Ethnic Identification during Early Childhood: the Role of Parents and Teachers

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Declaration

Except where otherwise indicated
this thesis is my own work.

M. S. Waniganayake
January 1992

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This thesis could not have been written without the love and support of a number of people. In particular, I will always be grateful to the children, parents and teachers who participated in this study, for sharing their lives with me.

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ABSTRACT

The primary purpose of this thesis is to examine the interconnections between the roles played by parents and teachers and children's own sense of ethnic identification during early childhood. Although the study of ethnicity and multiculturalism received much attention during the 1980s associated research applicable within the Australian early childhood scene remains largely an unchartered territory. Much of the research todate has focussed on adults' perceptions, paying little regard to children's view of the world.

This study is based on twenty-seven children aged between 5 to 8 years, descendants of Scottish, Finnish and Indian immigrants living in Canberra, Australia. To analyse the differences between the learning environments of home and school, a typology based on the participants' perceptions of their roles is advanced. The findings confirm the view that ethnic identification is a product of socialisation processes and that its outcomes are difficult to predict. More importantly, there is evidence to suggest that the process of learning to be Scottish, Finnish or Indian does not follow a serial or linear path, progressing neatly from the home to the school. It was found that although parents and teachers can alter the context of learning, children's capacity for independent thought and their everyday experiences with grandparents, siblings and peers, for instance, also contribute to children's sense of ethnic identification. Hence, when examining the contexts of learning, both adult and child perspectives must be considered together.

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Chapter 1
DESCRIPTION OF THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

Children are the next generation. They are the links in a continuum which perpetuates family lineage within the context of a community. This thesis is about the socialisation of young children, with particular emphasis on ethnic identification during early childhood. Ethnic identification is the process by which cultural customs, beliefs, attitudes and values of a particular category of people are handed down from one generation to the next. By examining the learning environments of the home and the school, the roles played by parents and teachers in the development of child ethnic identification will be explored.

The study of ethnic identification involves the interpretation of the interconnections within and among a variety of people and settings. This interpretation involves not simply the sociologist's attempt to understand and explain the particular behaviour of the children studied. It also includes a process by which children make sense of their world according to their ethnicity and self understanding. Meanings are derived from interactions. The nature of these interactions is influenced by the social context, the definitions of a situation.

Data were collected from a cross-sectional study of twenty-seven children of Scottish, Finnish and Indian origins, aged between 5 to 8 years, and who attend government schools in Canberra, Australia. A combination of participant-as-observer and in depth interviews was used in obtaining relevant data. This is a strategy well accepted by those who follow the symbolic interactionist tradition of Mead (1934) and Cooley (1902), concerned with relating symbols and interactions to show how meanings arise in social settings. Interactionists believe that by taking the participant's perceptions of every day reality, the researcher can study the "situated character of interaction, viewing social processes over time, and can encourage attempts to develop formal theories grounded in first-hand-data" (Silverman, 1985: 104). These are the basic principles and practices underlying interactionists' approach to the study of social phenomena (Denzin, 1978). Collecting data in

naturally occurring situations in this way enables the researcher to make sense of every day realities from the point of view of the individual(s) involved in particular situations. Lewins (1992: 78-81) concurs that when the researcher adopts a participant-as-observer role, it makes evidence collection more accessible. Being there on the scene makes it one of the best means of gaining access to the reality of the social world of the participants.

The study of ethnic identification as perceived by children, parents and teachers is the focus of this thesis. 'Ethnic identification' and 'ethnic identity' refer to similar issues, but capture different meanings. Identity tends to direct attention to individual traits or personal attributes whilst identification derives meaning from situational interests. As the purpose of this thesis is to examine observable behaviours or interactions within home and school environments, it was more appropriate to adopt a process oriented definition of ethnicity; namely ethnic identification. A more detailed discussion of theoretical developments and contemporary debate on ethnicity will be presented in chapter 4.

According to Weber (1947 in Runcie, 1976: 2), this technique of understanding the actor's subjective state of mind 'described as Verstehen' can be

> *... accomplished in one (or both) of two ways: (1) either observational understanding of the subjective meaning of the other's act, or (2) an understanding of the motive behind the act.*

The goal is to obtain social meanings as explained by the actors or participants themselves. The analysis however, does not stop here. It is not sufficient merely to study the individual participants' perspectives. Instead, the analysis takes account of the overall social network which provides meaning to the individual, and it rests on a firm body of descriptive data. It can be argued that this is a vital ingredient, imperative for theory building which is one of the main aims of this study, and "without descriptive data to build upon, theories of social behaviour are likely to continue to prove to be 'only theories'" (Schwartz and Jacobs, 1979: 10).

A child centred explanatory model will be advanced to analyse the

interconnections between children, parents and teachers. The objective is not to impose an external, outsider's view of social reality; rather, to endeavour to get inside the participants' own frame of reference. In this sense, this study may be described as ethnographic as it looks at the everyday living experiences of a group of individuals within a particular community. This introductory chapter details the design of the research, the choice of the research area, the sample and the field-work procedure adopted as well as presenting the rationale for undertaking this study. By being a participant of the research scene, Silverman (1985: 101) argues that "interactionists are likely to define themselves in the subject-to-subject relation to their data". Accordingly, a discussion of the factors which influenced the data gathering process, including an analysis of the role of the researcher is provided.

1.2 Research Area

Fieldwork for this study was carried out in Canberra, Australia's national capital city, where the forecast population for 1991 was approximately 287,000 (Castles, 1991: 74). I chose Canberra, because at the time, as a resident for over four years and having worked there as a teacher, I was already familiar with the Territory and its government education system.

Politically, geographically and socially, Canberra is an unique Australian city. Since 1927 Canberra has housed the Federal parliamentarians. Following Federation in 1901, Canberra was chosen as the place to locate the nation's first Federal parliament. On the other hand, its residents were the last mainland territorians to seek self-government and thus gain equality in status to those living in the states such as New South Wales and Victoria. It was in March 1989, that elections were held to determine the first Legislative Assembly comprising seventeen members, elected by the residents of the Australian Capital Territory (from now on referred to as the ACT). Until that time, the Federal government was responsible for the funding and administration of the ACT's community services, including health, housing, welfare and education.

Located inland (unlike any of the other mainland capital cities such as Sydney

or Melbourne), it has no direct transport links for international travellers. Although Canberra was the national capital, it did not have an international airport. On arrival in Australia most immigrants usually disembark at either Sydney or Melbourne and have to make a separate journey to Canberra. Moreover, in the case of many immigrants who lived in Canberra, unless they were sponsored by a relative living there, it was usually their second city of settlement since arriving in Australia. This situation was applicable to several families who participated in this study.

Canberra is also a conspicuously well planned city. One of the important aspects of Canberra's initial process of planned development was to establish a government preschool and primary school in almost every suburb. For instance, in 1981 there were sixty-two residential suburbs and only three of these did not have a government preschool and/or primary school.[1] These included the relatively newer suburbs which were not yet fully developed and occupied. Nevertheless, land was always specifically set aside for the government schools in every suburb. As such, these schools often play a significant function, providing a venue, a focal point for local community contact and interaction as well as participation and development at the neighbourhood level.[2]

Canberra has long held the image of being an affluent company town servicing the needs and interests of Federal politicians, public servants and foreign embassies. However, it can be demonstrated that this somewhat 'tarnished' reputation was not always justified. For example, in 1986, the ACT boasted the lowest unemployment rate and the highest average weekly income in the country. That same year, a comprehensive study by the ACT Council of Social Services (ACTCOSS) found that hidden behind this veneer of affluence, the harsh reality was that "one in every ten Canberran lives on a pension or benefit, that is, over 18,000 adults and 7,000 children" (ACTCOSS 1986: vii). Thus, one could say that

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1 Note however, that during the late 1980s due to aging population and lack of growth in the older suburbs, many of the primary schools in these areas had to be either closed or amalgamated.

2 Note that it is not compulsory to enrol a child at the neighbourhood government school. Parents can and do choose schools located in suburbs away from the family's residential address.

Canberra was a city of extremes, where the comfortable lifestyle of the rich can often mask the misery of the poor.

