupationally specific training and qualifications; and not for general ESOL courses

♦ adopt the FEFC funding mechanism of additional learning support to help learners achieve mainstream qualifications in education as well as training.

PART I

DATA ON PEOPLE WHOSE FIRST LANGUAGE IS NOT ENGLISH AND' THE PERSPECTIVE OF EMPLOYERS

1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE RESEARCH

1.1 Introduction

In the Summer of 1999 the Department for Education and Employment commissioned a research project on the needs of people whose first language is not English. The department wished to establish the barriers which second language speakers face when they enter the labour market; and how it might help those who are at a disadvantage off benefits and into jobs.

This document contains the findings of the research. It provides data on the number of people who do not have English as their mother-tongue and the types of English language provision open to them. It investigates the needs and aspirations of the target group as well as their command of English. It assesses whether a lack of English acts as a barrier to employment and in how far the provision available is appropriate. The report also provides examples of good practice and makes recommendations on policy and delivery and on how government initiatives could be used to get people into work.

One important point must be made here: although the focus of this research is on language as a barrier to the labour market, it was clear from the learners' contributions that they felt excluded from their local and social environment as well as from work. As such this research has implications for statutory services such as health care and social services as well as measures to break exclusion from work.

1.2 Research method

The research for this report was carried out between May and December 1999. Five areas in England and Wales were selected to provide an overview of second language groups and language delivery:

♦ East and South London because of the large numbers of refugees and other language groups living in London, as well as the variety of English language provision
♦ Manchester and Birmingham as samples of large cities with a predominantly Asian population
♦ Cardiff, as an example of a small city with a Somali population which goes back over a century and which has had a recent influx of Somali refugees

A representative sample of organisations were selected across the five areas to include further and adult education colleges, training providers, TECs, the careers service, FEFC, the Refugee Council etc.[1] Secondly, potential examples of good practice in getting people into work were also identified. In total 139 members of staff were consulted including college principals, chief executives, teachers, trainers and careers advisers. 86 people were interviewed individually, and 47 attended one of three workshops at the South London Basic Skills Forum, the Birmingham & Solihull Basic Skills Network and during NATECLA conference of 1999.

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1 For a list of the organisations consulted see p i.

Secondly, 178 English language learners, all on education or training courses, were interviewed in groups of about five people. The interviews took on average 45 minutes and collected data on first language, skills and experience, and occupational goals, as well as qualitative data on people's perceptions of their language learning experience. Thirdly, a sample of employers gave their views on the need for English language communication skills in work.

Questionnaires were used to guide the discussions but not all respondents were asked the same questions. For example, learners with very low level English were not asked all qualitative questions; and staff and management were asked those questions which were relevant to their area of work.

Although a large number of learners and members of staff were interviewed, this research could not claim to have any statistical validity as the sample of organisations and learners was chosen randomly. Another consideration is the diversity of the people who have settled in this country and their backgrounds and skills. The sample of learners interviewed is too small to be assured of their complete representation of the country as a whole. Nevertheless, various trends are apparent and are highlighted throughout the report. In addition, we make reference to other studies as they confirm or contradict our findings.

2 NATIONAL DATA ON THE SECOND LANGUAGE SPEAKERS LIVING IN GREAT BRITAIN

2.1 The categories of second language speakers

People who have come to settle in the United Kingdom fall into four categories:

- asylum seekers, refugees and people with exceptional leave to remain, for example people from Somalia, Iraq, Vietnam and Zaire
- New Commonwealth citizens from countries such as India, Pakistan and Bangladesh
- residents from the European Union
- residents from other countries such as Japan, Thailand, Poland and Brazil

While it is useful to have a broad understanding of these groups, it is important to bear in mind that generalised characteristics do not necessarily apply to individuals from these groups.

2.2 The number of second language speakers living in Great Britain

Unfortunately **there are no data on the number of people whose first language is not English; nor do we know how many operate in English. This causes serious problems with the planning of provision as well as the assessment of its sufficiency and effectiveness.** In the absence of accurate data we have put together an estimate of the likely numbers of second language speakers based on two sources of information:

1. Table 7 of the 1991 Census provides data on people's country of birth. This shows that **2,551,017** second language speakers (or 4.7% of the total population) were born in countries where English is not spoken.[2] The 1991 Census figure is a likely underestimate of the number of people living in the United Kingdom at the time.[3]

2. The Home Office provides information on the number of asylum applications, decisions to grant refugee status and exceptional leave to remain. These show that a total of 146,460 people have arrived in the United Kingdom since 1991 and are either awaiting asylum decisions or have been granted asylum. In addition the Home Office estimates that 91,000 dependants have accompanied the principal applicants since 1991 bringing the total to 237,460.[4]

The Census and Home Office figures make for a total of **2,788,567**. However, this figure is by no means certain because people may have died or left Great Britain since 1991. More importantly, it excludes those who did not register for the 1991 census and those who have arrived since 1991 and are not refugees. So, it is safe to assume that at least three **million second language speakers are living in the United Kingdom.**

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2 See Appendix 1 for a national breakdown of people born abroad by country where English is not the native/national language. You may also be interested to know that in 1991 599,325 people living in Great Britain were born in countries where English is spoken, for example the USA and Canada.; and that 14 million British citizens are living abroad now (information provided by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office).

3 For instance, second language speakers are more likely not to have filled in the census form if they cannot read English; and refugees and asylum seekers who have had bad experiences with authority may be reluctant to provide details

4 See Appendix 2 for a detailed analysis of the Home Office figures.

Not all second language speakers will need to learn English and many will be happily working in the United Kingdom but, if English communication is a problem, they are likely to be un- or underemployed. It is impossible to establish how many of these three million do not speak English fluently because we have no reliable data. There is one study which attempts to quantify the number of people affected by low level English skills. Carr-Hill et al estimate that in four communities alone, Bangladeshi, Indian, Pakistani and Chinese, 450,000 people fail to reach 'survival level' English.[5]

Given the figures above we can assume that **1-1.5 million people (or between one third and half of the three million people whose first language is not English) need to improve their English language skills if they are to participate in education, work and society.** While this is a best estimate based on available data, clearly we have insufficient information on this target group. Further research is urgently needed, in particular to confirm how many people are affected by a lack of English language skills; how many are in statutory education; and how many are of working age and unemployed because of their lack of English.

2.3   Ethnic minority data

Many studies on ethnic minorities classify people whose first language is not English according to Home Office categories. These concentrate on people who originated from New Commonwealth countries, for example India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Hong Kong. These data may have had some use as indicators of English language needs when people first arrived in this country. However, even at that time there was no automatic link between ethnicity and a lack of English language skills. As the second and later generations are growing up in the United Kingdom, these data are increasingly unreliable as indicators of English language needs. Secondly, the Home Office categories do not identify new entrants such as refugees. Consequently, they are used with caution in this study.

> **The Office for National Statistics' census should record information on the respondent's first language.**
>
> **DfEE should discuss with other government departments the feasibility of adopting new categories for ethnic minorities. These should represent current immigration patterns rather than the outdated New Commonwealth categories.**
>
> **To assist with the planning of English language provision the Home Office should provide data on the number and age groups of all asylum seekers and refugees including dependants.**

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5 *Lost Opportunities,* Roy Carr-Hill et al. Basic Skills Agency 1996. p 133.

3   DATA ON SECOND LANGUAGE SPEAKERS IN THE FIVE SAMPLE AREAS

The table below shows data for the five sample areas covered by this study. It gives a summary of the 1991 census data of people born in countries where English is not the national language. [6]

Area	Number of people	% of the population
East London	151,430	12.8%
Birmingham	85,466	8.7%
South London	107,624	7.5%
Cardiff	13,138	4.7%
Manchester	96,994	3.9%

The five local authorities confirmed that the 1991 census provided their only data source on second language speakers. This was out of date and insufficient to plan for local authority services.

3.1   Local Authority/DfEE statistics on primary and secondary education

There is one other source of statistical information on languages spoken other than English. Local authorities are required to provide the DfEE with a baseline of information on primary and secondary pupils' languages spoken at home. Although the DfEE data cannot be taken as indicative of the adult population, they provide interesting background information and indicate the scale of need among the younger generation. We have selected data on London and Birmingham below as examples of pupils' profiles.

3.1.1   Birmingham data on all LEA pupils' languages spoken at home

Language[7]	%	Language	%
Arabic	0.5%	Punjabi (spoken in India)	6.5%
Bengali	3.7%	Punjabi (spoken in Pakistan)	6.9%
Cantonese	0.2%	Pushto	0.9%
Creole	0.5%	Urdu	7.3%
English	70.0%	Vietnamese	0.3%
Gujerati	1.2%	Other	1.2%
Hindi	0.2%		

3.1.2   Summary of London data on primary and secondary school pupils

♦   in 1999 30 % of pupils in primary schools in Inner London had English as an additional language **and** were not fluent in English.

♦   37% of pupils in secondary schools had English as an additional language

♦   60% of the ethnic minority pupils were classified as 'white'. This category covers a host of communities eg Turkish, Spanish and Kosovan.[8]

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6 The full data in Appendix 1 show the great variety of communities in the areas.
7 Birmingham City Council Education Department (1998).
8 For full data on English as an additional language, fluency in English and ethnic composition, see Appendix 4.

3.2   London data on adult second language speakers

London undoubtedly attracts the biggest proportion of migrants and refugees in the country. This is partly because the economic opportunities are the greatest but also because there are established communities and facilities for new arrivals. *Cosmopolitan London* states that 'in 1991 there were 1.3 million from ethnic minority groups (including British born minorities and 37 different migrant communities of over 10,000'.[9] One of the major recent influxes concerns refugees and asylum seekers. Although the Home Office dispersal policy may change the concentration in London in the long term, London is already home to an estimated 220,000 - 300,000 asylum seekers and refugees.[10]

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9 *Cosmopolitan London*. Marian Storkey, Jacqie Maguire and Rob Lewis London Research Centre (1997) p iii.
10 *Refugee Education, Training and Employment in Inner London* Africa National Trust (1998) p 10.

4   THE COHORT INTERVIEWED, THEIR SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

This chapter provides a profile of the interviewees, the skills they acquired in their own country, whether they had learnt English; and their level of English at the time of interview. Chapters 8 to 13 will deal with the services available to them and their experiences in the UK.

4.1   The number of learners interviewed, their ages, nationalities and languages spoken

Total number of learners interviewed	178	
	Female	Male
	107	71
Total number of 16-19 year-olds	31	
Total number of 19 and older	147	
Number of countries of origin	53	
Languages spoken[11]	49	

4.2   The interviewees' length of stay in United Kingdom

- Up to 1 year — 26%
- 1 – 3 years — 30%
- 3 – 5 years — 11%
- 5 – 10 years — 17%
- 10 years + — 13%
- Born in United Kingdom(spent time overseas) — 3%
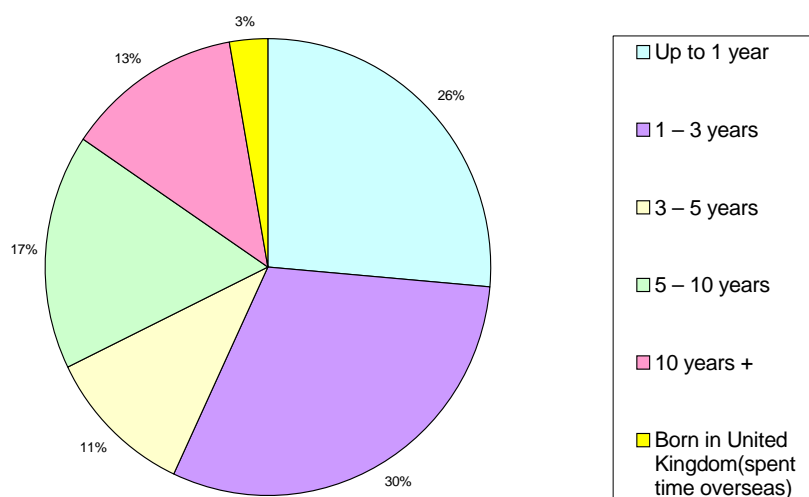
This table shows that over half the sample interviewed had been in Great Britain less than three years. The proportion of new arrivals was relatively uniform across the sample areas except for those living in Birmingham who had been here much longer. For example, only four people from Birmingham had been here for less than three years; and all five learners who had been born in the United Kingdom and had spent time in their parents' country of origin came from Birmingham.

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11 For details of the languages spoken, please see Appendix 3.

4.3 Overseas qualifications and experience

The sample of learners was asked about the qualifications and work experience which they had gained before arriving in this country.

4.3.1 *Highest qualification gained in country of origin*
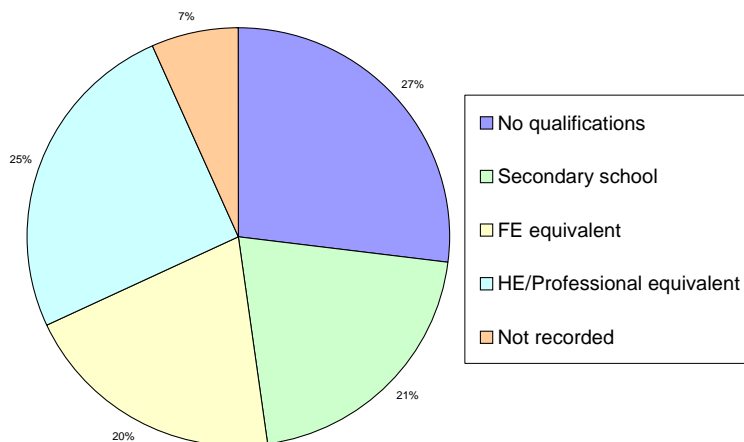
The figures show that 45% were qualified at FE or HE/professional level and that 21% were at secondary school level, making for a total of 66% which had completed secondary education. This figure is lower than that found in the Home Office research which states that '84% of the respondents had completed some form of secondary education, with over a third having attended a university level course'; and 'A third of the sample had a degree, post-graduate or professional qualification. Only 18% had no qualifications at all.'[12] Two factors are likely to account for the lower level of educational achievement in our study. In the first place, many of the learners interviewed were young and still in education. Secondly, our sample included not only refugees but also other settlers. There is anecdotal evidence that the former tend to achieve higher levels of qualifications.

4.3.2 *Education and work experience gained in the country of origin*

Work/ Education	Total	%
Still in education	67	38%
Unskilled work	15	8%
Skilled work	30	17%
Professional	35	20%
Never worked	26	14%
Born in UK	5	3%
Total	178	100%

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12 *The Settlement of Refugees in Britain* Home Office Research Study 141 (1995) p 21.

The high number of young people in this study accounts for the percentage of people still in education when leaving their country of origin (38%). This also explains the relatively low level of employment (45%) compared to other studies. For example, the Home Office study comments that two-thirds of the respondents had been in employment in their own country and that many had had good jobs there.[13] Compare also the Peabody Trust which interviewed only skilled and qualified refugees and found higher achievements for employment: 87% had jobs in their country of origin; and 43% were professionals, managers or employers.[14]

4.4 The learners' intended job destinations
The chart below provides a breakdown of the learners' intended destinations.
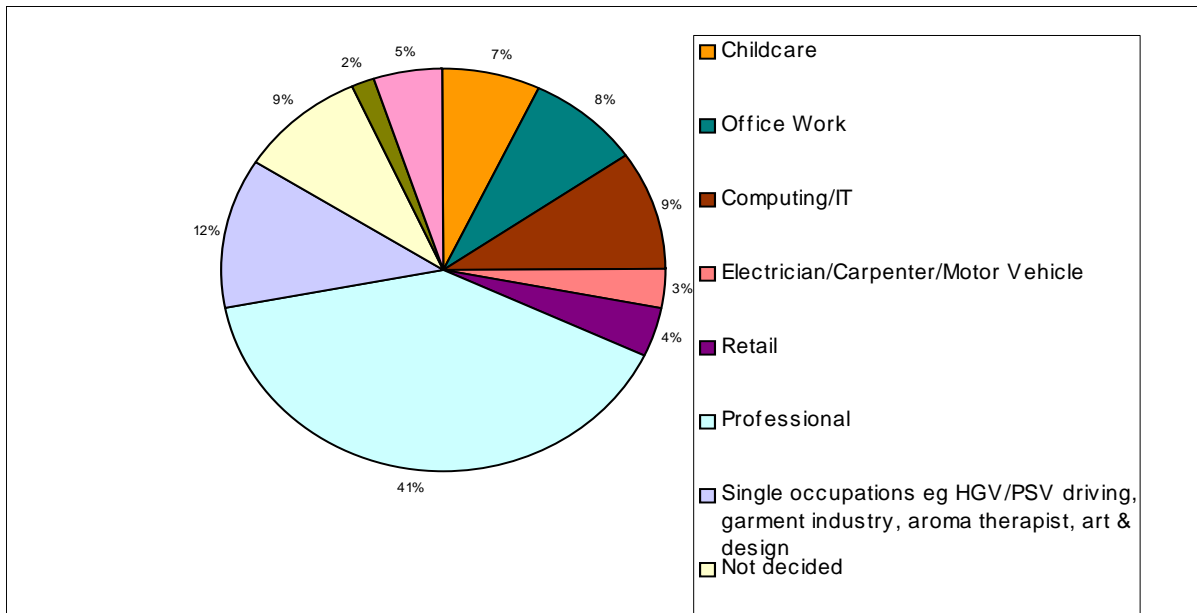
It is interesting that a high proportion of the learners (41%) intended to work in professional occupations, for example, as doctors, lawyers, accountants, interpreters and teachers. Since 25% of the sample were already qualified to HE or professional level (see section 4.3.1) we can assume that another 16 % wished to qualify in the United Kingdom.

4.5 Employment in the United Kingdom
Ten out of the sample of 178 people were in employment at the time of interview. All were found to be working in unskilled jobs in fast food restaurants or factories, as cab drivers etc. One of them was a qualified vet who was working as a cleaner; a second had been a supervisor in a cement factory and was now working in MacDonalds. Five others, all attending the same evening course, were in full-time work; four as factory workers and one as a kitchen porter.

Three learners had worked in this country but were not in work at the time of interview. One of these had been made redundant as a dental technician after having worked for 17 years and was now unemployed. Two had retired, one on medical grounds and a third because he was over 65.

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13 *The Settlement of Refugees in Britain* Home Office Research Study 141 (1995) p 21.
14 *The Employment & Training of Skilled and Qualified Refugees Peabody Trust* (1999) p 9.

4.6   Job seeking skills

Those whose language skills were more advanced were asked whether they had applied for jobs and how they had gone about it. All saw getting a job as problematic. Only a minority had applied for jobs but had given up when they had not been invited for a job interview. They appeared not aware that their experience in their own country may not match the UK perspective on job search and selling one's skills to an employer.

There is no doubt that second language speakers find it more difficult to find work than native English speakers. For example, the presentation of their application or behaviour in a job interview may not meet the expectations of the employer. That is why second language speakers need specific help and information on job search. They need to know exactly how the UK labour market works and to reflect on how it differs from their own country. They may also face an additional problem in that the employer may not recognise the value of foreign qualifications and experience. The project worker at CETS made an interesting point. She felt that people should be able to explain how their skills, qualifications and experience fitted into the UK framework.

4.7   English language skills

4.7.1   Knowledge of English before arrival in Great Britain

As far as we know, there is no information available on the English language skills learnt prior to arrival in Great Britain. That is why this sample of learners was asked about their previous experience of learning English. Their response was surprising.

4.7.2   Time spent learning English in own country
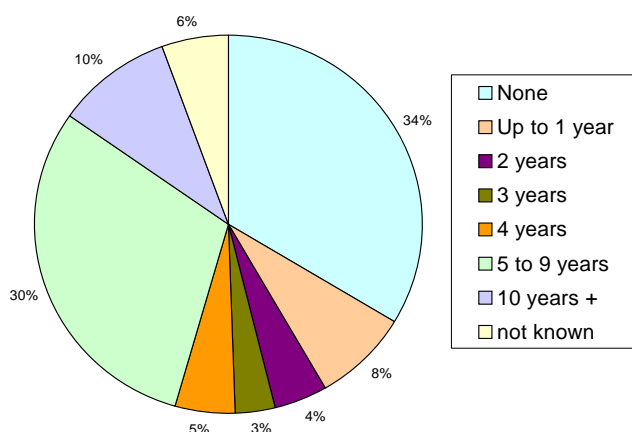
The response to the question on learning English was that:

♦   **60% of the respondents had learnt English prior to arrival in the United Kingdom; and 40% of the total had been learning English for 5 years or more.**
♦   The time spent learning English ranged from 6 months to 18 years.
♦   The most common time spent learning English was 3-4 hours per week.

This is an interesting finding because it challenges the idea that most people who settle in Great Britain do not have any knowledge of English. If it is indicative of second language speakers' command of English as a whole, it has major implications for language teaching:

♦ if people have learnt English prior to arrival, they can be assumed to be literate in the Roman alphabet even if their own script is different
♦ the teaching profession should be aware that people may already have passive, if not active, knowledge of English and that 'brush-up' English is more relevant than starting from scratch

4.7.3   The time spent learning English in UK
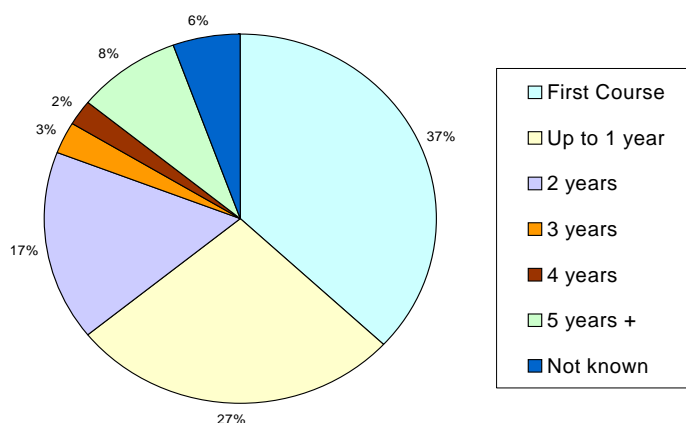
66 (or 37%) of the learners stated that their present course was the first English course taken in this country.

4.8   Language as a barrier to the labour market

All but a handful of the 178 learners interviewed stated that they saw **language as the major barrier to entry to the labour market.** They were aware that their level of English was too low to get a job and were pessimistic about their chances of finding employment without further improvement. Nevertheless, they were on the whole well motivated to improve their language and also their occupational skills, if necessary. Secondly, as section 4.3 shows, many were well-educated and already had valuable skills which should enable them to find employment.

If people lack the English language skills to access the labour market, **it makes economic sense to teach them English**, especially if they have work skills which are transferable to the UK environment.

4.9 The rating of language performance

There is tremendous variation in people's ability to communicate in English: many have learnt the language before arriving here (see section 4.7.1); others speak no English at all. Some learn to communicate fluently; others have great problems learning English and will not be independent users without substantial help.

When we assess the learner's language skills we need to consider the four skills of Speaking, Listening, Reading and Writing. These can be separated as shown in the table below:

	Productive skills	**Receptive skills**
Oral skills	Speaking	Listening
Written skills	Writing	Reading

While the learners were interviewed for this study, they also had their spoken English assessed. Some contributed more during the interviews than others, so the ratings given should be taken as indicative rather than absolute. Nevertheless, on the occasions where it was possible to check them with teaching staff, the ratings were approved.

The learners' performance was measured against the National Language Standards which are published by the Languages NTO. These follow the NVQ framework and accredit performance from level 1 where the learner has very limited English and can only manage communication in predictable circumstances to level 5 when the learner has the equivalent skills to a native (educated) speaker of English.[15] Please note that it is not common for second language speakers to reach level 5 in another language.

The learners' spoken English was rated against the National Language Standards as follows:

Level	Number	%
below 1	15	8%
1	53	30%
2	49	28%
3	53	30%
4	8	4%
5	0	0%
Total	**178**	**100**

The following points need to be made here:

♦ Since people's productive skills will be less developed than their receptive skills, we can safely assume that their listening skills would be rated higher than their spoken English.

♦ Nearly all learners who participated in general English language classes were rated as at or below level 2.

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15 For a description of the performance at the five NVQ levels, see Appendix 5. For a comparison of the NVQ National Language Standards and other common forms of ESOL accreditation, including a tentative mapping of the Adult Basic Skills Standards, see Appendix 6.

- Those who achieved at level 3 or 4 were found on programmes which were designed to help people into work. Interestingly those who achieved this higher level had been here for over 10 years or had even been born in this country. Nonetheless, they still had sufficient interference from their first language to be classified at level 3 or 4.

- Since higher level language courses and job preparation programmes were by no means common and had to be sought out specifically, the sample of courses is not representative of provision nationally. In a more representative sample the number of low general ESOL courses would dominate even more.

4.10   The learners' motivation to learn English

The 178 learners provided information on the reasons why they were learning English[16]:

- 71% were learning English in order to find work
- 19% thought that better English would improve their job prospects
- 44% wanted to improve their English so that they could study in further or higher education
- 40% of the students were learning English to communicate with others: '*If you live in England, you must speak English*'

Work and study were clearly the main reasons to learn English.[17] It was interesting, however, that those with limited English (mainly those who had been here for less than two years) wanted to learn English to make themselves understood. On the other hand, people with NVQ level 2 or higher wanted English for work and study. Last, 4% of the responses came from people who wanted to help their children with their homework. There were some wry smiles from other participants, however, when this issue came up, with people saying: '*We do not help our kids, they help us!*'

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16 Please note that the number of answers outnumbers the number of students interviewed because many people gave more than one reason for wanting to learn English.

17 This compares to a 1989 study in which 57% cited access to employment and 54% for promotion prospects as the dominant reason for learning English. *A Nation's Neglect*, ALBSU (1989) p 2.

5 THE EMPLOYERS' PERSPECTIVE

A variety of employers was interviewed for this section of the report ranging from banks, a hospital, a bus company and a recruitment agency.[18] Their comments covered the following four main areas:

1. English language skills
2. Recruitment
3. Qualifications and experience
4. Developing skills at work

5.1 English language skills

The employers interviewed for this study expected fluent communication skills for all jobs apart from low skilled jobs such as cleaning, driving buses and kitchen portering. It was vital that employees were able to communicate well with customers and colleagues. Some quotes from employers who attended the City Parochial Foundation's Employability event for refugees with professional qualifications: '*The language issue is very clear to us as employers: many people were not fluent in their verbal or written skills. While we could cope with a lower level of written skills –after all some English people cannot write very well either- our staff must be able to speak English fluently.*' and: '*Some of the people we saw had a lot of work to do to improve their language and communication skills'.*[19] Interestingly, one of the refugee organisations interviewed had also experienced tension between the desire to appoint refugees as employees and the need to employ people with sufficient English language skills.

Certainly, the employers were confused about language achievement: *"We do not have a system for measuring people's competence in reading, writing and speaking English. There are too many different qualifications and certificates".* The choice of the NVQ National Language standards to assess people's language skills for this study has in part been inspired by the fact that most employers are familiar with the NVQ scale of performance from level 1 to 5 and will be able to understand the benchmarking which underpin it.[20]

So what level of language skills should second language speakers be expected to have to find employment? Even though all jobs have their own communication skills requirements, it is possible to benchmark roughly the minimum level of language competence required: communication at NVQ level 3 should be considered the absolute minimum for most jobs or to study for a mainstream qualification. Jobs with a high communication content and use of formal language would be pitched at level 4 or level 5, the equivalent of an educated native English speaker. For example, the refugees who attended the City Parochial Foundation's Employability event would be expected to communicate at NVQ level 4 or 5 language because the professional, business and technical jobs they were looking for demand high level language skills.

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18 About half the employers consulted formed part of the Employability Forum, which was set up by the City Parochial Foundation and its partners in 1998. You will find a description of its activities in section 5.2.4.
19 See also *Creating the Conditions for Refugees to find Work* by mbA (1999) which echoes the same view: 'Employers cite spoken and written English, numeracy and an ability to communicate with customers and staff as necessary for any refugee looking for work.' p 6.
20 For a description of the five language levels, see Appendix 5.

A second consideration also deserves attention here: it appears that employers have a much higher expectation of the language required to function in the work place than the education and training system allows. As we shall see, English language tuition concentrates very largely on low level provision and English language teachers consider people to be job ready when employers (and vocational tutors) do not. The most obvious explanation of the tolerance of language teachers is that they are exposed to English language learners on a daily basis and that they get used to the English produced by their students.

There appeared to be little awareness of the difference in the teachers' and employers' perceptions, apart from three teachers and two managers working for a large financial institution and a bus company. One of the teachers said: '*There is a significant gap between what the students are learning here and what [language skill] is required in the job market*'; and a manager: '*The teaching which is available for ESOL speakers is not appropriate for qualified professionals"*. The second manager, himself the son of second language speakers, was acutely aware of the difficulties which second language speakers face. He felt that our current system was nowhere sufficient to make it possible for people to get into work.

The first manager felt strongly that people needed to learn language for work and that they should have the opportunity to learn English as a priority. For example, so many jobs in financial services were now telephone-based. There were recruitment tests on the market which measured people's performance on the telephone. This meant that people had to listen to a tape, make judgements and reply to questions. Their voice quality, expression, speed and empathy were all measured. This test could be used both as a training tool for language teachers to make them aware of what employers look for and to help second language speakers prepare for the language requirements at work.

There were two sectors where communication skills were rated differently: bus companies and the National Health Service. Bus drivers only needed limited English to deal with tickets and passengers' enquiries and to complete an accident report form. The hospital had difficulty in recruiting staff and many of its ancillary and nursing staff came from minority language groups. This had resulted at times in problems with communication with colleagues and patients.

5.2   Recruitment

5.2.1   Job Applications
Employers involved with the Employability Forum wondered if people had had sufficient advice on how to complete application forms and produce CVs. Their presentation, contents and use of English could definitely be improved. Hand-written applications had an added disadvantage in that people's handwriting might be very different and hence difficult to read.

5.2.2   Qualifications and work experience
Employers used the written application to establish if the applicant had the necessary qualifications and skills to do the job. The difficulty with people with overseas qualifications was that it was often impossible to establish their equivalent to UK qualifications or in how far people were familiar with UK practice. Secondly, people might present academic qualifications when practical experience and a track record were required. If applicants were unable to present appropriate qualifications, for example, having passed the Association of Accounting Technicians' or Association of Chartered and Certified Accountants' exams, they might not match the knowledge and skills requirements for the job.

Employers wondered if second language speakers had received sensible advice on how to get into employment. Some had been enticed into academic study in the UK when that was not an appropriate route into work. Employers were also concerned whether people's expectations were realistic: *'Many people are looking for senior roles in our organisation but you need sophisticated knowledge of legislation, banking regulations and must be able to orientate yourself quickly. They may simply not have the right combination of skills and knowledge.'*

5.2.3 References

The recruitment agency identified a specific problem with refugees who did not have references: *"We cannot put people forward to clients without references. We understand how difficult this must be for many refugees but employment agencies have to do this to protect themselves"*. Temping and work placements may be the solution to this problem.