Historically Canberra's employment base was built on public administration, defence and foreign affairs. However, during the 1990s public sector employment has been curtailed and today "the private sector accounts for nearly 50 per cent of all ACT employment" (Castles, 1991: 753). Over recent years, finance and information technology related fields have expanded significantly. One of the main reasons for this is that

> ... *the ACT has a number of competitive advantages which attract firms including a well-educated workforce, expertise in research intensive and design based industries, relatively cheap land, a quality lifestyle and environment and access to Commonwealth Government decision makers* (Castles, 1991: 754).

On the other hand, mainly because of the planned geographical spread of the suburbs, the segregation and concentration of specific ethnic groups into particular areas was not clearly obvious. As one critique remarked "Canberra has been identified as a public service city composed of Anglo-Saxons influencing policies for an ostensibly mono-cultural city and nation" (Phillips, 1978: 3). However, there are researchers (such as Young, 1985: 110) who claim that the low level of segregation of ACT residents according to birthplace groups, can be demonstrated statistically. They present evidence which suggest that to ignore Canberra's ethnic mixture was a mistake, a misconception, an incorrect perception of Canberra's socio-cultural milieu.

National census data were initially consulted to gain an overview of the ACT's population and demographic characteristics. Available data at that time (that is, the 1981 Census) revealed that 51,697 residents, representing 23.3 per cent of the ACT population, were born overseas. This figure was a slightly higher proportion than the corresponding national data which showed that 20.6 per cent of all Australians were born overseas. It has also been shown that

> ... *compared with Sydney and Australia, the ACT has a larger proportion of persons from Britain, Yugoslavia, Germany, the*

Netherlands, the United States of America, Finland, Malaysia, Austria, Papua New Guinea, Spain and Canada (Young, 1985: 110).

Later Census data also revealed that the ACT has continued to attract people born overseas. Moreover, this diversity in birthplace was reflected in the social and community clubs providing recreational outlets for the ACT population. For instance, in 1988 there were eighteen social clubs based on countries of origin, such as Finland, Greece and Canada. This figure did not include birthplace associations such as the Australia-India Association, which did not have a formal club-house nor ethnic language classes held in hired buildings or private residences. In the absence of a formal method of registration it was difficult to keep track of such organisational structures.

Similarly, although there were a large number of restaurants and cafes specialising in foods from a variety of different countries, no one had yet attempted to identify these food outlets according to the birthplace of the owners or the food they served. However, it has been noted that the influx of Asian immigrants during the 1980s was directly linked with the proliferation of Asian shops and restaurants in the ACT: "Catering to the cheaper end of the restaurant market and extending the range of cuisines, they have captured a market segment ignored by others" (DNM & ABS, 1984: 10). Taken together with the sixty-nine embassies and high commissions, all of the above cultural markers or symbols were part and parcel of Canberra's social landscape. Collectively, they represented the existence and the interests of Canberra's ethnically diverse population.

Another characteristic of the ACT which was relevant for this study was its age structure. The 1981 Census showed that children aged 5 to 14 years comprised the largest age cohort for the Territory (that is, 29 per cent of a total population of 221,607). Moreover, those aged below 35 years accounted for almost 66 per cent of ACT's population at the time. Young (1985) commented that in comparison to Sydney and Australia as a whole, ACT's younger age structure was quite unusual and may be indicative of young families moving to Canberra in search of educational

and employment opportunities.

Taking the children's perspective, it was important that Canberra provided an ideal setting to learn about living together in a multi-ethnic community. Canberra was ideal because, compared with other cities such as Sydney and Melbourne, it had a history of community relationships relatively free of ethnic conflict, tensions and violence. This meant that this study may be viewed as a test case in understanding the development of children's ethnic attitudes and behaviour. It offered a peaceful, harmonious environment for children to acquire skills about understanding and appreciating ethnic diversity under relatively ideal conditions. Thus overall the study of ethnic identification during early childhood within Canberra was not only possible and practicable, but also justified as an appropriate and relevant social issue. Accordingly, one could suggest that by assessing the processes of ethnic identification experienced by a group of young children growing up in such a setting, it may be possible to isolate factors which contribute to the development of a positive sense of ethnic identity during early childhood.

1.3 Sample and selection criteria

The study began with thirty-two children, their parents and class teachers. About three months into the fieldwork, one of the Finnish families left Canberra unexpectedly. At that stage it was decided that only one child from each family would be included in the final analysis even though in some cases there were two children in the same family who fulfilled the selection criteria, which will be described shortly. By having only one child from each family, it was possible to obtain a balance of equal numbers of children from each of the countries of origin. Accordingly, the final sample consisted of twenty-seven children, made up of nine children each from Scottish, Finnish and Indian backgrounds. Table 1.1 gives some general characteristics of the children.

Table 1.1: Characteristics of the child sample

Child Code	AGE (in years)	Gender	Country of birth	FPRA	Religion	Father's job	Mother's job
SCOTTISH CHILDREN							
S1	7	GIRL	Australia	8	Protestant	Plumber	Clerk
S2	6	GIRL	Australia	8	Protestant	Milkvender	Receptionist
S3	5	GIRL	Scotland	4	Catholic	Salesman	DPO
S4	8	BOY	Scotland	7	Catholic	Journalist	Clerk
S5	5	BOY	Scotland	4	Protestant	Salesman	DPO
S6	6	GIRL	Scotland	4	Protestant	Engineer	Nurse
S7	7	BOY	Scotland	4	Roman Catholic	Bricklayer	Shopassistant
S8	6	GIRL	Scotland	3	Protestant	Teacher	Home duties
S9	6	BOY	Scotland	4	Jehovahs Witness	Butcher	Home duties
FINNISH CHILDREN							
F1	7	GIRL	Australia	20	Pentecostal	Architect	Home duties
F2	5	BOY	Australia	15	Pentecostal	Carpenter	Home duties
F3	6	GIRL	Australia	15	Lutheran	Carpenter	Cleaner
F4	7	BOY	Australia	15	Lutheran	Carpenter	Cleaner
F5	7	GIRL	Australia	15	Pentecostal	Salesman	Nurse's Aide
F6	6	BOY	Australia	15	Pentecostal	Businessman	Home duties
F7	7	BOY	Australia	18	Lutheran	Carpenter	Home duties
F8	8	GIRL	Australia	18	Lutheran	Carpenter	Clerk
F9	5	BOY	Australia	15	Pentecostal	Carpenter	Home duties
INDIAN CHILDREN*							
I1	6	BOY	India	2	Hindu	Businessman	Home duties
I2	7	BOY	Australia	9	Hindu	Businessman	Home duties
I3	8	BOY	Australia	10	Hindu	Engineer	DPO
I4	5	GIRL	Australia	13	Hindu	Engineer	Home duties
I5	6	BOY	India	2	Hindu	Engineer	DPO
I6	6	GIRL	Australia	12	Hindu	Engineer	Clerk
I7	8	GIRL	Australia	13	Hindu	Teacher	Clerk
I8	7	GIRL	India	2	Hindu	Engineer	Home duties
I9	7	GIRL	India	4	Hindu	Computer consultant	Home duties

Notes: Child Code = Identification tag given to each child . The letter prefix denotes the child's country of origin.
FPRA = Family's period of residence in Australia, based on father's time of arrival; given in years.
DPO = Data Processing Operator.

* The Indian familes in this study are unrepresentative of the Indian-born in Australia. The majority of Indians in Australia are Christians and many of them are Anglo-Indians.

As table 1.1 shows, there was approximately equal number of boys and girls ranging in age between 5 to 8 years. Unlike their parents who were all either born in Scotland, Finland or India, only sixteen children (accounting for 59 per cent of the sample), were born in Australia. Of the remaining eleven, seven children (S3, S4, S5, S6, S7, S8 and S9) were born in Scotland, and four (I1, I5, I8 and I9) were born in India. All of the Finnish children were Australian born, indicative of their parents' long period of residence (over fourteen years for each family) in Australia. In contrast, none of the Scots families and fewer than half of the Indian families had lived in Australia for more than ten years. All the Indian children came from Hindu backgrounds, while the Finns were equally divided between the Luthern and Pentecostal religions. There was greater religious diversity among the Scots who were essentially all Christians of various denominations. Also, on the basis of parental employment, the Indian families could be described as predominantly professional or middle class in contrast to the majority of Finns who were semi-skilled or working-class. The Scots families on the other hand, were divided approximately evenly between these two classes. These and other family characteristics will be discussed in depth in chapter 6.