5.2.4 Job interviews

Several employers commented that there were two main obstacles to second language speakers finding employment: their low level English language skills and their lack of ability to sell themselves: *"They do not seem to understand how the job market works in the UK. We are looking at a competitive market where people are expected to push themselves forward. In some cultures this idea of selling yourself is frowned upon"*. It is true that each country and culture has its own concept of presentation skills at job interview and that, if these are very different from the UK culture, people would either over- or undersell themselves. For example, they might find it unseemly to boast of their own capabilities. Secondly, the employers had observed that many people saw no need to sell themselves because their qualifications and experience should be sufficient to be recruited. As a result, the refugees did not create the right impression. One employer stated of the second language speakers she saw: *'No, they would not convince me to employ them. They were not dynamic enough at interview. You have got to give it everything you've got. The question is whether they know what to do [during the interview] and whether they get sufficient advice.'*

A recruitment consultant, himself a member of an ethnic minority, agreed with this assessment. The second language speakers he saw lacked the confidence which recruitment consultants and employers look for. His advice was that people had to adapt to the UK labour market: *'Try temping to build up experience and a track record.'* He would place people who were confident and quick learners. He might let an employer know that it might take a day for someone to settle in but that in his opinion it was OK to give the person a chance.

It appears from the employers' comments that people need better language and communication/ presentation skills as well an understanding of UK practice in recruitment. Yet the situation is by no means hopeless: *'In a tight labour market employers are encouraged to look for different sources of labour and many of the people we saw had good skills'*.

Good Practice: Getting Professionally Qualified Refugees into Work

The Employability Forum was set up by the City Parochial Foundation and its partners in 1998 and has set itself the task of promoting links between refugees and the world of work. Employers have been central to the consultation process on how to recruit, select and train refugees. This has resulted in an action plan to help refugees in a practical sense. Most employers identified the need for:

♦   better English language skills, both oral and written
♦   presentation skills at interview
♦   understanding the concept of selling yourself to a UK employer
♦   presentation of CVs

The forum and employers has also started to explore how to:

♦   get access to clearer information on Home Office rules on permission to work
♦   give people an understanding of how the labour market operates
♦   create placements
♦   pilot programmes for specific occupational areas

In November 1999 over 200 qualified refugees were invited to an Employability event to meet potential employers. This event was also attended by Margaret Hodge, Under-Secretary of State for Employment.

The Forum has recently decided to help professionally qualified refugees with their English, advice on the UK labour market and feedback on their presentation skills. The first programme, targeted at people who wish to work in finance, is now being delivered and employers and recruitment consultants have been present to give advice. The forum hopes that at the end of the process it will be able to confirm refugees' credentials in terms of their professional and language skills, residence status and permission to work and that they can supply this information to prospective employers.

5.3   Developing language and other skills once in work

Although this study did not set out to investigate whether people managed to find work and what happened to them once they found a job, the employers interviewed confirmed that the number of second language speakers who entered the labour market was very low. They also commented that second language speakers would only succeed if they had good English language skills.

The hospital which contributed to this study was an exception: 55% of staff came from black ethnic minorities and second language speakers were heavily represented among support staff as cleaners, pot-washers, kitchen porters etc. Many spoke little English and some none at all. In some areas in the hospital so many second language speakers were employed that it was the norm for people to talk in their own language. People were not likely to attend an induction if they could not speak English and missed out on information on health & safety. There was evidence that a lack of understanding of English had contributed to health & safety infringements.

Secondly, some people were undoubtedly overqualified for the job, for example there were people in the kitchens with Masters degrees. Thirdly, the difference in culture also played a part. For example, people might click their fingers to attract someone's attention but this was not acceptable in a UK environment. Or nurses might deal with patients in a more formal and distant way than would be the norm in here. Even the sense of personal space may be different and may cause unease among patients. There was a strong feeling that in many cases people from other cultures were not aware of the impact of their behaviour and the hospital had interpersonal and cultural training high on the agenda.

When asked about possibilities for promotion, the hospital manager replied: '*People at the bottom cannot get out of the rut because their lack of English means that they have no access to learning'. Many see getting qualifications as the way out but actually it is their English that is holding them back'*.

5.4 Race discrimination and permission to work
There are two further aspects which can hinder the employment of second language speakers and over which they have no control.

5.4.1 *Race discrimination in the work place*
Although this study was not intended to consider the impact of racism on recruitment and employment, it is worth recording here how the learners, their teachers and the employers viewed the impact of racial discrimination.

The sample of learners
Second language speakers mentioned discrimination surprisingly rarely as a factor which hindered their chances of getting into work. This may have been because 75% of the learners interviewed had not yet tried to find employment. However, another recent study comes to a similar conclusion: 11% of unemployed respondents mentioned discrimination as a barrier.[21]

The teachers and their managers
About half of the ESOL teachers and their managers took the same view: discrimination was a factor but it was not the most dominant in stopping people getting into work. A lack of English language skills was rated as much more significant. The other half held the view that the impact of racial discrimination was a well-recognised factor in the employment market and that employers might use a lack of English as a pretext for not giving people the job when in fact racism was the real reason.

The employers
Many of the employers interviewed were positively minded to second language speakers and refugees in particular. They acknowledged the existence of racism but stated that many employers monitored ethnic diversity and aimed to promote ethnic participation in the workforce. Companies now sent strong messages to their staff that discrimination was not acceptable. One commented: '*Organisations and business try to be decent and feel insulted and patronised by a blanket accusation of racism.'*

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21 *The Employment & Training of Skilled and Qualified Refugees*, Peabody Trust (1999) p 11.

The recruitment consultant mentioned earlier - a member of an ethnic minority himself - made the point that while there was prejudice against people from a different race he did not consider it to be a massive hurdle. *'People are willing to accept you as long as you act in an English way and have the capabilities'.*

We should add that the LFS statistics confirm discrimination in the labour market against people who are not white: it shows unemployment rates which are twice as high for black minorities as for white people. At the same time it is difficult to identify in how far a lack of English language skills, cultural behaviour or race are to blame. Now that the children and grandchildren of ethnic minorities are reaching the labour market, it is time to review in how far people's racial characteristics stop them from getting jobs; and in how far cultural behaviour and the inability to speak English play a part.

5.4.2 Permission to work

Although the learners did not give direct evidence that they had been affected by the need to present employers with documentation on permission to work, this issue was raised by Refugee Council staff and highlighted in the mbA repor*t Creating the Conditions for Refugees to find Work*.[22] There was concern that the paperwork was confusing, came in many guises and could deter an employer from taking on an otherwise suitable candidate.

This view was backed up by employers who cited an added complication: recruitment was process driven with tight deadlines to fill job vacancies. There was no room for delay. The employers proposed that they should have easy access to advice on permission to work. This could be done by opening a helpline and by distributing information which was easy to understand. Otherwise employers might not be able to consider candidates from other countries.

5.5 Job search skills

The interviews with the learners and discussions with people attending Employability events showed that second language speakers needed better advice on how to find a job. This should include not just standard job search techniques but also job preparation aimed specifically at people who have a different concept of job hunting, qualifications and presentation skills.

Organisations which prepare people for work must provide:

- **job search training which makes explicit the process of job search in the UK and which makes people aware that job search in their own country is not necessarily the same as in the UK**
- **sufficient practice for people whose first language is not English to really understand what is required in the UK labour market**

Language teachers should be given the opportunity to explore what standards of English employers look for through teacher placements in the work place. And they must incorporate this knowledge into their teaching.

The Home Office should simplify documentation on permission to work.

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22 <u>Creating the Conditions for Refugees to find Work</u> mbA (1999) p 20.

6 DATA ON EMPLOYMENT, UNEMPLOYMENT AND DEPRIVATION

Unfortunately **there is an almost complete lack of information on the employment of people with low level English skills.** There are data on ethnic minorities from the New Commonwealth but as we have seen these do not provide reliable indicators of the ability to communicate in English. For example, Black Labour Market News reports percentages of unemployment derived from the Labour Force Survey in 1998 of 5% for whites; 9% for Indians; and 22% for Pakistanis/Bangladeshis.[23] But it is impossible to know in how far a lack of English stops them from finding work.

Secondly, there are small studies on refugees and asylum seekers carried out by local refugee community organisations. You will find below a summary of data derived from these:

1. The Peabody Trust study gives unemployment figures of 68% for asylum seekers; and 47% for those with refugee status or exceptional leave to remain. Unemployment does appear to decrease over time: 51% of those who had been here 5-8 years were unemployed. For those who had been in this country for 8 years or more, it was 22%.[24]
2. The Home Office study of 1995 found an unemployment rate of 57% for refugees. This was 'considerably above the national rate of 8%, and even well above the rate of 24% for ethnic minorities living in Inner London.' The study found that 'only just over a quarter (27%) were employed at the time of the survey'.[25]
3. The Africa Educational Trust estimated that the level of unemployment varied from 75% to 95% of the refugee population.[26]
4. The Training and Employment Section at the Refugee Council estimated that unemployment among refugee groups varied from 50% to 90%.
5. A research study on the refugee communities in Greenwich shows that the situation has not changed since this study was carried out in 1992. It states "with average levels of unemployment in excess of 65% and in some cases as high as 90%, these figures clearly show that refugees are even more relatively disadvantaged than other minority ethnic groups."[27]

6.1 Under-employment

There is anecdotal evidence that, if people are in work, they are employed at a level below their qualifications and experience. The most recent indication of under-employment is found in a study by the Africa Educational Trust which states that formal jobs were rare; and that many people were in 'informal jobs such as childminding, cleaning working for voluntary organisations, mini-cabbing and catering'.[28] Our study found a similar profile: only 10 % of the sample of learners interviewed were employed; and all of them were working as unskilled labour (see also section 4.5.)

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23 *The Black Labour Market News* (second quarter, 1998) pp 5-7.
24 *The Employment and Training of Skilled and Qualified Refugees* Peabody Trust (1999) p 11.
25 *The Settlement of Refugees in Britain* Home Office Research Study 141 (1995) people 29-30.
26 *Refugee Education, Training and Employment in Inner London* Africa Educational Trust (1998) p 29.
27 *Refugees and the Greenwich Labour Market*, Greg Clark (1992) p 13.
28 *Refugee Education, Training and Employment in Inner London* Africa Educational Trust (1998) Appendix 1.

6.2   Deprivation

There is much anecdotal evidence of poverty and deprivation among people whose first language is not English. But the only study to analyse the poverty suffered by language minorities is that by Richard Berthaud. He identified some ethnic minority groups which contain high percentages of second language speakers and concluded that four times as many Pakistani and Bangladeshi; and twice as many African households as white households were poor.[29]

> **The Employment Service should collect data on second language speakers and the impact of a lack of English on people's unemployment.**
>
> **The Labour Force Survey should collect data on people who face unemployment because English is not their first language.**

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29 *The Incomes of Ethnic Minorities* Richard Berthaud (1998) p 43.

PART II
PROVISION FOR PEOPLE WHOSE FIRST LANGUAGE IS NOT ENGLISH

The second part of this study consists of data on national provision for second language speakers as well as data on the provision found in the five sample areas. This includes advice & guidance, language teaching and learning as well as access to mainstream education and training.

7 DATA ON PARTICIPATION IN EDUCATION AND TRAINING

7.1 The total number of second language speakers in education and training

The total number of people identified on FEFC, TEC and New Deal funded courses was:

Funding organisation	Total	Period[30]	Data found in Section
FEFC	up to 100,000	1997/98	7.2
TEC	3,924	1998/99	7.3
New Deal	1,010	Jan 1998- Oct 99	7.4
Total	up to 104,934		

Apart from the Further Education Funding Council (FEFC) which provides the most complete set of data on second language speakers' participation, there is a lack of information on the demand for and participation in education and training. This is particularly true for TEC and ES-funded programmes. In addition, studies on the uptake of education or training, for example New Deal or adult training, routinely overlook the second language aspect. Even studies on ethnic minorities are found to concentrate on race but not language. Yet a lack of English language skills must rate on a par with race discrimination as a barrier to access.

7.2 Data collected by FEFC

The FEFC's analysis for 1997/98 shows that:

1.   A total of 60,911 students participated in ESOL courses which led to a qualification[31]:
   - 41,691 students took ESOL classes as a discrete learning goal[32;] 81% of these were part-time students

   - 19,220 studied ESOL as part of a broader programme of study eg ESOL and IT, or other qualifications such as A' levels or GNVQs.

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30 Please note that the most recent (or only) data available are quoted here.
31 This information is derived from FEFC data on individualised student records (ISR) for 1997-98. The figures are for all students in FE colleges, council funded students as well as students paid for through other funding. Please note that the latter category of funding makes up a small proportion of funded places.
32 A course with a 'ESOL as a discrete learning goal' concentrates solely on learning English; please note that students who are unemployed are entitled to a maximum of 16 hours learning a week under DSS rules.

2.   There are two more types of provision for which FEFC is not yet able to provide data:

- Up to 40,000 second language speakers were estimated to have been registered under the generic code category in programme 10 (basic education).[33] This covers mainly people with very low level English language skills and who did not take a qualification.

- Students who embark on a mainstream qualification are entitled to access additional learning support. However, we do not know how many second language speakers received language support because FEFC does not yet provide figures by area of support to people with learning difficulties and disabilities, literacy, numeracy and ESOL needs. In any case the total uptake of additional learning support has been low, for example in 1996 3% of total units were claimed for additional learning support.[34]

The FE sector provided language provision for up to 100,000 people in 1997-98.

7.2.1   FEFC data on qualifications, levels of achievement and ethnicity

FEFC also has information on qualifications, levels of achievement and ethnic background[35].

1.   Breakdown of qualifications achieved by students studying ESOL as part of a broader programme of studies

Qualification category	Council funded	Other funded	Total number studying ESOL as part of broader programme	%
A/AS level	529	77	606	3.15%
GCSE	439	40	479	2.49%
GNVQ precursor	768	161	929	4.83%
GNVQ	618	27	645	3.36%
NVQ	412	21	433	2.25%
Access to HE	369	27	396	2.06%
HNC/HND	16	26	42	0.22%
OCN	876	7	883	4.59%
Additional NVQ/GNVQ	5	1	6	0.03%
Other	13968	833	14801	77.01%
Total	18000	1220	19220	100.00%

These figures show that only 23% of the students achieved A levels, GCEs or (G)NVQs. The vast majority (77%) achieved qualifications classified as 'Other'.[36]

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33 Estimate provided by FEFC statistical support. Since FEFC now requests information, in future information will be available by area of study, such as ESOL, literacy and numeracy.
34 *Evaluation of the Additional Support Mechanism* Sally Faraday et al FEDA/FEFC (unpublished 1999) p 5.
35 Please note that the data produced here only relate to ESOL as a discrete learning goal and as part of a broader programme of study.
36 They include a host of non-NVQ qualifications such as those awarded by City and Guilds and RSA (eg CLAIT).

Analysis of the same data set by NVQ level

Level	Council funded	Other funded	Total	%
1	8588	205	8793	45.75%
2	4783	529	5312	27.64%
3	2561	359	2920	15.19%
4,5 or H	62	35	97	0.50%
Not known	2006	92	2098	10.92%
Total	18000	1220	19220	100.00%

This table shows that almost three-quarters (73.39%) of the students qualified at NVQ levels 1 or 2. This is at a level where the chances of finding employment are low. These achievements should also be seen in the context of the National Learning Targets for England for 2002: 85% of 19-year-olds should have a level 2 qualification; and 60% of 21 year-olds and 50% of economically active adults a level 3 qualification.[37] It is clear that this group scores well below the desired targets.

2.   Analysis of the students' ethnicity:

Ethnicity	Discrete ESOL	ESOL as part of broader programme
Bangladeshi	4.79%	3.73%
Black African	9.56%	11.18%
Black Caribbean	0.41%	1.12%
Black Other	0.81%	1.03%
Chinese	4.75%	4.56%
Indian	7.40%	6.48%
Pakistani	10.16%	10.62%
White	25.55%	31.04%
Other Asian	9.19%	8.51%
Other	14.76%	12.35%
Not known/provided	12.63%	9.39%

These figures show that only 27% of students on both programmes are from the Home Office New Commonwealth categories. This reinforces the notion that this categorisation is out of date.

3.   The gender balance

Women (63%) outnumbered men (37%) substantially, both on discrete ESOL courses and on broader programmes of study. This imbalance of gender causes concern even if it follows a general trend in Further Education where women outnumber men by 56% to 44%. We do not know the reasons for the male under-representation. As we shall see, it is likely that the type of courses, delivery methods and topics appeal more to women than to men.

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37 Level 2 =5 GCSEs at Grades A-C; NVQ2; or intermediate GNVQ. Level 3 =2 A levels; NVQ3; or advanced GNVQ.

7.3   Data collected on TEC funded provision

Unfortunately it is not possible to assess how many second language speakers access the adult training programme Work Based Learning for Adults because people who need English and Welsh language training are counted under the same heading. The annual percentages for people who had an ESOL or WESOL need and started training were:

ESOL starts on Work Based Learning for Adults	
1995-96	2%
1996-97	3%
1997-98	3%
1998-99	4%

Taking the total number of starts (98,100) for 1998-99, 4% **or 3,924 second language speakers started training in that year**. While it is not possible to distinguish between those who went on Pre-Vocational/Basic Employability Training and those on mainstream training, experience with individual TECs shows that the vast majority of second language speakers spend their time on PV/BET. Very few manage to transfer onto mainstream occupational training or jobs.

7.4   Data collected on New Deal

The data available on New Deal show that from January 1998 to the end of October 1999 379,500 18-24 year-olds started on New Deal. Of these **1,010 stated a need for English (or Welsh or Gaelic) as a second language** as their reason for early entry. The only other available evidence concerns ethnic minority participation. Although this is not reliable indicator of second language speakers needs, it is quoted here in the absence of any other data:

New Deal numbers leaving Gateway by destination Jan 1998-Oct 1999		
Employer	2,000	4.7%
Education & training	9,500	22.2%
Voluntary sector	3,500	8.2%
Environmental taskforce	1,100	2.6%
Transfer to other benefits	2,400	5.6%
Other	4,500	10.5%
Not known	9,800	22.9%
Total	42,800	100%

Please note that only 4.7% of ethnic minorities went onto the employment option.

Local Learning Skills Councils should:

♦   **establish a baseline of language communities in their catchment area**

♦   **ask providers of education and training to collect annual data on:**

- **their learners' first language by programme area and gender**
- **the need for additional learning support on mainstream courses**

♦   **monitor provision against the language community baseline and, if necessary, set targets for providers**

Studies on ethnic minorities should take into account race, language and culture as factors which have an impact on unemployment.

8 PROVISION FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS FOUND IN THE FIVE SAMPLE AREAS

8.1 An overview of providers

You will find below an overview of the various organisations involved with delivery to English language learners:

♦ Adult education colleges which deliver discrete English language teaching to people over 19

♦ Further education colleges which deliver discrete English language teaching, English as part of a wider programme, and additional learning support to 16-19 year-olds and adults

♦ The Careers Service which advises mainly 13-20 year-olds (with special focus on 16-17) on further study and training options as well as on job search

♦ ES personal advisers who guide unemployed people on New Deal options; and claimant advisers who guide people on job vacancies and training options

♦ TEC providers who deliver training to young people and adults

♦ New Deal providers which deliver the Gateway, the four options and Follow-Through

♦ Voluntary sector projects, including provision run by ethnic minority/refugee organisations

As we shall see, these organisations tend to work in isolation and would benefit from closer co-operation and referral.

9   ADVICE AND GUIDANCE

When second language speakers first arrive at an organisation to enquire about learning opportunities, they are routinely referred for assessment of their language skills, followed by referral to language classes. While this approach is not wrong in itself, several respondents to this research saw it as incomplete. One manager said that, regardless of their other skills, individuals are treated as '*an ESOL person*'. They might be professionals or skilled workers but this was not taken into account.

This approach may be unintentional but it does mean that second language speakers are screened out of mainstream courses simply because English is not their mother-tongue. Their ability to handle English should definitely be a factor in deciding on the right course. But second language speakers also need access to careers advice; information on the equivalence of their qualifications; and on any training or retraining options including language support.

9.1   Initial screening and diagnostic assessment of language skills

There are essentially two sources of screening and assessment materials. The first consists of BSA tests which are used by some colleges and are compulsory for TEC-funded courses. With one or two exceptions, the respondents interviewed did not see these tests as relevant for two reasons: they were designed for native English speakers who have difficulties with reading and writing; and not for people who are trying to learn English. Secondly, the BSA tests do not assess spoken English or free writing. There was an overwhelming view that the BSA tests did not give meaningful results on the language performance of second language speakers.

The second type of assessments had been designed in-house by individual organisations. The procedure consisted of an oral interview, in most cases followed by a simple, generic test for reading and writing. Respondents regretted the fact that there was no national framework for language assessment. This made it difficult to be sure of levels of attainment. It also made it impossible to compare assessment procedures across different institutions.

Language testing customised to specific occupational or educational mainstream courses was rare. Yet there were some examples of good practice: two small training providers, Training for Employment and Making Training Work, had developed assessments which were subject-specific and had been found to be reliable predictors of success on mainstream courses. You will find these projects described in sections 10.4 and 6.

Last, the language assessors clearly saw the tests as of value to their organisation rather than to the learner. This was confirmed by the sample of learners: few reported that they had received feedback on their performance. Neither were they aware that i**t takes a lot of time and effort to learn another language.** Like many of their peers, they were unprepared for the effort it takes to learn English and often blamed themselves for their lack of progress. As a consequence, many give up learning altogether. That is why it is important to give people an indication of the time it may take to learn English.

Good practice: The Birmingham Toolkit for English Assessment

In 1995 Birmingham & Solihull TEC did a study on ESL provision which found that it was of variable quality and that English language teaching was delivered in isolation from mainstream provision. Several organisations such as Birmingham TEC, Sixth Form and Further Education Colleges and Birmingham City Council Departments formed the ESOL partnership to address issues such as initial language assessment, access to advice and guidance and the quality of teaching. Project development is funded through the Birmingham Core Skills Development Partnership which accesses SRB funding.

Standardised initial assessment was tackled first because it would not only make assessment more reliable, it would also allow for more consistent referral and placement on courses. The result is the Toolkit for English Assessment. It contains assessment activities for the four skills of Speaking, Listening, Reading and Writing and across six levels of competence: Beginner, Foundation, Intermediate, Advanced, Proficient and Specialist. These are matched with Birmingham City's own English language standards; the ESU Framework; and the NVQ Language Units. Guidance notes and mark sheets are also provided. The Toolkit was piloted in various institutions and staff had training in the use of the pack. The Toolkit is now in use across the City of Birmingham and there are plans to develop new assessment activities to match the descriptors.

For information on the Toolkit please contact Simon Griffiths at Birmingham & Solihull TEC on 0121-335-4885.

9.2 Careers advice

Few of the learners who participated in this study had had their educational background or occupational skills reviewed. They did not know that there were (limited) opportunities to equate their qualifications to the UK framework and assumed that they would need to qualify for a second time. Sadly, many language tutors did not know about initiatives such as NARIC either.

The careers advisers interviewed acknowledged that, like other clients, second language speakers needed independent advice and clear information on career paths. They were asked in how far language skills played a part in careers advice. They replied that it was an essential component but that they did not have the tools for language assessment nor that it was their role to carry it out. Yet as one of them said: '*English is key to employment and without fluency we are unable to take advantage of people's talent and skills*'.

The careers advisers also pointed out that people needed advice on whether goals were realistic and whether they would take an inordinate number of years to achieve. This point was endorsed by the employers in chapter 5 and also by the interviewees in the Peabody Trust Study: 'Many people said that their expectations of finding work had been too high and the longer they had been here, the more likely they were to say it.[38]

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38 *The Employment & Training of Skilled and Qualified Refugees*, Peabody Trust (1999) p 10.

Different expectations of how to secure employment may also affect individuals. Recent arrivals, refugees as well as EU and New Commonwealth citizens, hold education in very high regard and expect to find jobs once qualified. They tend not to be aware that in the UK previous experience and fluency in English counts at least as heavily as qualifications. As a result, there is a danger that people (re-)enter education, qualify and are still unable to find a job.

9.2.1 *Community organisations and careers advice*

The learners interviewed for this survey were asked whether they had relied on their community organisations for advice on course provision or careers advice. Many learners expressed surprise to be asked this question. **104 (77%) of the 135 learners who responded had not made use of their community organisation at all.**[39] In particular they did not expect community organisations to advise on career options or even courses because they would not necessarily have this information to hand.

Careers advisers, advisers at Job Centres and the staff at one voluntary sector advice centre agreed with this view: ethnic minority organisations were not necessarily in the best position to provide advice and guidance. There was concern that minority groups often worked in isolation and that they lacked knowledge of British practice, major initiatives and local provision. The advice workers interviewed did not blame the ethnic minorities for this; rather there was a clear role for funding organisations to make sure that minority organisations were aware of UK practice and had links with other organisations.

9.3 The equivalence of overseas qualifications

The status of overseas qualifications is a difficult issue not only for overseas nationals but also for the bodies which award and control qualifications. There are two aspects which are often taken together: the equivalence of qualifications; and the need to make sure that people's English language skills enable them to practise safely. Since the level of English language skills required is not normally made clear, it can be difficult for second language speakers to know what they should be working towards. This also makes it difficult to know where language is used as a barrier to practice and where there is a legitimate concern over the person's lack of language skills.

The lack of transparency extends to the process of recognition. As the WUS/RETAS study commented: 'There is a bewildering array of procedures which might include one or more examinations or a period of further training or study or a time of supervised work experience or a combination of them all'.[40] However, there are four initiatives, two well-established, which are likely to have a positive impact on overseas qualifications:

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39 See section 13.1.1 for further discussion on the use of community organisations.
40 *The Refugee Professionals' Guide on Assessment and Recognition of Overseas Qualifications* Hernan Rosenkranz WUS/RETAS (1999) p 10.

1.   NARIC

NARIC (The National Academic Recognition Information Centre for the UK) is funded by the DfEE and offers advice & information on:

- the comparability of British and international academic qualifications (please note that NARIC does not provide assessment of non-academic qualifications)
- entering the labour market in the United Kingdom
- professional registration
- admission to undergraduate and postgraduate courses

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NARIC's information is updated three times a year and is available on the Internet, CD-ROM or by contacting NARIC direct.

Roughly half of the organisations interviewed knew about NARIC and had used its data to help students equate their qualifications; the other half did not, mostly adult education colleges.

2.   The EU framework of qualifications

The framework for the mutual recognition of EU qualifications was set up to enable EU residents to use their skills in other EU states.

3.   The Lisbon Convention

The 1997 Lisbon convention, sponsored by the Council of Europe and UNESCO, agreed to set up a framework for mutual recognition of academic qualifications. The convention makes an explicit reference to refugees and states that each party should 'develop procedures to assess fairly and expeditiously whether refugees, displaced persons and persons in a refugee-like situation fulfil the relevant requirements for accessing higher education, further higher education programmes or employment activities.[41]

4.   The European Framework for Higher Education

The United Kingdom and 28 other European countries have recently signed two declarations[42] which commit them to 'the creation of the European area of higher education as a key way to promote citizens' mobility and employability'.[43] Among the aims are the promotion of readily comparable degrees and credit-based higher education. In future it will be possible for those students and graduates with qualifications from eastern as well as western European countries to have their qualifications compared to degrees acquired in the UK. It may also be possible for students with degrees from outside Europe to have their degrees assessed through the same method.

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41 The Refugee Professionals' Guide on Assessment and Recognition of Overseas Qualifications Hernan Rosenkranz World University Service: RETAS 1999
42 The declarations were signed at the Sorbonne in 1998 and in Bologna in 1999.
43 The European Higher Education Area: Joint Declaration of the European Ministers of Education June 1999. *http://www.europedu.org*

Organisations which refer or place second language speakers on courses should assess occupational skills and experience as well as English language skills.

Awarding, examinations and professional bodies should review whether the criteria set for English language performance match the level of language required for the job.

All organisations advising second language speakers – such as FE and adult education colleges, Job Centres and New Deal providers - should have access to information on academic equivalence provided by NARIC.

The government should continue to promote the development of frameworks to equate British and foreign qualifications.

DfEE/Learning Skills Council should review as soon as possible the practice of using literacy standards and tests which were designed for native English speakers to measure second language speakers' performance.

10 ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROVISION IN THE FIVE SAMPLE AREAS

The provision found in the five sample areas consisted of four categories and covered a total of 37 courses.

Type of Provision	Provided by	Number of courses covered
Pure ESOL courses	Adult education colleges Further education colleges Basic Employability Training New Deal	22
English, IT and Maths courses	Further education colleges	5
Professional/Vocational courses with English support	Adult education Work based Training for Adults	4
Mainstream FE courses with and without English support	Further education colleges	6
Total		**37**

10.1 The number of contact hours per week
The table below shows the number of hours of English language learning quoted by the 145 learners who answered this question.

Hours	Number of learners	
2 hours	9	6%
8 hours	49	34%
10 hours	13	9%
12 hours	23	16%
14 hours	9	6%
15 hours	23	16%
16 hours	15	10%
20 hours	4	3%
Total	**145**	**100%**

Young people on FEFC-funded courses were attended between 14 and 20 hours a week while adults attended up to 12 hours. There were exceptions to this pattern, for example a smattering of young people was found on part-time adult courses. Some of the adults were aware of the difference in provision for young people and adults. For example, one group commented: "*If you are over 19, no one cares for you.*"

10.2   General ESOL classes

As the table in the previous section shows, this type of provision was by far the most commonly found. It was delivered by four types of providers: adult education colleges, further education colleges[44], and providers delivering Basic Employability Training and New Deal. Most of the general ESOL provision was part-time and aimed at adults. As the FEFC statistics for 1997/98 show, this is typical: 79% of the students taking ESOL as a discrete learning goal were 19 or older; and 81% were part-time students.

Although general ESOL courses outnumbered other types of provision by far, anecdotal evidence and the reporting of waiting lists indicated that there was not enough provision for general English classes. As one tutor said: "*If the students came on the first day of the course in September, they got in. If they came on the second day, the classes were full.*"

Attendance at general ESOL classes is usually open-ended and can range from a few weeks to many years. Our sample demonstrates this very well: 37% of the learners interviewed were on their first course; and 8% had been attending English classes for five years or longer.

It is hard to generalise about the content of general ESOL courses because each teacher will be in charge of the curriculum and style of delivery. But typically, learners in a beginners' class might learn to say: '*My name is ….; I live in …..* Higher level English classes might address English for shopping, going to the doctor, filling in forms etc. This type of provision is often referred to as 'survival English' because it aims to enable people to deal with their immediate needs. Our discussions with staff and the learners showed that this approach is common and confirmed that language learning linked to occupational skills or further study or training was not part of the curriculum. This is of course not to say that the content of general ESOL classes is wrong; it is just that it is one-sided. It may also explain why women outnumbered men in our survey by 60% to 40%. If the home-centred approach does not appeal to men, they may leave language classes even if they would benefit from learning English. This aspect of provision needs further study.

The learners attending general ESOL classes ranged from beginner to intermediate (or up to roughly NVQ level 2).[45] This is undoubtedly because people with no or low English language skills need to concentrate on basic English. But historically this type has been delivered without consideration to progression and the level of English required to move into mainstream education, training or jobs. This has created a **provision by-and-large without exit routes**. One of the respondents said: '*Second language speakers are being warehoused on ESOL courses year-in-year-out until they leave.*'

10.3   Intensive English, IT and maths for young people

Many further education colleges provide young people with FEFC-funded intensive provision consisting of between 14 and 16 hours a week. While previously the curriculum consisted solely of English language teaching, over the last few years it has been extended to include IT and/or maths. On the whole this is a positive development because it allows an opportunity to learn other skills as well as English. The problem is that by no means all learners need it.

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44 Please note that adult and further education relied very largely on FEFC and ESF funding and that LEA funding was non-existent or negligible. For further information on funding see section 14.
45 For information on the NVQ framework see section 4.9.