Obviously this group of children, parents and school teachers cannot be described as a statistically representative sample of people living in Canberra. Rather, as Rose (1982: 54) explains it, one could say that this "sample was designed only as an approximation to representativeness, since the plan does not involve random selection from the population". In other words, it will be shown that the participants were specially selected for this study. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that these general characteristics of the Scots, Finns and Indians in this study were also reflected in available Census information about these three groups living in Australia. Take for instance the issue of citizenship. According to the 1981 Census, although the majority of Indians living in Australia (79 per cent) have acquired Australian citizenship, the Finns (50 per cent) have done so to a lesser degree. This picture was mirrored by the same three groups of people participating in this study as shown in table 1.1. Moreover, many Indians (that is, 35 per cent of the 41,657 Indians in Australia) and Finns (that is, 38 per cent of the 9,507) have

been living in Australia for ten to fourteen years. In contrast, for the Scots, who were numerically the largest group of immigrants (in 1981 there were 151,629 Scots throughout Australia), the average length of residence in Australia was twenty-two years. As can be seen from table 1.1, the Scots and the Finns in this study did not conform to the above pattern in this regard. This was because, although the Finnish parents in this study had come to Australia with their own parents, the Scots were young families who had only recently migrated with their children aged less than 10 years.

This was also reflected in the current trends in immigration to Australia. That is, during the last decade, although the rate of immigration from Finland had declined, that of Scotland and India has remained relatively high. By comparing the 1976 and 1981 Census data for the ACT, Young (1985: 114) was able to show that the biggest increase in migrant settlement was recorded for the United Kingdom (that is, an increase of 1,007 persons) and that India was ranked eighth (that is, an increase of 181 persons representing a 35 per cent rate of increase between 1976 and 1981). These and related issues regarding the Scots, Finns and Indians living in Australia will be discussed more fully in chapter 2.

Given that this study was aimed at understanding ethnic identification from the child's point of view, the primary unit of analysis was the child. Five specific child characteristics were used in selecting a child for the study, and these were as follows:

1.3.1 Age: That the child was aged between 5 and 8 years.

This was to ensure the selection of a stable group of children attending school and only those who were below 8 years of age. This was necessary firstly because the study focused on early childhood, traditionally recognised by early childhood professionals the period between 0 to 8 years of age (AECA, 1990). This was based on the belief that socialisation during this period is integral to the development of ethnic identification, as will be discussed in chapters 3 and 4. The second reason was that because the child's school environment was to be studied, only children

who were of school age were selected. Also, since most children in the ACT commenced formal schooling at age 5 years, it was possible to obtain a cohort aged between 5 to 8 years, who would fit into the recognised early childhood age period. It was also realised early that it would be difficult to locate a sufficient number of children of exactly the same age who would conform to the next four selection criteria as well. Thus, it was quicker and more efficient to use the age range 5 to 8 years.

1.3.2 Birthplace: That the child's mother and father were BOTH born in either Scotland, Finland or India.

For fieldwork purposes, ethnicity was described in terms of the child's parents' country of birth. Use of birthplace in this sense was both useful and necessary as a signifier, for easy reference and demarcation.[3] Also, by having both parents born in the same country, whether Scotland, Finland or India, the differences between the child's mother's and father's ethnicity could be minimised. In this sense it could be assumed that there was compatibility regarding parental values in childhood socialisation within each family. It was further assumed that a child's ethnic identity was directly linked to the family background. Thus, while only some of the children selected for the study were born outside Australia (see table 1.1) all of the parents were born in either Scotland, Finland or India respectively.

1.3.3 Residency: That the families were permanent residents of Australia.

This was to safeguard the availability of the child for the duration of the fieldwork, which took place over approximately twelve months. Effectively this excluded children of diplomats and overseas students (who number significantly in Canberra) whose residency in Australia was temporary. The 1981 Census also

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[3] Note that here, it was decided not to use the person's mother-tongue or religion to signify her/his ethnicity as this was rather problematical. For instance, Spanish is commonly spoken by many immigrants from Spain as well as others from Latin American countries. Likewise, Islam is practised by immigrants from Malaysia as well as Lebanon. Therefore it was easier to ask for a migrant family from India than a Hindi speaking Hindu!

revealed that although the largest proportion of Finnish and Indian immigrants have lived in Australia for 10 to 14 years, the period of residence common to most British-born immigrants was over 29 years. However, given the relatively small size of the birthplace groups living in the ACT and the necessity to select children on the basis of particular criteria, it was decided not to place further restrictions on the number of years a family had lived in the ACT.

1.3.4 Schooling: That the child attended a government school in Canberra.

In 1984, when the fieldwork commenced, there were sixty-four government and twenty-one non-government primary schools in the ACT. Available statistics on school enrolments also indicated that primary school enrolments in the government sector were considerably higher than in the private sector. In order to ensure access to a larger school age population, it was decided to choose children attending government schools in Canberra. This was necessary to minimise differences in education policies and practices within and between government and non-government schools. In this way, those children attending Catholic and independent schools were not included. Note also that the child's school had to be located within Canberra[4] because this was the chosen research location for this study.

1.3.5 Family Status: That the nuclear family unit of the child, including her/his parents and siblings, was living together.

Data from the 1981 Census again indicated that almost 70 per cent of the overseas born residents in the ACT were married and that the majority of Canberra residents lived in traditional nuclear family units. Hence, it was assumed that this would not place undue restrictions on locating a sample for the study. On the other hand, by specifying the family structure, it would help to reduce differences which may arise from variations in home context due to separation, divorce or death. For instance, research undertaken by those such as Burns (1980) and Ochiltree (1990)

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[4] Note that the ACT Schools Authority, which ran the government schools in Canberra at the time was also responsible for the schools in the outlying areas of the Australian Capital Territory, including schools in Wreck Bay and Jervis Bay.

show the effects of separation and/or divorce on the child's self-concept and competence. However, it was difficult to isolate the factors in terms of the way in which the family structure (whether it was a nuclear, single or step-parenting situation) would directly influence the process of ethnic identification.

Essentially, the above child characteristics helped clarify the nature and scope of the sample and therefore set the limits within which effective analysis was possible. Given the relatively small sample size, various factors were isolated and consciously put aside as they constrained the processes of both obtaining a sample and making data analysis more complex. Variations that may have arisen by looking at ethnic identification among mixed-race children or the dynamics of ethnicity within step/single parent families are both important and relevant contemporary social issues. However, such complex variations were separate and specific issues and to derive any valid conclusions would require a large scale study.

Another important determinant factor in the sample was the choice of the three birthplace groups. The selection of Scottish, Finnish and Indian immigrants was essentially based on two criteria:

i) the birthplace group's perceived degree of social distance from the host culture; and

ii) the absence/presence of the birthplace group in Canberra.