A number of young learners complained that they were expected to take maths as part of their English course and that it was at a much lower standard than they had achieved in their country of origin. It is true that many young people are ahead in terms of maths skills compared to their British peers.

The language performance of many students indicated that they were on the right courses because they needed intensive-time English language teaching. But there were a number of students who were operating at NVQ level 3 and for whom participation on a mainstream course would be appropriate especially if they had language support. The same pattern was found in an earlier study in South London where 'young second language speakers were using their time in further education to learn English without working to a vocational or educational qualification'.[46] Their language teachers agreed that some could move onto mainstream courses but said that it was difficult to organise a transfer because their colleagues teaching on subject specific courses would not welcome it.

10.4   Professional/vocational courses

There were four courses which were professional/vocational in nature and which were aimed exclusively at second language speakers. These were delivered by two training providers who between them delivered two care courses, an interpreting course and a course to help professionals orientate themselves on the labour market. The funding for these courses consisted of social service/TEC funding and FEFC/ESF funding respectively.

One of these courses, the Bridge to Work is run by CETS (Croydon Continuing Education and Training Service), the adult education provider in Croydon. It provides an interesting example of a new approach to orientation to employment.

Good Practice: The Bridge to Work

The Bridge to Work course runs for 10 weeks and is aimed at people who have advanced level skills in English and a professional/higher qualification gained in another country.

You will work with qualified careers advisers and language teachers to:

- Compare the equivalence of overseas qualifications with United Kingdom qualifications
- Learn how higher institutions may give recognition for evidence of prior learning
- Assess and recognise the skills you have learned which may allow you to find work
- Gain a recognised computer qualification using up to date software
- Use the internet for research on careers
- Learn how to contact professional organisations for advice on requalification
- Find out how the British workplace is different, through a one-week work placement.
- Write a CV and an application form that an employer will read
- Come to understand what is required of you in a UK job interview or the interview for a course
- Have support from a mentor while you look for a job.

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46 *A Programme for Action* South London Basic Skills Partnership/Philida Schellekens (1999) p 18.

The participants on the Bridge course were very positive: *'Bridge is better than other courses. It is more appropriate & practical'*. The careers adviser working with the students was also convinced of its usefulness: *'People lack an understanding of the system. They really do not know where to start and they can be given the wrong advice. For example, an Algerian who is a qualified lawyer in his country of origin was advised to do an access to law course but his real need was to do structural English'*. If you would like more information about the Bridge project, please contact Cheryl Dunn on 020-8656-6620.

A second example of good practice is found in the East End of London. It concerns a project where mainstream and language training have been integrated.

Good Practice: Delivering Care Training

Making Training Work delivers courses in ESOL, mainstream training, teacher training and interpreting. They also deliver training with other organisations such as the local authority's social services department. This department had expanded its in-house Care training to include second language speakers. The first course was popular with the trainees because it had good placements. However, once on the course, half the trainees were about to be told to leave because the placement providers were unhappy with the trainees' command of the English language. At this point the provider was brought in to help with the trainees' language needs.

This worked well and social services and Making Training Work decided to deliver the second course together. Both took part in the initial assessment: health leaflets and other materials were used to assess spoken and written language skills as well as vocabulary. The Care teacher interviewed the trainees to assess their attitude, empathy and knowledge of hygiene, as she would a native English speaker. Not all candidates were accepted, either because of their attitude to caring or because their language skills were too low. The latter were referred to language provision and were told that they were welcome to apply again.

The Care and language support tutor planned the course together and the language tutor based her teaching on activities, materials, handouts and leaflets which were relevant to the Care tutor's sessions. Their weekly time table was as follows: 15 hours work placement; 5 hours health & social care; and 5 hours language support.

Making Training Work decided against work placements in the trainees' own language community. In the first place, the NVQ is set in the UK context, which can be substantially different from childcare in other countries. Secondly, the course participants needed an English speaking environment to improve their English language skills. And last, being placed with a mainstream employer and having a reference would enhance the chance of subsequent employment.

The trainees made remarkable progress: at the start of the course most had reasonable speaking and listening skills but had difficulty with writing. Towards the end of the course students were able to write personal statements and edit their work. At the time of interview many were applying for jobs. The trainees felt that this was the first course which answered their language needs and held their interest.

10.5   Mainstream provision

A small number of second language speakers were found on mainstream provision but it took special efforts to find them. In the end, 14 learners were interviewed: eight on TEC-funded training and six on further education courses. They were studying on the following courses: GNVQ Foundation Business Studies, Diploma in Nursery Nursing, Care, IT, carpentry and BET/painting & decorating.

It transpired that of the 14 people who had been identified as being second language speakers, five were subsequently assessed as having sufficient language skills to operate independently and hence not needing language support. Secondly, seven of the 14 people interviewed had been born in this country and all acknowledged that they needed help with their English. This was understandable for the five who had lived in their parents' country of birth for a considerable time. But the other two people had been here all their lives and had obvious mother-tongue interference which made it difficult to understand them. This compares with a study carried out in Islington in 1992 which found that 39% of 16-23 year old Bangladeshis born in this country felt that they needed support with English if they were to find work.[47]

The young people who had moved between the United Kingdom and their parents' country of origin reflected on its impact. One said: '*I feel lost between two worlds*'. Another student commented: '*Pakistan is not like going home, it's going on holiday.*' Most of them felt that their first language was English, apart from one: '*I am really embarrassed about lack of English. I am no good for here, not for there, I am in the middle*'.

10.5.1 Mainstream provision without language support

Eight learners were on mainstream courses without language support but, since five had sufficient language skills, only three would have benefited from help with their language skills. When asked how they got on with their courses, the three learners said that they coped. They had sympathetic teachers, for example the teacher on the Nursery Nursing course was happy to explain the work in more detail and they got help from their peers. All had to work very hard but clearly found it worthwhile. They valued being with native English speakers: '*Contact with mixed groups is better: you learn so much!*'

10.5.2 Mainstream provision with language support

Six learners were on mainstream provision with language support. All valued their courses and saw two major advantages: they had access to a language support tutor. Secondly, they agreed with their peers on mainstream provision that being with native English speakers was in itself beneficial.

Two learners were on Basic Employability Training which prepared the trainees for Painting & Decorating so they have been included here. These trainees, whose English was very basic indeed, spent their time preparing for Wordpower Entry level and their tutors provided activities which related to their occupational skill area.

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47 *The Training and Social Needs of Bangladeshi Youth in Islington* R Waldinger Mainframe (1992).

Three others were studying for GNVQ Foundation Business Studies. They had 18 hours tuition a week, of which two were spent with their language support tutor. These students said that their mainstream tutor used a lot of terminology, for example 'sole trader' and 'VAT' without explaining what these meant. Their language support tutor helped them with new language as well as the structure of assignments. She also helped with study skills such as using reference materials, taking notes and using the internet. The students commented on their peers who also might benefit from language support: '*A lot of students do not attend. Some see it as not important. They think their English is better than it is.*'

The issue of language support was discussed with all tutors. Those in FE colleges were well aware of its existence and were in principle in favour of its delivery. Few colleges provided language support, however. This was partly because the mainstream tutors would have to be involved: '*Because of the number of hours tutors are required to teach each week, there is little goodwill so it is difficult to ask people to develop new initiatives*'. Secondly, people felt that they lacked the knowledge to deliver language support. As one of the tutors said: '*The colleges do not know how to handle this*'.

10.5.3 *The number of people accessing mainstream and vocational/professional courses*
Because a special effort was made to track down second language speakers on mainstream or professional/vocational courses, the number of people identified was higher than could be expected normally. Yet even considering the over-representation of this group, **the percentage of people on mainstream or professional/vocational courses was only 15% of the total sample. This figure should be set against 44% of the sample who were studying general English and who intended to undertake further study or training.**

10.6   Government-funded programmes: WBLA and New Deal
It proved difficult to locate training or New Deal providers who took second language speakers. Yet there is in principle no reason why training programmes should not be suitable for this target group. In fact, TEC programmes and the New Deal may provide people with their only opportunity to acquire and/or accredit skills[48]. Secondly, many second language speakers already have vocational skills and qualifications. But as this research project shows second language speakers' access to either programme is extremely low: only 13 were identified: two on BET; six on WBLA and five on New Deal.

Investigation of the content and level of these courses showed that they were similar to general ESOL courses delivered by educational institutions (see section 10.2) or that in fact trainees were on 'in-fill' on existing general ESOL courses. Discussions with staff showed that most people were taken on with such low level English that they could not possibly progress onto training or find employment given the time allowed on programme. As a result, providers were duplicating provision offered by the education colleges; and access to mainstream vocational training and employment was minimal.

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48 For those who are unfamiliar with TEC-funded programmes: WBLA provides occupational training and help with basic skills to long-term unemployed people over 25. WBLA includes BET which provides individually tailored help to unemployed adults at risk of social exclusion.

10.6.1 Work Based Learning for Adults

The sample of TECs and providers which participated in this survey confirmed that, apart from delivery by a small group of specialist providers, TEC funded programmes did not provide for second language speakers. Trainees who present themselves for training are routinely referred to ESOL classes and the few that go on training courses are expected to cope without language support. The lack of provision for second language speakers was also borne out by a NATECLA report of July 1999 which found no evidence of any TEC-funded programmes.

Since statistics on Pre-Vocational Training (PVT) and its successor Basic Employability Training (BET) are incorporated into Work-based Learning for Adults, it is not possible to identify participation or progression for either programme. However, anecdotal evidence and previous studies of individual TECs indicate that the vast majority of second language speakers were found on PV/BET ESOL programmes and that they did not progress to mainstream provision or find jobs.

One provider explained that her organisation used to deliver ESOL and vocational training. There was still a demand for it but the organisation could not afford to offer it anymore because of the short time scale allowed for training and the low funding base. Another issue was accreditation. When asked about the qualifications offered, she said: '*Wordpower and Numberpower are what we get paid most for, so that's what we deliver but it does not suit the client group very well*'.

10.6.2 TEC staff perspective

The TEC staff who were interviewed for this project varied from contract managers who had never considered second language speakers as a distinct group and those who had had extensive experience in managing provision. All agreed on two points: first, the emphasis in TECs had been on financial monitoring rather than on the quality of delivery. As one group said*: 'We have been counting beans rather than monitoring quality*.' Secondly, those interviewed would all welcome training in monitoring quality of delivery in general and felt that this should include English language delivery.

Those who had had experience of language training were knowledgeable on the client group. They saw the need for integrated vocational and language delivery and for building progression to lead up to vocational training. But they also acknowledged that they were in a minority and that many of their colleagues (as well as their management) did not know about the needs of this target group. They approved of the focus on quality which the Learning Skills Council would bring but were concerned in how far the sector would be able to deliver. These managers felt that in practice there was a constant need to balance the quality of delivery with the need to keep a sufficient supplier base. If there were not enough providers to deliver the training and outcomes, then it was difficult to stand down providers on the basis of lack of quality. This problem was likely to continue beyond the transition to the local Learning Skills Councils.

> **Case study: an example of second language speakers' participation in training**
>
> The 1991 Census shows that 8% (or 108,500) of the population in South London was born in countries where English is not spoken. Out of a total of 7,892 trainees on programme in 1997/98, there were ten second language speakers on Network; one on Modern Apprenticeships; and 65 on PV/TfW.

Good Practice: Delivering Care and Administration NVQs

Training for Employment (TFE) is part of the adult education provider in Croydon. The organisation offers a variety of training programmes, including Care and Administration NVQs to native English speakers as well as second language speakers. TFE delivered a distinct ESOL programme for Care and Administration until two years ago when the management decided to open provision to both native and second language speakers while at the same time integrating language and training delivery.

This how the delivery was set out: the tutors did an initial assessment to judge prior skills and motivation as well as a language assessment to see if the trainees would be able to cope with the requirements of the course. People who were not yet ready to start the training course were referred elsewhere for language tuition and encouraged to come back four months later for a review of their language skills. One tutor said '*Some students do come back but they do not always improve in class. They need to interact with English people*.' Another issue concerned the tutors: there was a gap between the highest ESOL level taught and the level of language skills required for the NVQ.

1.   Care
50% of the trainees on the Care course were second language speakers. The trainees' motivation and an ESF-funded Introduction to Care course meant that drop-out was very low. The trainees did their work placements mostly with social services or in homes. Some homes looked for people who had other languages in addition to English so people's native language could actually be an advantage.

Many of the trainees worked hard and were good carers. While they needed good spoken English, written English is not a major requirement for carers and many trainees did well on their assessments.

2.   Administration
The percentage of the trainees with English as a second language (5%) was much lower than for the Care course. This was because the requirements for accuracy and fluency were much higher for Administration. That is why they needed to have a very good level of English to start with. Meeting the standards for literacy and accuracy were vital. For example, trainees needed to be able to read documents, type letters and answer the telephone. In addition they needed to be aware of cultural differences as well as other aspects such as body language and pronunciation. Incidentally, all trainees on the course had learnt English in their country of origin. The tutors were very committed to help them get qualified and were pleased that second language speakers had found employment, for example, in foreign exchange in a travel agent's; a doctors surgery, the Foreign Office; and as a teaching assistant in Tower Hamlets school.

Interestingly, the tutors felt that many second language speakers were more motivated to achieve than native English speakers because the latter were sometimes scared to come off benefits while the former were not.

10.6.3 *New Deal*

It has been particularly difficult to find evidence of second language speakers' participation on New Deal. By the time the research for this project had been completed, only five people had been identified. All but one were on 'in-fill' on existing general ESOL courses, three on BET and one on an adult education course. The fifth was found on the Making Training Work Care course which is reviewed in section 10.4.

It was clear that staff managing the New Deal contracts had low awareness of second language speakers. For example, one manager had just started to come across the target group. His office was in the process of setting up an ethnic minority strategy but language needs had so far not been considered. Another TEC had commissioned an evaluation of ethnic minority participation on New Deal but the report had contained a bare mention of the need for language training.

There were several concerns over provision for second language speakers:

1.   In the opinion of ES staff, TEC managers and providers alike, personal advisers were not equipped to identify, assess or advise on language performance.

      While New Deal advisers needed training in assessment, there was anxiety that advisers were already under much pressure and had to cope with so many assessment tools that they could not deal with any more. One interesting suggestion was that ES client advisers should use the first six months of unemployment to assess the learners, refer them to language training and provide New Deal advisers with a skills assessment. This would mean that people could then be referred appropriately.

2.   The funding for New Deal caused concern, not just for language provision but also for the main programme. Three providers reported that ES did not see the need for high-band funding to pay for the additional cost of training second language speakers. For example, an ES office refused additional payment to a local college and suggested that the provider used ESF funding instead. A second college, the only local provider delivering ESOL, asked ES for additional funding to deliver on its mainstream and ESOL provision, because it could not cover the cost of delivery. When this was refused the college pulled out of its contract.

      Some ES staff were sympathetic to the arguments in favour of additional funding and said that ES would consider this issue during the next funding review.

3.   New Deal managers and staff reported:

      ▪ evidence of providers placing New Deal trainees in general ESOL classes without any occupational input at all.

      ▪ evidence of competition for clients. For example, one person who was interviewed for this survey had left New Deal voluntarily to go on to a TEC-funded care course because it suited her needs better. The provider had been accused of poaching and the situation was only resolved when the trainee was subcontracted under New Deal.

4.   The longer time scale for training and greater flexibility of New Deal was welcome and could help many second language speakers achieve their goal of finding work. However, few people can be expected to achieve employment considering the low level of language training and lack of access to occupational training or placement. One New Deal manager commented on local provision in her area: '*New Deal organisations are not in a position to deliver. They do not have the capacity*.'

New Deal is also typical in that it provides an interesting and recent example of what happens when new government initiatives are introduced at short notice. There are of course honourable exceptions but on the whole a skeleton service is established in the first year. This delivers to core groups but does not take special requirements into consideration. In the second year funding organisations and providers become aware of minority needs such as literacy, numeracy or second language needs and begin to plan for delivery. If the programme is altered substantially or abandoned for another initiative, the cycle of core delivery starts anew.

Providers should make sure that second language speakers have access to a broader spectrum of courses than is currently available, in particular high level general English, mainstream courses and professional/vocational courses.

FE Colleges delivering English courses to young people should make sure that:
- **their language, maths and IT provision matches the needs of the individual**
- **learners are able to progress onto mainstream provision as soon as their language skills are sufficient.**

Vocational training and New Deal providers should deliver occupational training and work placements to second language speakers. They should leave basic English language provision to the education sector.

The Learning Skills Council and the Employment Service should include provision for second language speakers when planning new initiatives such as New Deal.

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11   REVIEW OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

You will find below a review of English language teaching which will cover:

1.   The quality of delivery
2.   Access to and sufficiency of general language provision
3.   Progression to mainstream education, training and employment
4.   Language support provision on mainstream education and training courses

11.1   The quality of delivery

11.1.1 The learners' perceptions of their courses

Of the 123 learners who were asked what they thought of their courses, 119 stated that their current course had helped them to improve their English. This is 97% of the sample and an acknowledgement of the dedication and input of their teachers. Since this question was asked only of people who were attending classes, it is hard to be sure in how far our sample is representative of second language speakers as a whole. It may help to compare these results to other studies which asked their respondents about English language courses. The findings of the Peabody Trust study were that 58% of the sample were or had been on English language courses. 71% of these were satisfied with their course; and 25% not.[49] The findings of the Home Office study were that 80% of beginners and 95% of advanced students had benefited from their courses. But the study concluded 'The fact that a fifth of those attending beginners' courses found their English not greatly improved, however, is rather worrying'.[50]

11.1.2 The learners' suggestions on how to improve English language learning

While generally positive about their current courses, the learners were not uncritical of the delivery of language teaching. They made a variety of suggestions to help them to improve their language skills:

♦   More language provision and access to a wider variety of classes.
♦   Better quality of teaching and more specific attention to grammar, including feedback on how well the learners spoke and wrote English:
     'Teachers should teach more and correct our English more'
     'Teacher need to give feedback. You have to know what you are not so good at. That's the big reason we are here.'
     'It is good to be corrected'.
♦   The need for reinforcement. *'We want to practise [what we learnt before] but we get new things all the time'.*
♦   A surprisingly high number of requests for help with pronunciation.
♦   Higher level learners wanted help with presentation skills '*Not enough information on format of writing and presentation of information'.*
♦   Learning with a variety of first language speakers rather than learning with people from the same language group '*With same language students you learn nothing'.*
♦   Learning the language of work "*We want to learn English on the job*".

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49 *The Employment & Training of Skilled and Qualified Refugees*, Peabody Trust (1999) p 63.
50 *The Settlement of Refugees in Britain* Home Office Research Study 141 (1995) p 27.

However, a substantial minority of learners did not mention language provision at all: They expressed anxiety over **their lack of contact with English people**. Many only spoke English with people who had to have contact with them for example, the landlady, their children's teacher, the GPs etc. This pointed to a sense of isolation felt by many learners.

11.1.3 The need for fluency and accuracy

Several tutors and managers questioned the practice of aiming for fluency without needing to be accurate. This had promoted '*a culture of teaching where mistakes do not matter*'. Not all respondents saw this as a problem but many felt that ESOL had lost the balance between fluency and accuracy. As we have seen in section 5 accuracy mattered a great deal to employers because it formed the basis for professional communication. Employers could simply not consider recruiting someone with inaccurate language skills. Although not many teachers appeared to be aware of the employers' demand for accuracy, one manager said: '*Teachers think that inaccuracy does not matter but the students' language is full of little errors and employers do not accept that.*' A team of vocational tutors echoed the employers' perception: '*English language tutors seem to think students speak English well. They adjust their understanding of their English to the students' level; employers do not.*' These comments indicate that language tutors need to know what the communication requirements are for work, study and training and that they need to incorporate these into their teaching.

11.1.4 The methodology of ESOL teaching

Many of the learners' requests for grammar teaching, feedback, pronunciation and presentation skills indicated a demand for a more structured style of teaching (section 11.1.1). Two careers advisers who worked extensively with second language speakers felt the same way: the teachers' expectations of ESOL students were low and many ESOL teachers lacked proper teaching skills. Interestingly, a manager remembered that during an OFSTED inspection in the early nineties an ESOL teacher had been told off for teaching grammar.

One careers adviser commented that many second language speakers would feel happier being in an EFL environment because it was more how they used to learn. She said: *ESOL [teaching] is too slow. It underestimates people and aims for lowest common denominator. It assumes people do not want to be pushed.*' The principal of an FE college referred to the teaching practice in her college: '*There is a need to move from counselling and support to systematic teaching*'. Comments from the FEFC Inspectorate indicates that inspectors shared similar concerns: 'The standard of much of the provision found in this programme area is a cause for concern when compared with the standards in other programme areas'.[51]

11.1.4.1   *EFL and ESOL*

While it is impossible to be categorical about the differences between English as a Foreign Language (EFL) and English for speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), they differ broadly in the following way: ESOL is aimed at people who have come to live in the UK and who need to learn English to live here. People are taught elementary 'survival' English and specifically the language to get access to public services and for family life.

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51 *Basic Education* Report from the Inspectorate FEFC (1998) p 11.

By contrast EFL is aimed at people who do not wish to stay in the UK but who want to learn English for travel, study or work. The level of English taught covers the full range of language, from beginner level English to very advanced language requirements in the work place. Many second language speakers who wish to progress to advanced English can only do so by enrolling in EFL classes.

There have been recent attempts to review the relationship between the two fields. See for example Krystyna Vargas' recent article in *Language Issues* in which she argues that 'the division [between EFL and ESOL] is no longer sustainable as it no longer meets the needs for those it was intended'.[52]

11.1.5 The content of general ESOL learning

As we have seen, the topics for general ESOL were home- and family-centred rather than focused on occupation, education or training. There can be no doubt that provision would benefit from a more balanced curriculum in which both aspects are addressed. This may also improve the retention of men in general ESOL classes.

11.1.6 Staff qualifications and experience

75% of the respondents expressed concern over the quality of delivery. Heads of department, tutors and people not directly involved with delivery such as careers advisers recognised that teaching practice needed to be reviewed. The respondents identified four main areas for review:

- the quality of delivery and the skills required to teach effectively
- the ability to assess the learners
- in-service training for practising teachers
- language support

Two respondents, a head of department and a college principal, commented that they had had trouble recruiting suitable staff: '*People come in not understanding the basic concepts of teaching*'. This situation is now being remedied by the introduction of the CELTA (Certificate in English Language Teaching to Adults) which is aimed at new entrants to the profession and the DELTA (Diploma in English Language Teaching to Adults) for teacher-managers. Those respondents who had had experience of these new qualifications were very enthusiastic about them. People felt that they brought much needed rigour to the profession. There was concern, however, that those who had taken earlier qualifications were less well prepared to teach and needed in-service training.

11.1.7 Monitoring & evaluation

There was little evidence that the quality of delivery was monitored. As one head of department said*: 'We do not really know what goes on in the classroom*.' The interviews with members of staff showed that only two organisations formally assessed the effectiveness of language delivery and the added value of the various types of provision. This is worrying because an analysis of the quality of learning could be the catalyst to improved delivery. One organisation had developed an evaluation procedure which involved the teaching staff as well as the students.

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52 *Language Issues*, NATECLA vol 11 no 2 pp 11 –13.

Good Practice: Evaluation

The managers of an externally funded project at CETS asked the students for written feedback on completion of the programme. They then organised meetings with students, teachers, providers and employers. These meetings produced a number of action points which were used to review and improve several aspects of delivery. The centre then produced a checklist based on the project evaluation. This is now used to monitor all provision on a regular basis.

11.2 Access to and sufficiency of language provision

90% of the respondents stated that their organisation did not have sufficient provision to meet the needs of its existing learners regardless of the type of provision. Secondly, those offering general ESOL courses felt that the number of hours was insufficient to help people make fast and substantive progress. The learners agreed: nearly all, except those with small children, would much prefer more intensive language learning. But how would we know how long it takes to learn English and what the optimum input should be?

11.2.1 The time it takes to learn English

While there appears to be no UK information on the time required to acquire English language skills, Australian data provide an interesting projection: they forecast **1765 hours of teaching** to get from no English to the level of competence required for further study or a job.[53] Please note that this figure is only an indication of average language learning and that other factors, such as aptitude for language learning, literacy in own language and exposure to English in daily life are equally important. These factors are not included in this calculation.

Taking the figure of 1765 hours of tuition, the following projections will apply to learners who speak no English to get to the point where they could participate in further study or get a job:

♦   Full-time 16-19-year-old FE students (**450 guided learning hours** per year) would need almost **four years** of study
♦   Adult students who learn English **ten hours a week** over 30 weeks would need **five years and seven months** of study
♦   Adult students who learn English **four hours a week** over 30 weeks would need **14 and a half years** of study

Of course not everyone will have to start learning English from scratch and many people will need less time and resources to achieve the required level of English. For example, only 40% of our sample had not learnt any English before arriving in the United Kingdom.

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53 Data provided by Canberra TAFE, Canberra where the length of time taken to learn English has been monitored since the mid 1980s.

There is one more point to be made here: there can be no doubt that language provision delivered in small weekly doses will make for slow improvement or even just maintenance of language skills. Slow language learning is also likely to cause drop-out because the learner loses motivation. The number of hours currently available is insufficient to make fast (and lasting) improvements.
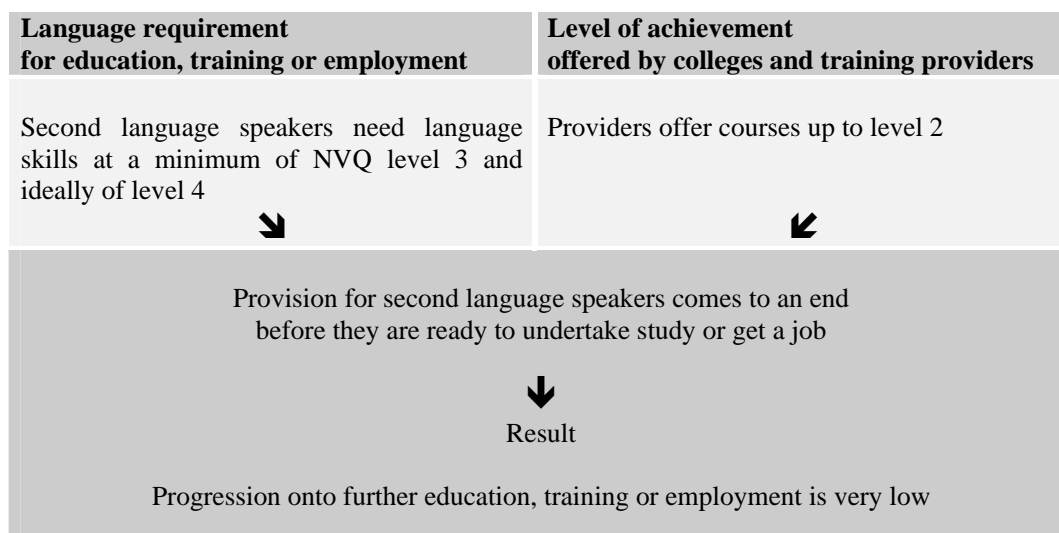
11.3   Progression to mainstream education, training and employment

Both the responses from the staff interviewed and the difficulty in identifying learners on mainstream courses indicated that progression from general ESOL classes to mainstream provision was rarely achieved. The views of teachers of general English and their managers were divided in two groups: the first saw it as their responsibility to teach English but not to prepare for or refer students onto other courses. They tended not to be aware what happened to their students once they left the programme. It was sad to hear that in some places the old divisions between education and training were still in place, with tutors refusing to refer to TEC training programmes on principle and regardless of how training might be delivered.

The second group had a different view: they were concerned that few learners moved onto mainstream training/education or a job. They felt that provision should move from low level, free-standing English language provision to include higher level courses and more flexible modes of language learning which related to mainstream courses. Here are some of their comments: '*People are not allowed into mainstream. They are kept in straight English classes too long*'. And a second: '*We face a crisis in basic skills and ESOL provision. It is satisfactory but no more: progression is not common.*' A third teacher referred her students to another local college which provided language support on mainstream courses because her own college did not provide it. The participants at the NATECLA workshop commented: '*We do not know about progression onto mainstream courses. Success in mainstream is not known; failure is when they come back to ESOL*'.

11.3.1 Language as a barrier to progression and employment

It appears from this study that general language provision, whether it is offered through further/adult education or TEC/New Deal training, caters for people from beginner to intermediate language skills. But to find work or progress onto mainstream education or training, people need language skills which are substantially higher. This means that there is a gap between the level of general language provision offered and the skills required to go on to education, training or jobs.

Language requirement for education, training or employment	Level of achievement offered by colleges and training providers
Second language speakers need language skills at a minimum of NVQ level 3 and ideally of level 4 ➥	Providers offer courses up to level 2 ↙
Provision for second language speakers comes to an end before they are ready to undertake study or get a job ⬇ Result Progression onto further education, training or employment is very low	

Several learners identified the difference between fast, complex communication in the outside world and the slow delivery and simple language in the classroom: *'when in class we understand, when outside we can't'*. ESOL tutors in turn adjust their language to the level of their students and are able to understand them when an employer or mainstream tutor would not be able to. This is the likely reason that many language tutors think that students can progress onto courses or employment while mainstream tutors and employers reject them because of their lack of English.

11.4   Language support
This research project shows that language support provision on education and training was rare indeed. Yet the learners who had access to it were enthusiastic about it and staff were generally in favour. It appears that part of the problem lies in getting mainstream and language tutors to work together. The second problem is finding skilled language teachers. Two managers were keen to set up support but were unable to. One of them said that this field required highly-skilled staff who were able to analyse a mainstream curriculum, assess the learner's language skills and design a programme of work. She had been unable to recruit internally or externally.

Since the FEFC's additional support funding provides a useful mechanism for language support, it is discussed in more detail under Funding in section 14.2.1.

11.5   Work placements
Work placements form an essential part of many education and training courses and are an excellent introduction to the world of work. This is true for all learners, whether they are second language or native English speakers. Yet anecdotal evidence indicates that second language speakers have a much lower chance of a work placement and that, if they have one, they are often placed with their own community group. This is the right environment for those who wish to work as community workers, but not for others: community placements do not give second language speakers an opportunity to:

♦   practise English in the work context
♦   experience work practice and social behaviour in the work place
♦   get a reference from a British employer

Two providers used work placements as part of their training courses. For a description of their programmes see section 10.4 for Making Training Work and section 10.6 for Training for Employment.

11.6   Mentoring

As we have seen, many adult second language speakers have prior experience and qualifications gained in their country of origin. Once their language learning needs have been addressed, the advice of a mentor can make all the difference to getting people into work. The ideal mentor would be a person who is working in a similar type of work environment and who speaks the same language and has the same cultural background as the mentee. This is of course difficult to achieve and it should be possible to match a sympathetic native English speaker with someone from a different language and cultural background. Although this method might work very well, as far as it is known, mentoring of second language speakers has not been tested in the field.

The Adult Basic Skills Strategy Unit/DfEE should implement the recommendation in the Moser report on the entitlement to English language learning. This should include provision up to a level where people are able to function independently in work, further education or training intensive provision; and flexible access to language learning for those who are in work

The local Learning Skills Councils and Employment Service should:
♦ **ensure sufficient provision to meet demand for general ESOL courses**
♦ **ensure provision from absolute beginner level up to NVQ level 3**
♦ **provide specialist courses which enable people to adapt their existing occupational skills and experience to the United Kingdom environment as well as improve their English language skills;**
   or provide access to mainstream provision with additional learning support
♦ **promote quality of delivery on general ESOL courses and a curriculum which covers topics on home and family life as well as the occupational/educational context.**

The Learning Skills Council should create a system which monitors the uptake of additional learning support by individual target group: ESOL, disability, learning difficulty, and basic skills.