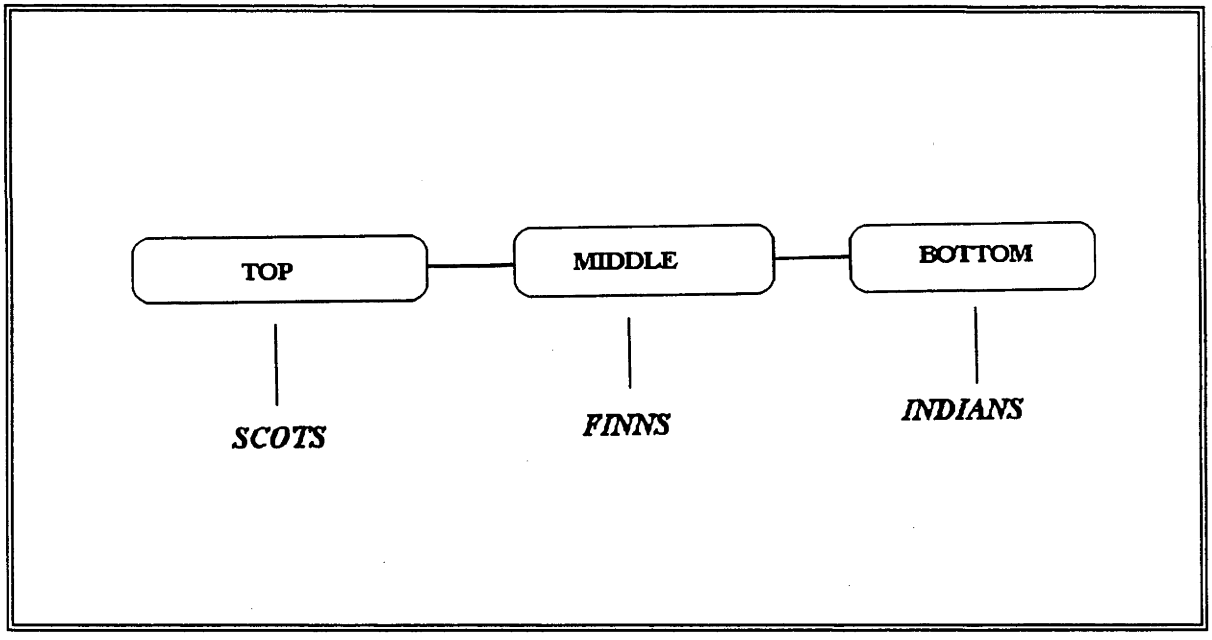
Firstly, it was assumed that individuals are conscious of having a 'certain place' within a society, in relation to the location of others. Consequently, social distance refers to the degree of understanding between the respective places which exists between individuals, an individual and a group, and between and within groups (Bogardus, 1960). These differences in location may be related to the individual's ethnicity, class, culture, religion or sex. Bogardus (1960: 468) explains that

> *... social distances are of two kinds. One is due to faulty perception and communication. The other is a recoil from acquaintance and intimacy in which differences in attitudes, sentiments and beliefs are discovered and in which conflicts are developed.*

Accordingly, an individual's ethnic background can influence what s/he says (speech), feels (emotions) and does (behaviour). However, we do not all say, feel and behave in similar ways nor are we constantly influenced by one particular aspect of our ethnic background. These differential levels of perception mean that any valid interpretation of ethnic identification is possible only from a comparative perspective. More importantly, it is argued that ethnic identification therefore can exist only when there is some sense of others. In other words, it is a socially acquired mark of identification. Accordingly, for the purpose of this study, as figure 1.1 shows, the notion of an Anglo-Celtic Continuum, denoting social distance between Scots, Finns and Indian immigrants, was adopted.

Figure 1.1:

Place of Scots, Finns and Indians on the Anglo-Celtic social distance continuum



Using the concept of social distance as defined above, birthplace groups were placed at three points along the continuum as shown in figure 1.1. For this purpose, it was assumed that ethnicity and birthplace were linked. Given that the history of Australia's 'white' settlement is largely based on British heritage, the majority of the population are of Anglo-Celtic ancestry (Price, 1988). Thus, in adapting to living in Australia, at the top end of the social continuum one could place the highly Anglicised immigrants such as the Scots. By contrast, immigrants such as the

Indians who are more visible as a distinct category, perceived by the general community as being Anglicised only to a lesser degree, are placed at the bottom end. Then, those such as the Finnish immigrants who are less visible, and could pass being considered to be at least moderately Anglicised, are placed in the middle of the social distance continuum. In doing so, it is possible to differentiate between immigrants in a general sense by using a prescribed status such as birthplace. Thus, known characteristics such as common religion, diet, dress and language spoken were taken into account in comparing the social distance between various categories of immigrants.

It was hoped that the use of three categories of immigrants from distinctively different countries, (socially, economically, politically and culturally) may help to isolate those elements which show themselves as constant, during the process of ethnic identification at home and at school. It is important to note here that the above birthplace locations were arbitrary and were not field-tested in any way. Instead it was based on a subjective assessment, and was useful merely as a tool to help organise the selection of the birthplace groups for the study.

The second criterion was to assess the size of the birthplace groups living in Canberra by using available Census data to see if there would be a large enough population within which to obtain a sufficient number of families with children who met the selection criteria identified earlier. Here, I was also guided by a desire to choose immigrants who hitherto have been neglected in research or subjected to minimum study. This meant that those like the Germans, who were heavily represented in Canberra (Young, 1985), were excluded.

One of the major difficulties encountered at this stage was that the available Census data did not provide sufficient specific detail about the children according to their birthplace, schooling or age. This problem was overcome by choosing at least two birthplace groups placed at each point along the continuum shown in figure 1.1. The potential of each immigrant group was later discussed with a 'social contact'. These were individuals who were themselves immigrants, knew and were in contact

with other people of the same ethnic background. These social contacts' primary task was to assist in gaining access and facilitating entry into their respective ethnic communities. Following initial discussion with several known families, the Scots, Finns and the Indians were confirmed as the three groups to be included in this study.

Whilst examining trends in the proportion of overseas-born residents in ACT and Australia between 1947 and 1981, it was found that the largest numbers of immigrants came from countries within the United Kingdom, Europe and Asia, in that order. More specifically, using the 1981 Census, Young (1985: 109) ranked the twenty largest birthplace groups of the overseas-born population in the ACT. The United Kingdom with 18,853 ranked first, Finland with 977 ranked ninth and India ranked fourteenth with 704 people, living in the ACT. Thus, it can be seen that the three birthplace groups which were chosen, each had over 500 local residents, and this was significant considering that in 1981, Canberra's total population was less than 250,000.

Moreover, Scotland represented one of the oldest source countries for Australian immigrants. On the other hand, Finland represented the post-war migrant boom years of the 1950s and 1960s, when large groups of people from European countries such as Germany, Yugoslavia and Italy, came to resettle in Australia. In contrast, India was representative of the more recent influx of Asian immigrants from countries in the South East Asian region, such as Malaysia and Vietnam. In this sense, the three birthplace groups chosen for this study were representative of different periods of Australia's immigration history. This factor played a key role in determining the final groups of immigrants to be included in the study because previous researchers (such as Zubrzycki, 1964; Huber, 1977; McKay, 1980 and de Lepervanche, 1984) have shown that the period of residency can influence the process of ethnic identification. For instance, McKay (1980: 19) contends that according to Hansen's 'law of third generation return'

> *the behaviours and psychological orientations of the third generation are generally acknowledged as the crucial indicators of social integration among the descendants of voluntary migrants.*

Although my study does not span across three generations of Scottish, Finnish and Indian immigrants, they all came to Australia as free settlers. This alone makes the inclusion of Scots, Finns and Indians not only relevant but also necessary. Whether or not the period of residency in Australia had an impact on the children's identification process will be discussed in later chapters. Having chosen to come to Australia, one cannot ignore their presence.

Twenty-seven children was seen as an appropriate base sample, which was manageable for one researcher. On the basis of practical logistics alone, this proved to be an insightful forethought. As can be appreciated, the co-ordination of home (N = 27) and school (N = 19) visits, sprinkled throughout Canberra became a juggling act because I had to negotiate with teachers and parents to arrange mutually suitable times for each visit. In addition to such practical considerations, the fundamental goal was to get to know and understand the social world of the participants as much as possible from their own point of view. For, as stated by Lofland (1971: 7) "the qualitative analyst seeks to provide an explicit rendering of the structure, order and patterns found amongst a set of participants". In order to achieve this, it was better to concentrate on a selected few rather than a random mass population. Thus, although statistically the sample size may be considered too small, the emphasis was placed on obtaining qualitative data of a high standard.

1.4 Fieldwork Procedure

Fieldwork was carried out over a period of twelve months during 1985 to 1986. Firstly, the social contacts as described earlier, each provided a list of about five to seven families of either Scottish, Finnish or Indian origin. The social contacts knew these families personally, and felt that they could fit into the selection criteria as described above and would also be willing to participate in this study.

I then contacted these families by telephone and their suitability was directly assessed by using the five child characteristics specified earlier. This was time-consuming and often frustrating because, after going through each of the selection criteria to verify that the children and the parents did actually fit into the sample,

many families initially identified by the social contacts could not be used. This was because the social contacts had not undertaken a careful assessment of each family when recommending them to me. Lack of knowledge about the children's exact age and type of school attended were the main contentious issues. So in many cases it was found that a child was either too young or too old. Likewise, parental dissatisfaction with the government schools was common[5] and if the child was not already in a private school, her/his name had been placed on a 'waiting list' for that year. Hence such children could not be included because there was a strong possibility that their schooling status would change after the commencement of field visits. Since private schools were excluded from the study, it was preferable not to include those who were likely to transfer from the beginning.