The Further Education NTO should consider adopting the CELTA & DELTA as suitable teacher training qualifications for English language teaching.

Providers of education and training should:
♦ **deliver general ESOL provision which enables the learner to progress to work, study or training**
♦ **drastically increase language support provision on mainstream courses**
♦ **monitor and evaluate teaching practice against quality standards and curriculum requirements**
♦ **improve standards of delivery by providing in-service training**
♦ **provide work placements which suit the learner's occupational needs and which take place in an English-speaking environment.**

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12   REVIEW OF MANAGEMENT

12.1   Management responsibilities

Four aspects of management deserve attention:

Many managers and tutors expressed concern that ESOL had been managed in isolation. This view was also expressed by the FEFC Inspectorate: 'Basic education [which includes ESOL] is one of the most demanding and difficult areas in further education, yet it rarely receives adequate support and attention from college managers.[54]   The perspective of heads of department reinforced the impression of a separation of management and teaching staff: *'We do not know what teachers are doing [in the classroom]'*. Both this research project and the FEFC report indicate that organisations would do well to consider whether their senior management manages English language delivery sufficiently actively.

Secondly, there is the question whether teachers have the necessary skills, access to information and training to do their job well. Certainly the FEFC Inspectorate also highlights these as a need: 'Other issues affecting standards include the recruitment of inexperienced teachers, a lack of support for the growing number of part-time teachers, insufficient sharing of good practice between teachers and inadequate curriculum guidance for teachers'.[55]

Thirdly, access to mainstream courses can only be achieved with the active support from managers. And last, management could play a central role in overcoming the isolated delivery of services to second language speakers, both between organisations and between departments within large organisations such as colleges.

12.2   Tutors' and managers' working conditions

The tutors' and managers' commitment to their learners must be acknowledged here. It was obvious that they worked hard – and many in their own time- to make sure that the students had a productive time in the classroom. It became clear from their contributions that their workload was a major obstacle to the quality of delivery and innovation. This applied to education as well as training. Most teachers taught between 20 and 23 hours a week. Since there was a great deal of paperwork to be done as well as assessment and internal verification, this left little time for preparation of lessons, let alone to review and innovate in the light of the changing needs of the learners.

Managers seemed particularly pressed: they taught between 15 and 17 hours a week as well as managed their departments. The few people who were working full-time or in fractional posts were under tremendous pressure to manage their departments, including a large number of part-time staff.

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54 *Basic Education* Report from the Inspectorate FEFC (1998) p 11.
55 *Basic Education* Report from the Inspectorate FEFC (1998) p 11.

12.3   Language qualifications

Before we go into the qualifications available to second language speakers it is important to make the point that by no means all English language learning is accredited. See for example the FEFC statistics in section 7.2 which shows that in 1997/98 up to 40,000 people learnt English without external accreditation. Otherwise there is a host of qualifications which fall into three categories:

♦   qualifications devised in the context of English as a Foreign Language, for example the Cambridge First Certificate and Pitman exams
♦   qualifications developed for native English speakers who have literacy problems such as Wordpower and the new adult literacy standards which QCA and DfEE are developing
♦   qualifications which are accredited through the National Open Credit Network (NOCN) and were developed by local colleges[56].

The respondents interviewed were unanimous that the existing number of qualifications needed pruning. No one accreditation came out as ideal but the most popular choices were Pitman exams, the Cambridge Certificate in Communicative Skills in English and NOCN qualifications. The least popular was Wordpower because a qualification designed for native English speakers was not suitable for second language speakers. This is confirmed by a recent NATECLA report on ESOL delivery which states: 'Wordpower [is] offered by just a few colleges'. This does not bode well for the new literacy standards being developed by QCA and DfEE as they are intended to serve both native English and second language speakers.

So what do we need any standards and accreditation of English language skills to do?

♦   benchmark the development of skills from the pure beginner to the equivalent of a native English speaker
♦   be credible with employers and institutions of education and training
♦   provide a framework for the language teaching profession to plan and deliver a programme of learning

12.4   Resources

12.4.1 Teaching and learning materials

Teachers and their managers found it difficult to find suitable materials to assess and teach English language. In the past many designed their own materials but this was no longer possible now that teachers were teaching up to 22 hours a week. Respondents found that materials relating to mainstream curricula, for example English for hairdressing or care, were even harder to come by.

It was also obvious when visiting organisations in the sample areas that many had no or very limited access to information technology. New government initiatives such as Learndirect will undoubtedly make a positive impact on interactive materials but it is important to make sure that organisations have the right hardware and that the learner is able to access them.

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56 You will find in Appendix 6 an overview of the most popular qualifications and a comparison of their estimated levels of achievement.

Good Practice: Language Development Network

The Language Development Network, based at Shipley College, produces open learning materials to develop underpinning language and communication skills in a wide range of vocational areas. The materials are largely used for additional learning support but can be used in other contexts, too. The Network consists of 50 members who subscribe to the service as well as contribute materials.

All materials are analysed in terms of subject, skills, function and grammar. You can access their database on www.ldn.org.uk and search for any of these fields. Members of the Network can download materials on-line.

You can also visit the website to explore the Network's Leonardo project which is transferring the LDN pedagogy into a multimedia environment through the production of multimedia courseware.

12.4.2 Access to childcare

Women with small children below four years old were frequently unable to attend English classes because they were unable to find childcare. This meant that they had to wait until their children went to primary school before they had the opportunity to learn English. In the case of some learners this had taken years. Many teachers and managers expressed concern that this group of women was in effect excluded from learning English and felt frustrated that nothing could be done to help them.

QCA/ should make sure that standards and accreditation of English skills:
♦ **benchmark the development of skills from the pure beginner to the equivalent of a native English speaker**
♦ **are credible with employers and institutions of education and training**
♦ **provide a framework for the language teaching profession to plan and deliver a programme of learning.**

The Learning Skills Council and Employment Service should:
♦ **radically simplify the funding and accreditation of English language provision**
♦ **make sure that local organisations work together to deliver a continuous service to second language speakers**
♦ **ensure that their own staff dealing with funding and monitoring of provision are adequately trained**
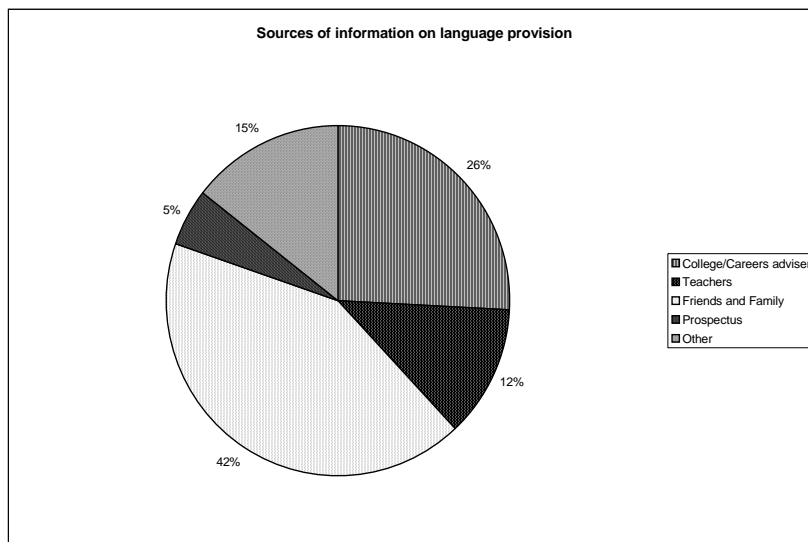
Education and training providers should:

♦ **ensure that senior managers are actively involved with the management of English language delivery. This should include the delivery of language support.**
♦ **ensure that in-service training for teachers is mandatory and part of continuing professional development**

♦ **consider employing more staff on fractional and full-time contracts.**

13 MARKETING PROVISION

13.1 Finding out about language courses

158 learners were asked how they found out about their current course. They gave the following responses:

♦ 42% found their way to classes through friends and family. This was particularly true of people who were attending their first class: '*The best thing is a friend'*.
♦ Those already on courses often got information from their teachers; 12% of those interviewed fell into this category.
♦ The rest found out about provision by other means such as job centres, youth workers, refugee/community centres, libraries, newspapers or radio advertising.

Sources of information on language provision

- College/Careers adviser
- Teachers
- Friends and Family
- Prospectus
- Other

The following points emerged from discussion with the learners:

♦ 61% of the sample had found it easy to locate language classes. People from East London (93%), Manchester (88%) and Cardiff (66%) had found it easier to find language provision than those from South Birmingham (45%) and London (27%).
♦ While young people indicated that they had little trouble in locating provision, most adults did not know that there was English language provision when they first arrived; and some took years to discover it.
♦ The sample of learners clearly saw information by word-of-mouth as the best way of finding out about courses.
♦ Sole reliance on written English to inform people of courses does not reach those with limited or no English. One group of interviewees commented: "*Because people cannot understand written English, many in the community still do not know about classes*".
♦ Courses without a track record in the community were unlikely to attract people simply because no one knew about them.

Good practice: Course information

Croydon Education and Training Services distributes its own newspaper with information on its classes to all households in the borough. This method of communication clearly worked: a substantial number of learners interviewed had found out about classes through this newspaper.

13.1.1 Referral from own language community organisations

Many language groups have their own associations which provide a range of services and facilities. Some organisations provide a focal point for social contact with other members; while others offer advice on housing, benefits and immigration and mother-tongue language classes for children.

The learners interviewed for this survey were asked whether they had relied on their language community organisations for advice on language courses. Many learners expressed surprise to be asked this question. As we saw in section 9.2.1 **104 (77%) of the 135 learners who were responded had not made use of their community organisation at all.** The 23% who had made use of them had tended to do so in the early stages of settling down in the United Kingdom. The analysis of the responses by area shows that people in East London (39%) and Birmingham (32%) had made the most use of their own community; and Cardiff (8%) the least. Their questions had related to problems with housing, asylum status etc rather than language provision.

The low use of community groups contradicts the common supposition that people from ethnic minorities rely heavily on their own communities and that they continue to do so over a period of time.

Organisations delivering mainstream as well as English language courses should develop a marketing strategy for second language speakers which makes use of community networks, radio and newspapers as well as English media of communication.

New arrivals would benefit from course information written in their own language, if they can read; and otherwise an opportunity to discuss their needs with a guidance worker who can speak their language.

14   FUNDING

14.1   Sources of funding

You will find below an overview of the current sources of funding available:

Organisation	Type of funding programme
FEFC (Further Education Funding Council)	English as a discrete learning goal English as part of a broad programme of learning English under generic code English through additional learning support
LEA (Local Education Authority)	Non-schedule 2 funding[57]
EMTAG (Ethnic Minority and Travellers' Achievement Grant)	General ESOL administered by FEFC (formerly known as Section 11 funding and administered by the Home Office)
Government Offices	SRB (Single Regeneration Budget) Funding for projects over 3-7 years Careers Service funding
ESF (European Social Fund)	Objectives 2, 3, 4 and 5 as well as programmes such as Now, Horizon and Leonardo
TEC (Training & Enterprise Council)	Work Based Learning for Adults (including Basic Employability Training)
	Work Based Learning For Young People; Modern Apprenticeships (which has subsumed National Traineeships) & Life Skills
ES (Employment Service)	New Deal: Gateway; Full-time education & training and voluntary options
One-off project development funding,	For example, DfEE Adult & Community Learning Fund & Basic Skills Agency project funding

14.2   Application of funding
Managers of organisations delivering English language teaching as well as those commissioning and monitoring provision had concerns about the current funding arrangements:

♦   Those in charge of delivery agreed that the multitude of funding sources had created a jungle which only the best-informed managers were able to manipulate.

♦   Further and adult education colleges varied hugely in terms of the provision and number of places offered to second language speakers. It appeared that the understanding of the FEFC's funding mechanism, rather than the needs and number of students, was central to delivery.

♦   Many managers of English language provision were not sure how FEFC funding worked and how it applied to their provision. Some had asked their finance departments for clarification but had not been given the information they required.

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57 No evidence of LEA funding was found in this study.

- TEC and FEFC providers acknowledged that, since the introduction of outcome-driven funding, it had been their priority to juggle qualifications to attract funding and that it was not always possible to reconcile the learners' needs with the need for funding. As one respondent said: '*Our main priority is counting units*'.
- Some respondents had managed to attract external funding for one-off projects. This was used in two ways: in the first place to try out innovative ways of delivery. One respondent said that although the deadlines were always tight and it could be difficult to manage, one-off projects did galvanise her team into action with some very good results. The second use of external funding was to deliver essential services which could not be funded through core funding. This meant as one contributor said*: 'Having to pretend to be innovative just to keep the service going*'. Some respondents clearly felt the effect of continuous bidding and short-term project delivery. They were suffering from 'pilot fatigue'.
- TEC and ES managers mirrored the comments of their providers: they were not sure what they should look for when contracting and monitoring English language provision.

14.2.1 FEFC's additional learning support

In 1994 FEFC introduced learning support units to meet the needs of learners who attended mainstream courses and who had a disability, learning difficulty or needed support with basic skills/ESOL. The funding was available for individual needs which were impossible to tackle through mainstream provision. In the case of second language speakers it could be used to improve students' English language skills in a mainstream environment.

Although the FE sector has generally welcomed the new funding mechanism and in principle colleges can use the funding, in practice its uptake for language support has been very low.[58] Since FEFC does not provide information on additional support by category of need, we have to rely on anecdotal evidence. For example, FEDA's recent survey on the use of additional learning support funding states that second language speakers' needs were not being addressed.[59] The experience of the participants at a NATECLA workshop in the Summer of 1999 confirmed this. The participants, all experienced tutors and managers, agreed that there was little or no provision.

There is clearly scope for development of language support and the interviews with staff working in FE colleges showed that there was a growing awareness of additional learning support and its potential use for second language speakers. Interestingly, tutors working on TEC or New Deal programmes also saw the potential benefit of the FEFC funding mechanism for language support and thought that it could be usefully extended to vocational training.

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58 *Additional Support, Retention and Guidance in Urban Colleges*, Chapter 1 by Liz Lawson and Philida Schellekens FEDA pp 15-38.
59 *Evaluation of the Additional Support Mechanism* FEDA (1999) pp 16-7.

Employment Service should consider targeting funding as follows:

- **use vocational training and New Deal budgets for occupationally specific training and qualifications; and not for general ESOL courses**

- **adopt the FEFC funding mechanism of additional learning support to help learners achieve mainstream qualifications in education as well as training.**

15   CONCLUSION

This research shows that, despite the commitment of the learners and many ESOL teachers, achievement in learning and progression into mainstream society is low. Provision for second language speakers - from initial advice & guidance to general English, access to mainstream courses and work placements - is fractured and in many cases people do not get further than general English classes. **There can be no doubt that their lack of English causes second language speakers to be one of the most excluded groups in society and the labour market**. This needs to change if second language speakers are to fulfil their potential. We must create progression routes for people, signpost them effectively and inform them of the steps required to reach their goal.

We should also recognise that many second language speakers are able, motivated and well-qualified people who will succeed provided that they have the right help.

What will happen if we do not tackle provision for second language speakers?

♦   Exclusion from the labour market as well as social exclusion

♦   Continued dependency on the state

♦   Lives lived in poverty with implications for the next generation.