During the initial telephone conversations the parents were also asked to recommend other families who had children with similar characteristics. This method of snowballing was very successful in obtaining a suitable sample for the study. Although specific details had to be clarified directly at that time, most parents usually named up to three families each that they knew personally or had heard of or had met sometime ago. Thus, in this way the final sample was not restricted to a single social network, rather it cut across the various social and religious strata within the same birthplace group, as will be shown later.

Once the suitability of a family was verified on the telephone, arrangements were made to meet the parents and the children concerned. These introductory meetings were held in their own homes, at a time when both parents were home, either at night during the week, or during the day on the weekends. These meetings were aimed at achieving the following:

i) to introduce myself in person to the families;

ii) to discuss details about the project and provide an opportunity for the parents to ask questions about their involvement in the study; and

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[5] This will be discussed more fully in chapters 6 and 8.

iii) to obtain parental consent formally to visit children at home and at school for a period of 12 months.

In general, parents were interested in participating in the study and there were no rejections or withdrawals. Here, it is worth noting the enthusiasm of the Scottish parents in particular, because almost all of them were pleased to be identified as Scots. As one parent remarked, "It's nice to be thought of as Scots. It's time that someone asked us about Scotland and not about Britain because for us, Scotland comes before Britain". Several parent participants expressed their disgust and disillusionment with the then British Prime Minister's (Margaret Thatcher) policies which were manifestly the cause for their desire for Home Rule for Scotland.

At this stage of the fieldwork, there were also two significant issues of concern for some parents. Firstly, one Indian family and one Scottish family both expressed concern regarding confidentiality in reporting the findings. They were reassured that no one else would have direct access to the data collected and that in writing the thesis, care would be taken to safeguard the identity of all individuals concerned. Another Indian family was concerned that I did not directly interfere or intervene with their child at school and thereby disrupt the child's education. Although these parents gave their consent to go ahead, they later raised this issue with their child's class teacher. They were reassured by the teacher as well that I had in no way obstructed or hindered that child's learning. The teacher later told me that she had explained to the parents that the children regarded me as "a visiting teacher, who helped out in the classroom and interacted with all the children", thus supporting my intention not to draw unnecessary attention to the 'study child'[6] in each classroom.

At the same time, discussions were held with various personnel at the Australian Capital Territory Schools Authority (ACTSA) to obtain entry into the

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[6] The term 'study child' will be used from now on to refer to any one of the twenty-seven children who participated in this study.

government schools to visit the children's classrooms. Following negotiations, a letter of endorsement for the study was received from ACTSA. Later, once the children had been selected and their parents' consent had been obtained, letters were sent to the relevant school principals requesting an interview to discuss the study and arrange access rights to visit the children at their schools. On the whole, these meetings with the school principals were cordial. Only at one school, the particular class teacher concerned expressed reluctance to participate as she was concerned about the presence of a researcher in the classroom. She felt that this would attract unnecessary attention to the child and said that this would thus "create a problem for the child who was well adjusted". A special meeting was arranged between myself and that teacher to discuss the project with her and having won her trust, she agreed to co-operate with my request.

Overall, the twenty-seven children selected attended nineteen government schools scattered throughout Canberra. In undertaking the school visits, if there was only one child at a particular school, I spent either the morning or the afternoon at that school. If there were two or three children in the same school[7] I spent the whole day there dividing my time equally between the children involved. During these visits, whether I was a participant observer or a non-participant observer was decided by the class teacher concerned. Having previously met me in their homes, the study children easily recognised me when I visited their classrooms. Invariably, they would comment to their class teacher and peers that "she (meaning me) came to my house". Whilst acknowledging this in private conversations with the child, the class teachers generally underplayed the special relationship between myself and the study children in public. This was a deliberate ploy so as to minimise any changes to the child's position in the classroom.

The class teachers usually introduced me as a 'visiting teacher' and, with the exception of one school, I was allowed to participate in all activities. This enabled me to interact with all the children in a particular classroom and so disguise the

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[7] There were 6 schools which had two children each and only one school had three children.

overt focus on the child selected for the study. I interacted with the children both inside and outside the classroom, including the playground, the library and any special classes (for example, religion, music and English as a Second Language classes) which they attended, during school time.

In total, each child was visited at home and at school separately, on at least five occasions and this came to an overall total of 270 field visits for the year. This consisted of: 27 CHILDREN (5 HOME visits + 5 SCHOOL visits) = total of 270 visits for the year. The exact number of visits per child however varied. For, in addition to the pre-arranged visits, where possible (and when invited), children were observed on special occasions such as at birthday parties, community functions (for example, Indian Independence Day celebrations) and particular school events (for example, International Children's Day celebrations). Usually, such occasions provided an opportunity to interact with the participants informally.

Data for the study were gathered from observing children's interactions and talking with them, as well as their parents and teachers. The focus of my observations was children's interactions with their parents and teachers, but where possible, involvement of those such as siblings and peers were noted. Immediately after a home or a school visit, comments and notes were written about these informal interactions and observations. During these visits I used open-ended questionnaires, and in depth individual interviews were also held with the participants present. Although the children and the teachers were interviewed at school separately, parent interviews were carried out in their homes. Three separate schedules of interview questions were developed for use with the children, parents and the teachers respectively (see appendix 1). In designing these, interview schedules used by other researchers in the area (especially Taft and Cahill, 1978; Johnston, 1972, Huber, 1977 and Zubrzycki, 1964) were consulted and incorporated where appropriate.

In general, parents and children were asked similar questions about their family life (including customs, religion, dress and diet), attitudes to 'home' and

'host' countries, schooling and educational aspirations, language usage and leisure activities (including contact with own birthplace group). Parents were also asked additional questions about their own education and employment, and to compare their current situation to life in their home country, particularly with reference to family life and children's schooling. Similarly, children were asked specific questions about their relationships at school including teachers and peers. As with parents, children were also asked to recall their experiences in either Scotland, Finland or India[8] and indicate their preferences regarding their identification with Australia or their family's country of origin. Questions directed to the teachers were based on the following topics; their training and experience, school policies (on various aspects including curriculum, discipline and homework), contact with parents, children's adjustment and achievement and attitudes to immigrants. Where possible and permitted, these interview comments were supplemented by school records and examples of children's school work.

Permission was also obtained from the participants to tape record the formal interviews. All the children agreed and enjoyed this procedure. Often some children asked for the interview to be played back to them. The adults were less enthusiastic and some of the teachers in particular, were more guarded during their formal interviews as the tapes provided a permanent record of what they said.[9] However, this method was chosen because it allowed the conversation to flow with minimal disruption.

Each interview usually lasted about forty five minutes to one hour with the adults (that is, parents and teachers) and about twenty to thirty minutes with the children, and were recorded over two to three visits. Some interviews with the teachers and the parents took almost two hours each, particularly towards the latter

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[8] Although 16 out of 27 children were born in Australia, only 4 Finnish and 4 Scottish children had not visited their parents' country of birth.

[9] Three teachers and two parents were reluctant to allow the interview to be recorded; instead notes were taken during the interviews.

part of the year when my relationships with them were well established. By then most participants (especially the adults) were used to having me around. The majority of parents and teachers accordingly felt more relaxed and less constrained in sharing their personal thoughts about the children with me. This illustrates the importance of taking time to get to know participants and to build a relationship when carrying out fieldwork-based research of this type.

However, there were two main factors which interrupted the smooth progress of the school visits. These were, child absenteeism because of sickness, and staff turnover due to various reasons such as promotions. In the first case, at least on ten different occasions, upon arriving at a school the visit had to be cancelled because the child had failed to attend school without prior notice. Since it was difficult to predict and inform me about child absenteeism beforehand, little could be done to postpone a planned visit on such occasions. Overall, most teachers generally welcomed me into their classrooms and gave their time freely, to talk to me. The formal interviews were done mainly during their 'time-off' from formal teaching.[10] Recess and lunch breaks were also used to a limited extent as this time was better spent in observing and interacting with the children in the playground. Some teacher interviews were in fact done after school hours. As one teacher put it "we can have a good talk without being interrupted".