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Total Persons by Country of Birth	Manchester	Cardiff	South London	East London	Birmingham	TOTAL	Great Britain
Kenya	3,207	382	6,570	7,066	3,852	21,077	112,422
Malawi	432	26	322	481	151	1,412	10,697
Tanzania	726	109	1,794	1,983	930	5,542	29,825
Uganda	1,223	192	3,469	4,415	1,600	10,899	50,903
Zambia	602	96	641	649	242	2230	16,758
Total East Africa	**6,190**	**805**	**12,796**	**14,594**	**6,775**	**41,160**	**220,605**
Zimbabwe	522	81	792	650	203	2,045	21,252
Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland	435	17	36	40	35	563	2,001
Republic of South Africa	1,497	202	1,967	1,313	499	5,478	68,059
Total Southern Africa	**2,454**	**300**	**2,795**	**2,003**	**737**	**8,289**	**91,312**
Gambia	62	5	88	157	50	362	1,388
Ghana	516	53	3,462	4,373	199	8,603	32,672
Nigeria	1,100	112	4,493	4,457	477	10,639	47,085
Sierra Leone	221	42	732	571	100	1,666	6,310
Total Western Africa	**1,899**	**212**	**8,775**	**9,558**	**826**	**21,270**	**87,455**
Algeria	182	31	138	183	43	577	3,672
Egypt	606	90	1,129	501	272	2,598	22,849
Libya	402	73	170	90	69	804	6,604
Morocco	161	19	342	512	65	1,099	9,073
Tunisia	59	2	163	254	10	488	2,417
Other	810	740	1,828	4,596	298	7,974	34,195
Total Northern Africa	**2,220**	**955**	**3,770**	**6,136**	**757**	**13,838**	**78,810**
Total Africa	**12,763**	**2,272**	**28,136**	**32,291**	**9,095**	**84,557**	**478,182**
Bangladesh	7,020	954	1,957	31,580	7,682	49,193	105,012
India	14,946	1,205	18,987	27,958	21,553	84,649	409,022
Pakistan	21,901	1,358	3,558	16,955	31,343	75,115	234,107
Sri Lanka	398	155	4,327	3,923	242	9,045	39,387
Total South Asia	**44,265**	**3,372**	**28,829**	**80,416**	**60,820**	**217,702**	**787,528**
Hong Kong	3,554	481	2,857	2,657	1,264	10,813	72,937
Malaysia	1,197	412	1,829	2,298	692	6,428	43,511
Singapore	698	158	992	978	315	3,141	33,961

Total South East Asia	**5,449**	**1,051**	**5,678**	**5,933**	**2,271**	**20,382**	**150,409**
Burma	368	12	1,033	421	80	1,914	10,608
China	1,365	181	958	803	539	3,846	23,784
Japan	282	268	1,159	266	176	2,151	28,235
Phillipines	235	32	726	2,459	101	3,553	21,836
Vietnam	781	77	3,170	1,473	1,402	6,903	20,119
Other Asia	722	139	959	663	375	2,858	24,744
Total Remainder of Asia	**3,753**	**709**	**8,005**	**6,085**	**2,673**	**21,225**	**129,326**
Iran	1,599	240	1,154	657	360	4,010	32,262
Israel	638	49	301	421	83	1,492	12,195
Other Middle East	1,954	882	1,903	1,078	1,547	7,364	57,262
Total Middle East	**4,191**	**1,171**	**3,358**	**2,156**	**1,990**	**12,866**	**101,719**
Total Asia	**57,658**	**6,303**	**45,870**	**94,590**	**67,754**	**272,175**	**1,168,982**
Cyprus	1,134	195	5,269	5,118	803	12,519	78,031
Malta and Gozo	842	269	1,119	1,297	297	3,824	31,237
Mauritius	328	48	2,212	2,549	218	5,355	23,450
Seychelles	73	16	277	212	15	593	2,967
Other New Commonwealth	182	56	189	114	61	602	7,479
Total Remainder of New Commonwealth	**2,559**	**584**	**9,066**	**9,290**	**1,394**	**22,893**	**143,164**
Belgium	395	74	628	271	161	1,529	16,416
Denmark	296	31	543	259	99	1,129	14,226
France	1,067	219	2,176	1,131	468	5,061	53,443
Germany	5,995	876	4,920	2,519	1,903	16,213	215,534
Greece	469	393	583	427	181	2,053	14,610
Italy	2,652	587	3,289	2,060	743	9,331	91,010
Luxembourg	16	0	31	10	4	61	705
Netherlands	637	138	868	431	199	2,273	29,442
Portugal	240	172	619	668	72	1,771	19,775
Spain	880	234	1,726	929	210	3,979	38,729
Albania	4	0	3	3	0	10	161
Austria	947	83	725	321	216	2,292	20,645
Bulgaria	34	9	64	103	17	227	1,710
Czechoslovakia	374	56	357	148	80	1,015	8,720
Finland	80	24	254	146	36	540	5,285

	Manchester	Cardiff	South London	East London	Birmingham	TOTAL	Great Britain
Hungary	562	49	573	240	195	1,619	12,487
Norway	167	23	278	134	54	656	8,684
Poland	4,098	210	2,003	1,416	1,355	9,082	73,738
Romania	172	10	149	220	24	575	3,960
Sweden	136	24	316	148	47	671	11,054
Switzerland	324	25	435	185	73	1,042	12,613
Yugoslavia	505	71	329	230	291	1,426	13,813
Other Europe	30	1	33	19		83	1,276
Total Europe	**20,080**	**3,309**	**20,902**	**12,018**	**6,428**	**62,737**	**668,036**
Turkey	329	74	1,241	2,024	134	3,802	26,597
USSR	2,745	182	404	381	345	4,057	27,011
Central and South America	860	114	1,645	836	316	3,771	39,045
Total Africa	**12,763**	**2,272**	28,136	32,291	**9,095**	**84,557**	**478,182**
Total Asia	**57,658**	**6,603**	46,230	94,590	**67,754**	**272,835**	**1,168,982**
Remainder of New Commonwealth	**2,559**	**584**	9,066	9,290	**1,394**	**22,893**	**143,164**
Total Europe	**20,080**	**3,309**	20,902	12,018	**6,428**	**62,737**	**668,036**
Turkey	**329**	**74**	1,241	2,024	**134**	**3,802**	**26,597**
USSR	**2,745**	**182**	404	381	**345**	**4,057**	**27,011**
Central and South America	**860**	**114**	1,645	836	**316**	**3,771**	**39,045**
Total	**96,994**	**13,138**	**107,624**	**151,430**	**85,466**	**454,652**	**2,551,017**

Total Persons by Country of Birth	Manchester	Cardiff	South London	East London	Birmingham	TOTAL	Great Britain
Total population by area	2,499,441	279,055	1,427,247	1,184,658	981,041	6,371,442	54,888,844
Second language speakers as a percentage of total population by area	3.90%	4.70%	7.50%	12.80%	8.70%	7.10%	4.70%

Source: Office of National Statistics *1991 Census: Table 7*

Home Office data on asylum applications and decisions to grant refugee status or exceptional leave to remain from 1991 to 1998[60]

	1991	**1992**	**1993**	**1994**	**1995**	**1996**	**1997**	**1998**
Asylum applications	44,840	24,605	22,370	32,830	43,965	29,640	32,500	46,015
Refugee status	505	1,115	1,590	825	1,295	2,240	3,985	5,345
Exceptional leave to remain	2,190	15,325	11,125	3,660	4,410	5,055	3,115	3,910
Total allowed to remain	2,695	16,440	12,715	4,485	5,705	7,295	7,100	9,255

Total of successful applications plus the number of outstanding applications and appeals

People allowed to remain in Britain from 1991 to 1998	**65,690**
Outstanding appeals	16,000
Outstanding applications at the end of 1998	64,770
Estimated dependants from 1991 to 1998[61]	91,000
Total	237,460

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60 *Home Office Statistical Bulletin* May 1999 Table 1.
61 *Home Office Statistical Bulletin* May 1999 Table 7. Please note that these are the total number of estimated dependants; including those whose principal applicants' application was subsequently rejected.

Other Language(s) spoken by the cohort of 176 people interviewed

Language	South London62	Birmingham	East London	Cardiff	Manchester	Total
Albanian	6	1	2	0	0	9
Amharic/Tigrinya	1	0	0	0	0	1
Arabic	4	3	0	4	4	15
Arabic/French	1	0	0	0	0	1
Azerbaidjani/Farsi	1	0	0	0	0	1
Bengali	1	3	6	0	2	12
Cambodia	1	0	0	0	0	1
Catalan	0	0	0	1	0	1
Creole/English	1	1	0	0	0	2
Cantonese	1	0	0	3	1	5
Dari/Farsi/Pushto	0	0	0	1	0	1
English/Igaw	0	0	1	0	0	1
Farsi	0	0	0	3	5	8
French	5	0	1	2	1	9
French/Swahili/Lingala	1	0	0	0	0	1
German	0	0	0	1	0	1
Greek	0	0	0	1	0	1
Gujarati	1	1	0	0	0	2
Italian	0	0	0	2	0	2
Japanese	0	0	0	1	0	1
Kashmiri	0	1	0	0	0	1
Kikongo/Portuguese	1	0	0	0	0	1
Korean	0	0	0	2	0	2
Kurdish	1	0	0	0	2	3
Kurdish/Turkish	1	0	0	0	0	1
Lithuanian	1	0	0	0	0	1
Malayalam	0	0	1	0	0	1
Mandarin	0	0	2	1	1	4
Polish	1	0	0	0	1	2
Portuguese	3	0	1	0	0	3
Portuguese/Shankana	0	0	0	1	0	1
Punjabi	0	0	1	0	0	1
Punjabi/Hindi	0	0	1	0	0	1
Punjabi/Peshwari/Urdu	0	1	0	0	0	1
Punjabi/Urdu	0	4	0	0	0	4
Pushto	1	3	0	0	0	4
Russian	2	0	2	1	0	5
Rumanian	1	0	0	0	0	1

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62 Including nine interviewees at the Training & Employment Section at the Refugee Council

Shona	1	0	0	0	0	1
Somali	8	0	7	2	13	30
Spanish	1	0	1	0	0	2
Swahili	1	0	2	0	1	4
Swahili/Urdu	0	1	0	0	0	1
Swedish	0	0	0	1	0	1
Tamil	3	0	1	0	0	4
Thai	1	0	0	0	1	2
Tigrinya	4	0	0	0	0	4
Turkish	1	0	0	1	1	3
Twi	1	0	0	0	0	1
Urdu	0	5	1	0	4	10
Urdu/English	0	1	0	0	0	1
Yoruba	0	0	1	0	0	1
Total	57	25	31	28	37	178

London data on primary and secondary school pupils

1. Pupils who have English as an additional language[63]	Inner London	Outer London
Authority maintained primary schools	31%	20%
Grant maintained primary schools	29%	15%
Authority maintained secondary schools	37%	29%
Grant maintained secondary schools	8%	7%

2. Pupils assessed as not fluent in English	Inner London	Outer London
Authority maintained primary schools	30%	10%
Grant maintained primary schools	17%	3%
Authority maintained secondary schools	28%	15%
Grant maintained secondary schools	8%	7%

3. Ethnic group distribution in London Schools[64]			
Bangladeshi	4%	Indian	8%
Black African	7%	Pakistani	3%
Black Caribbean	7%	White	60%
Black Other	3%	Other	7%
Chinese	1%		

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63 *Education in London: Key Facts* London Research Centre (1999) p 3.
64 *Education in London: Key Fact* London Research Centre (1999) p 8.

NVQ level	Language Features of NVQ levels 1-5
5	Performs as effectively as an educated native English speaker. Is able to handle Speaking, Listening, Reading and Writing fluently with high accuracy and speed. Can switch between the four skills without effort Handles all tasks in own and related specialist fields Is sensitive to the context in which the interaction takes place and the feelings and motives of other people
4	Uses English confidently and fluently in a wide range of situations. Register is largely accurate in formal, informal as well as colloquial exchanges Makes complex sentences. Has a wide range of vocabulary, uses English word order and handles all tenses as well as passive mode: *the books were bought yesterday* Makes minor mistakes but is mostly able to correct them Understands and responds to people's feelings and emotions, irony and implied meaning but at times may miss aspects of these because of minor gaps in the use of English and cultural understanding
3	Can use English in a variety of informal situations and begins to feel comfortable in formal situations. Has lapses in fluency and accuracy. While these do not interfere with basic communication, they will hinder a free exchange of information, ideas and facts Has sufficient command of English to express views and opinions to some extent and can make suggestions: *I believe that ..; Why don't we ;* Begins to understand irony, sarcasm and jokes but cannot necessarily produce these actively Uses the present and past tenses accurately, as well as consistent use of *–s in: he helps, she works* Is able to produce the present perfect: *I **have lived** here for 2 years* Is likely to struggle with producing the passive voice: *The house was sold yesterday* Produces and understands complex sentences, using link words such as *because, although, however, despite*

NVQ level	Language Features of NVQ levels 1-5
2	Uses English in familiar and routine situations but will often not be accurate. Will need frequent repetition and clarification Is largely accurate when using the present and past tense: *When I was sixteen, I went to college.* Is not consistent in use of *–s in: he helps, she works* Expresses future plans: *I'm going to go back to college.* Makes comparisons: *She is taller/ better than me.* Word order may not be accurate: *I all the time make mistakes* Asks and answers a range of simple questions: *Is there another course I can do?* Understands requests for information on personal details: *What was your job when you were living in your country?* Follows instructions and directions: *You go out the door and turn left* Uses link words such as *and, but* and *when*
1	Can communicate in familiar and predictable situations but only to a limited extent. Lack of vocabulary, language structure and word order will hinder communication. Tends to use the present tense only: *I live in Birmingham.* May be able to use the past tense: *I lived in* Pakistan but will not use it consistently Uses phrases such as *I like …, Can I have, Excuse me, Again please* Follows very simple instructions and directions, for example *Boil the water, Close the window. Go straight ahead. Turn right at the corner.* Asks very simple questions about time, directions and personal information: *What is your name? Can you spell that? Where is ...? Are you the teacher?* Responds to requests for information: *How do you spell your name? : Do you smoke? What would you like?*
0-1	May be able to give or understand essential information on the topics given below: ♦ own name, age, address, family details, country of origin, language ♦ days of the week and *today, tomorrow, yesterday* ♦ numbers up to 10 and basic sums of money ♦ basic greetings: *hello, goodbye* ♦ responses such as *yes, no, please, thank you, sorry* ♦ very simple instructions: *help, come here, go now, turn right* Knowledge of English will depend on the client's experience and exposure to English. For example, parents may know some language to talk about their children; people working in a factory may be able to give very simple information about their job, equipment etc

OVERVIEW OF COMMONLY TAKEN ESOL/EFL QUALIFICATIONS AND THEIR LEVELS

The table below consists of a comparison of the most commonly taken ESOL/EFL qualifications as well as a first attempt to map them against the new adult basic skills standards. Please note that the comparison with the basic skills standards is made on the basis of parity of language competence between native and second language speakers; not on functional level or the effort required to acquire another language. This means that a learner who is a second language speaker would need English language skills at NVQ level 3 or equivalent to be able to perform tasks required at basic skills Entry level. A second language speaker below NVQ level 3 would not have the necessary language skills to function at a level required for the basic skills standards. Since the validity of this matrix has not yet been put to the test, comments and suggestions are very welcome indeed.

Adult basic skills standards	NOCN units	Pitman	NVQ Language Units	UCLES	English Speaking Union
			5		9
					8
Level 2 \ Level 1		Advanced	4	Certificate of Proficiency in English \ \ CCSE* level 4	7
Entry 3 \ Entry 2 \ Entry 1	3	Higher Intermediate \ Intermediate	3	Certificate in Advanced English \ CCSE* level 3	6 \ 5
	2		2	First Certificate in English \ \ CCSE* level 2	4
	1	Elementary \ Basic	1	Preliminary English Test \ \ CCSE* level 1	3 \ 2 \ 1
	Entry			Key English Test	(0)

*Certificate in Communicative Skills in English