Similarly with the home visits, one important aspect must be clarified. As can be deduced from table 1.1, twelve mothers in the sample (consisting of two Scots, five Finns and five Indians) were not in paid employment and stayed at home alone or with young children. They requested that I visit during the day. As Huber (1977) found in her study of Italians in Griffith and in Sydney, these visits proved to be the most productive and enjoyable in getting to know the families. During these visits, I participated in their day to day chores, including helping with cooking, shopping and picking up children after school. Hence, it was not uncommon for me to spend almost six to seven hours at a time at one of these homes. The only

[10] Usually every teacher had about 2 hours per week during normal school hours allocated for marking and programme planning. During this time another teacher took over the class.

disadvantage was that since fathers were not at home during the day and because I usually left before they arrived home, my contact with these fathers was limited. On the other hand, with the other fifteen families, whom I visited either at night or on the weekends, usually both parents were present and contributed to the discussion.

Over the year I got to know the children, their families and teachers intimately. Once the interviews were finalised it was difficult to take leave and many asked that I maintain contact. As one parent put it, "We've told you so much about us, you're almost a member of the family. You can't just walk out on us like that!" Unfortunately, my time was limited as I had to then move on to transcribe the interviews by listening to the tapes and typing the conversations verbatim. This was somewhat tedious but the actual process helped me to become more familiar with the data collected. By repeatedly reading these interview transcripts, a variety of information was collated as quantifiable tables and as interview excerpts which depicted various patterns of behaviour, values or attitudes of the participants. This information will be presented in the later chapters when the findings are presented and analysed in detail.

1.5 Researcher's Role

The nature of the research design selected for this study called for an exploration of attitudes, behaviour, values and motives which were at time elusive and intangible as well as sensitive. However, by containing the size of the sample I was able to maintain relatively close contact with all participants. In contrast, large scale surveys which use only self-administered questionnaires to obtain similar attitudinal and behavioural information, tend to distance the researcher from the respondent. Accordingly, the methodology used in this study was justified as it afforded a better chance to clarify concepts and contradictions, both expressed and hidden. As Schwartz et al (1979: 46) state: "participant observation, when used in combination with interviews, offers a potentially powerful way to call into question the relationship between words and deeds". In other words, to be able to reconstruct the participants' reality, it was necessary first to observe what they

experienced and try to understand how they may feel so that the researcher could make sense of why they did what they did. Clearly, the researcher's own ethnicity, sex and personality can all affect her/his ability to establish rapport (Schwartz et al, 1979). In this case, the establishment of good rapport was contingent upon the following factors:

i) That I was an immigrant myself.

ii) That I was a trained teacher.

iii) That I was a married woman.

Firstly, the parents assumed that as an immigrant, I would be sensitive to their own problems of adjustment to life in Australia.[11] My ethnicity also influenced my interactions at school. For example, when I visited a school where there was an Indian child, it was not unusual for other children to ask me whether I was the study child's mother. The study child usually disclaimed this and I explained that I was a visiting teacher, interested in finding out what they learnt at school.

In addition, one of the teachers also alerted me to possible racial bias from the teachers because of my ethnicity. She suggested:

> *What would be interesting is to get together all the teachers that you've been talking to and if you weren't there, see if their REAL prejudices come out! Some probably wouldn't have been game to tell you what they would tell another white woman.*

I was not aware of any apparent 'sensitivity' in this regard. However, I believe that on the whole all the teachers generally spoke frankly, openly and treated me as a professional equal. Some of their personal biases did come out in their answers during the interviews as will be shown later when discussing the findings.

On a different level, this study also affected the participants' level of ethnic

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[11] Note that my inability to speak either Finnish or Hindi, the two major languages other than English, spoken by the participants was not a major drawback as they all spoke English as well. Only one of the Finnish mothers had some difficulty and she arranged for her sister to act as an interpreter during the formal interviews, as she was keen to make sure that I "understood exactly what she meant".

consciousness both at home and at school. For instance, it was through me that some of the teachers first realised that they had a child from either a Scottish or Finnish background in their classrooms. Similarly, with the Indian children, although all the teachers were aware that they had an 'Asian' or a 'coloured' child in their classroom, the majority did not know (and in some cases said that they did not wish to know) the child's exact ethnic background. Prior to my arrival, these children had not disclosed any information about their ethnic origin to their teachers. Following my visits when some of the children started to talk about their cultural backgrounds at school for the first time, their teachers also took a more active interest in this regard.

Overall, my identity as a teacher was by far the most important contact point with the children and the teachers. It helped by legitimising my interactions within the school arena as an equal, an accepted professional and not merely as a researcher - a total outsider. Sometimes, teachers actually gave me a group of children to work with for a specific lesson. Such groups included the child who was a participant in my study and this was a useful way of getting to know the children better, in a small group with their peers. In other words, I was allowed to be both an observer-as-a-participant although it appeared to be a participant-as-an observer.

Being a teacher was also a hindrance at times. For instance, when observing a child during a structured, teacher directed lesson it was easy for me to lapse into evaluating the teacher's teaching techniques per se and not the interaction between the teacher and the specific child under observation. Also, when problems arose with a child at school,[12] teachers and/or parents sought my advice. Since it was imperative that I remained neutral, I refrained from offering a personal opinion on these occasions. Instead, I helped to get the teacher and the parents together to talk things over and to get them to try to resolve issues of concern between themselves.

Finally, my status as a married woman also influenced my field relations,

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[12] This happened with two cases and will be discussed later in chapter 8.

particularly with the parents. It must be noted that my husband was present at all of the introductory meetings with the parents.[13] Both parents were present at these meetings and I believe that his presence helped considerably in gaining the confidence of the parents. In particular, some of the Finnish and Indian fathers found it easier to start the conversation by addressing my husband first. He, however, kept his answers to a minimum by redirecting the questions to me.

Most parents perceived being married as a sign of maturity and stability. On the other hand, being a woman made it easier to gain access to the families through the mothers, for most of these women welcomed the opportunity to talk to another woman, particularly one who was interested and willing to listen to their concerns and beliefs about their children and families. This particular aspect of doing fieldwork among people from diverse cultures is not uncommon to women researchers (see for instance, Huber, 1977 and Johnston, 1972).

Female anthropologists such as Bell (1983) and Pettigrew (1981) have also carefully documented the way that participants classify a researcher according to her/his ethnic background, sex, age, social class and marital status as well as the research design[14] and research skills.[15] These factors can influence the outcomes of fieldwork. Whilst doing research in rural Punjab as a young European woman recently married to a Sikh, Pettigrew (1981) for instance found that her kinship ties through her husband's family affected her movements as well as the nature of information collected. On the other hand, doing fieldwork among Aboriginal women in Central Australia, Bell (1983: 26) found that she was regarded as "'safe' with women's secrets" only because she was an unattached, mother of two, a woman

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[13] He did not however accompany me during the subsequent home visits unless especially invited to a meal or a special function such as a christmas party. He was also absent at the school visits.

[14] For example, whether the project is based on IQ testing, survey questionnaires or observations.

[15] For example, the researcher's ability (and willingness) to learn the participants' native language and contribute to on-going events, like helping to take lessons, as I did at some schools.

economically and emotionally independent of "the world of men". Thus, research work can be a two-way process, influencing both the researcher and the subject(s).

In general, the role that the researcher's own family members plays in conducting fieldwork has not received much attention in sociological literature. A group of female ethnographers, who were primarily anthropologists, did once organise a conference "intended to be an exploration of the effects of accompanying children on anthropological field research" (Butler and Turner, 1982: v). Conference participants agreed that in spite of the complexities of teasing out the costs and benefits of family involvement in doing cross-cultural research, having one's children present while doing fieldwork helped to gain additional data as well as insight. This was applicable in my situation too, as I was able to discuss and clarify some issues with my husband, the only other person who had also experienced at least to a limited extent, direct contact with those who participated in my study.

Clearly, all of the above factors pertaining to the researcher's role as well as personal characteristics, can influence the degree of balance achieved between detachment and involvement when interacting with the participants as well as in the interpretation of the data. Realistically, it was impossible to be completely value free. Those such as Bell (1983) and Connell (1985) have stated that the researcher's personal prejudices and values may influence the total research process beginning with "... the topic adopted, the theoretical assumptions, the questions asked, the method of investigation, the treatment of results and the conclusions reached" (Sargent, 1983: 9).

Care was taken not to interfere intentionally with the natural course of events or interactions between children, their parents and teachers. My objective throughout was "to maintain a more or less marginal position" (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1989: 100). It was necessary to minimise the degree of subjective interpretation by replacing it with critical, objective analysis (Sargent, 1983: 9) without loosing the essence of the contextual meaning for the participants. As

Pettigrew (1981: 62) concluded

> *... we all know that both in collecting and in interpreting of our data, social and personal interests are deeply involved. Hence, the subject itself requires that we understand something of the situations in which particular practitioners worked and wrote.*

1.6 Rationale for the Study

The original impetus for the study arose out of my interest in issues of ethnicity and educational inequality. During the 1960s and 1970s, amid general concern with the outcomes of schooling, "educational sociology was in demand - and was (being) asked to produce, not just statistical maps of inequality, but also explanations for it" (Connell, Asheden, Kessler and Dowsett, 1983: 25).[16] Although there was an accumulated body of research and policy documents on educational inequality, little attention had been paid to disadvantages experienced by children at the lower end of the education system, in preschools and primary schools. Research from overseas also indicated differential patterns of treatment of young children from ethnic minorities (see Ingham, 1982). In addition, major Australian studies on immigrant children's schooling and adjustment were based mainly on adolescents (for example, Mead, 1984; Taft and Cahill, 1978; and Smolicz, 1981). Those studies which included younger primary school age children, were limited in number and in scope. Often they focussed on a specific issue such as language (for example, Tenezakis, 1977) and did not address the wider social issues of ethnic identification. Describing the situation in the USA, Ziegler (1979: 361) claimed

> *rather than attempting to capture the process, sociologists traditionally have documented end-states: the degree of acculturation or assimilation by ethnic groups at a point in time.*

The same claim can be made of the Australian context. My training as an early childhood teacher in the early 1980s had done little to encourage me to seek

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[16] The writings of Fensham (1970) and Roper (1970) were the "main writings that formulated the issue at the turn of the decade" and the government's attempt to formulate policy responses were reflected in the Karmel Report (1973) and the Schools Commission's study on *Girls, School and Society* (1975) (in Connell et al, 1983: 219).

information about children's family life, let alone respond to cultural diversity in the classroom. Hence, I was keen to remedy this situation by undertaking a research study.

Another major limitation in Australian sociological research was its reliance on survey based questionnaires. Critical of this approach, Connell et al (1983: 29) wrote that

> *Very often researchers had never even laid eyes on the people being researched; at best they saw them briefly while handing out questionnaires. Normally they communicated only via ticks or answer sheets .... Such research was more like manufacturing margarine than like meeting people and learning about their problems.*

In defiance, Connell and his colleagues adopted an ethnographic approach to their research on studying schools and families. Increasing recognition of the success of this method had a profound impact on my choice of a qualitative approach for this study. I was also aware that those studying early childhood had to a large extent relied on adult informants to provide insights on their children. This had meant that children were rarely used as the primary source of research input. As Amato (1987: 1) argues

> *... academics, psychologists, and teachers often tell us what children think and how they feel about family life. So do politicians, religious leaders and journalists. Yet few have bothered to ask the children THEMSELVES what is on their minds* (emphasis in original).

This denial is reminiscent of the view of children as *tabular rasa* beings upon whom adults etch cultural knowledge. Instead, it will be argued that children are active participants in socialisation, and that their views may not necessarily match the adults' view of the world. By asking the children to present their own point of view directly to the researcher, it is hoped that this study will help to redress the imbalance of adult dominance in research and present some insights about the children's view of the world.

Historically, the study of children's understanding of ethnicity has been dominated by those in the fields of social psychology (such as Gustav Jahoda and Henri Tajfel) and anthropology (such as Margaret Mead and Beatrice Whiting) and

the entry of sociologists is relatively new. In this sense, this study can be described as exploratory. Also, early empirical studies looked at 'race' (rather than ethnicity) as a biological concept and prejudice for instance, was described as "a pathological (psychically-caused) rather than a normal (culturally-caused)" personality trait (Goodman, 1973: 250). Depending on their field of interest, researchers provided psychoanalytical, cognitive developmental or cultural learning explanations. Moreover, the roles of the family and the school and the persons included within these institutions including parents, siblings, teachers and peers, have been alleged but there has been no systematic longitudinal studies in the area applicable to the Australian context of child socialisation.

Assuming that children <u>are</u> aware of ethnicity, the task of examining the process of learning is not easy, as the process of ethnic identification may vary with the learning environment and as defined by the child. Hall and Jose (1983: 260) state that

> *... when children learn about race, they seem to be highly dependent on the type of experiences and information that they are exposed to in the process of developing feelings about themselves vis-a-vis an ethnic identity. As Proshansky and Newton (1968) have noted, children learn about race both directly and indirectly - at home, at school, in the streets and from parents and peers.*

This study examines the context of ethnic identification within the home and the school environments. It is argued that parents and teachers, as the two main agents of early socialisation, play a significant role in determining the nature of ethnic identification during childhood. Since the bulk of an individual's formative years are spent mainly within these two social institutions (that is, the home and the school), the influence of both environments upon the child must be considered.

Ethnic identification is also approached from a comparative perspective. Firstly, this study provides a cross-cultural view by assessing the similarities and differences between the three targetted ethnic groups. At the time when this study began, there was mounting international research evidence which rejected the process-product model of socialisation popular in the 1960s and 1970s. As

expressed by Goodman (1970: 157) scholars acknowledged the benefits of comparative research thus: "Cross-cultural studies and comparisons can shatter facile generalisations about children, about what 'the child' perceives, knows and feels, from infancy to adolescence." To this extent, the comparison of children of Scots, Finnish and Indian descent living in Australia is unique.

Secondly, this study will compare and contrast the relative importance of the roles of parents and teachers. My objective is to assess the relative role of factors influencing ethnic identification, during a child's formative years of growth and development. To what extent are parents and teachers more or less influential in the expression or suppression of a child's ethnicity in order to reproduce the status quo of the culturally disadvantaged? On the other hand, what factors within these three cultures of the Scots, Finns and the Indians help to promote or suppress a child's ethnicity at home and at school? Such questions are central to our understanding of ethnic identification during early childhood.

1.7 Structure of the thesis

In sum, within the home and the school,

> ... *the interplay between generations separated by different histories, but confronting common current social conditions (within Australia) adds one further dimension to the process of social development* (Furstenberg, 1985: 286).

This is the dimension of ethnic identification during childhood. In exploring the operationalisation of this process, this thesis is divided into nine chapters. This introductory chapter has introduced the reader to the research setting and design of the study. Chapter 2 presents a historical overview of the migration and settlement of the three birthplace groups chosen for this study, namely Scots, Finns and Indians living in Canberra. The next two chapters serve as theoretical back-drops for the analysis of findings. Chapter 3 deals with childhood socialisation in general and chapter 4, explores ethnic identification more specifically. Chapters 5, 6, 7 and 8 are essentially data chapters, where the results of fieldwork will be presented. Whilst chapter 5 will focus on teachers and the school setting, chapter 6 will

examine parent perspectives, within the context of the family. In chapter 7, the children's own views will be presented. In chapter 8, these results will be put together and analysed using a typology based on the participants' perceptions of their roles in the development of ethnic identification. Finally, in chapter 9, the views of the children, the parents and the teachers will be brought together. The primary purpose is to compare the roles of parents and teachers, to ascertain their relative contributions to child ethnic identification during early childhood.

Chapter 2

SCOTS, FINNS AND INDIANS LIVING IN AUSTRALIA

2.1 Introduction

For over two hundred years, the nature and character of the Australian people and their land have undergone radical changes mainly as a consequence of continued waves of migration of diverse people - culturally, linguistically, socially and politically. Immigrants from about 120 countries have come here, in response to various 'push' and 'pull' factors in Australia and elsewhere. For instance,

> *at the 1947 Census, Australia's population was 7.6 million. By 31 December 1986, this had grown to 16.1 million. Of the 8.5 million increase, about forty percent has been the direct result of net migration gain*[1] (DILGEA, 1987: 23).

This thesis is based on three such categories of people who have migrated to Australia from Scotland, Finland and India.

The process of immigration or the movement of individuals from one place to another on a permanent basis, is selective and specific both at the individual, personal level and at the group, community level. Hence, the primary focus of this chapter is to set the scene, to present relevant background information pertaining to the migration, settlement and adjustment of Scottish, Finnish and Indian immigrants living in Australia. This was necessary so that one could understand the context of the way of life of these three immigrant groups and appreciate the inherent complexities of bringing up a child within the new (and often an alien) socio-cultural ethos in contemporary Australia.

This chapter is however not intended to be an encyclopaedic entry about the geographical, historical, socio-cultural, economic and political mores of Scotland, Finland and India. Each of these three countries has its own long, histories and idiosyncratic customs and norms, learnt and practised within that country. However, a detailed description of these aspects as applicable in the country of origin was neither possible nor necessary for this thesis. Put another way, this

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[1] Net migration is the difference between permanent long term (12 months or more) arrivals and departures.

thesis does not deal directly with these immigrants' way of life as it was in Scotland, Finland and India. Instead it is concerned with their life in Australia, in their new country of settlement. Accordingly, an overview of the historical background of Scottish, Finnish and Indian immigration to Australia is provided, beginning with a brief discussion of how this information was collected.

2.2 Sources of Information

The information for this chapter came from three main sources: the national Census, previous research studies about Scots, Finns and Indians living in Australia and from the personal interviews with those who participated in this study. In terms of the quantitative data, it has been found that the collection and maintenance of accurate statistical data on Australian immigrants, particularly the minorities, has not always been easy to obtain or access (Price, 1979: A27-A36). There are many anomalies and deficiencies which make statistical analysis at times complex as well as confusing. For instance, the first / wealth Census taken in 1911 did not take into account the Australian Aborigines and this practice continued until 1966. Likewise, in the early days, instead of keeping separate records on each country of origin, the smaller immigrant groups were often amalgamated with the larger groups. For instance, "in the Censuses prior to 1921, the Finns were usually counted as Russian" (Koivukangas, 1986: 13). The Scots on the other hand, who were a comparatively larger group[2] (see figure 2.1), were rarely identified as separate from the other countries within the U.K. They were placed with the English, Irish and Welsh immigrants classified as British or born in the United Kingdom. As Price (1979: A29) points out, "British nationality category ... was all that existed for members of the British Commonwealth before the British citizenship and birth place statistics appeared in 1959".

In 1961, Australian Census collection switched from nationality to birthplace (Price, 1979: A30) but this method too was not without problems. For example,

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[2] "The Scots maintained their position as the third largest overseas born nationality in Australia until at least 1975" (Prentis, 1983:xii).

"statistics on the Indian born include not only the so called 'native' or 'ethnic' Indians, but also those of mixed descent" (Jayaraman, 1988: 542); especially the Anglo-Indians and Europeans who were born there while serving in the civil or military service during the British rule in India.

With all three groups, as with other immigrants, anomalies also arose between the 'migratory' and 'visitor' categories (Price, 1979: A28). For Census purposes, little or no distinction was made between those who had come to Australia to settle and those who were merely visiting on temporary visas. Consequently, those such as students, tourists or people on short-term employment contracts present on Census nights were included with little regard to their residential status. These factors must be borne in mind when looking at table 2.1 which shows the number of Scots, Finns and Indians in Australia between 1901 and 1986.

Table 2.1

Scots, Finns and Indians in Australia (1901 - 1986)

YEAR	SCOTS		FINNS		INDIANS	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1901	101752	11.8	-	NA	7237	0.8
1947	102998	13.8	1373	0.2	6960	0.9
1954	123634	9.6	1733	0.1	11955	0.9
1961	132811	7.5	6488	0.4	14166	0.8
1966	152275	7.1	5925	0.3	15754	0.7
1971	159292	6.2	10359	0.4	29211	1.1
1976	151882	9.2	9185	0.5	37586	2.3
1981	151629	5	9507	0.3	41657	1.3
1986	149136	4.3	9087	0.3	47820	1.4

Notes: No. = Total number of persons born in Scotland, Finland or India, living in Australia.
% = Proportion of Scots, Finns and Indians, as a percentage of all overseas born people living in Australia.
NA = Finns were counted as Russians until 1921.
Sources: ABS, 1986; Koivukangas, 1983 and Price, 1975 and 1979.

From table 2.1 it is clear that there has always been many more Scots than

either Finnish or Indian immigrants in Australia. In fact, during the thirty-nine years between 1947 and 1986, the growth of Scots in Australia (46,138) was comparatively higher than that of either the Indians (40,860) or the Finns (7,714). The wide gap between the Scots and the numerically smaller Finns and Indians is well illustrated in table 2.1. However the number of Scots and Finns, which peaked in the early 1970s, have declined in the last ten years. The Indians, by contrast, though originally prevented from entering Australia under the 'White Australia' policies, have continued to increase gradually over the past 40 years. Table 2.1 shows that there were at least six times more Indians in 1986 than there were in 1947. However, the total number of Scots, Finns and Indians as a proportion of all overseas born people in Australia, has remained relatively low. In order to assess the significance and the implications of these statistical data, one needs to look at the overall context of Australian immigration.

Available research on Scottish, Finnish and Indian immigrants to Australia, were few in number and limited in scope. In fact, the most comprehensive studies about these three birthplace populations living in Australia were each originally written as PhD dissertations. Prentis (1982) wrote about the Scots, Koivukangus (1972) on the Finns and de Lepervanche (1978) about Indians. The use of these three studies exclusively, was problematical. Firstly, the representativeness and scope of each study varied greatly. In de Lepervanche's case, her thesis dealt with a specific Indian settlement in Woolgoolga on the north coast of New South Wales.[3] This community consisted of mainly Punjabi Sikhs, a religiously distinct minority in India as well,[4] which made her study less applicable in obtaining an overview of Indian immigrants in Australia. There was a similar drawback in the Prentis study because he excluded Scots living in Western Australia, South Australia and Tasmania. Fortunately, Koivukangas took a more general look at Finns dispersed

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[3] It is worth noting that Woolgoolga at that time was the "largest single rural community of Indians in Australia, numbering around 350 and mostly descendants of the early migrants" (Jayaraman, 1988: 543).

[4] Within India, according to religious differences, "Hindus form the majority and are followed in order of decreasing number by Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Jains and Buddhists" (Jayaraman, 1988: 542).

throughout the continent.

There was also a time-related problem since these three authors have each confined their findings to specific time periods. That is, de Lepervanche's study was based on her fieldwork done in Woolgoolga between 1968 and 1973. Prentis and Koivukangas on the other hand, both used personal interviews and archival material pertaining to the Scots from 1788 to 1900 and the Finns during pre-World War II era respectively. The nature of the immigration process itself and the characteristics of the individuals who migrate to Australia have changed markedly over the years. Hence, although previous historical material can be useful and relevant, one must keep in mind that the present study is essentially concerned with life in the 1980s. In this regard, although de Lepervanche did not have any recent publications on Indian immigrants to Australia,[5] both Prentis and Koivukangas have revised and/or extended their work on Scots and Finns respectively (see Prentis, 1987 and Koivukangas, 1986).

2.3 Phases of Immigration

In studying ethnic identification, it must be reiterated that the "Australian situation is one which has arisen because of migration and it is important to understand the nature of that migration" process (Horvath, 1980: 3). Moreover, the interactionist approach to fieldwork using the participant-observation method has been criticised for its "focus on the present (which) may blind the observer to important events that occurred before his (sic) entry on the scene" (Silverman, 1985: 104). Understanding the historical and political context of Scottish, Finnish and Indian migration to Australia serves as one way of overcoming this weakness. Broadly speaking, the process of immigration can be viewed as three phases over time, as shown in figure 2.1. This will be followed by a discussion of various aspects of Scottish, Finnish and Indian immigration, relevant to each phase.

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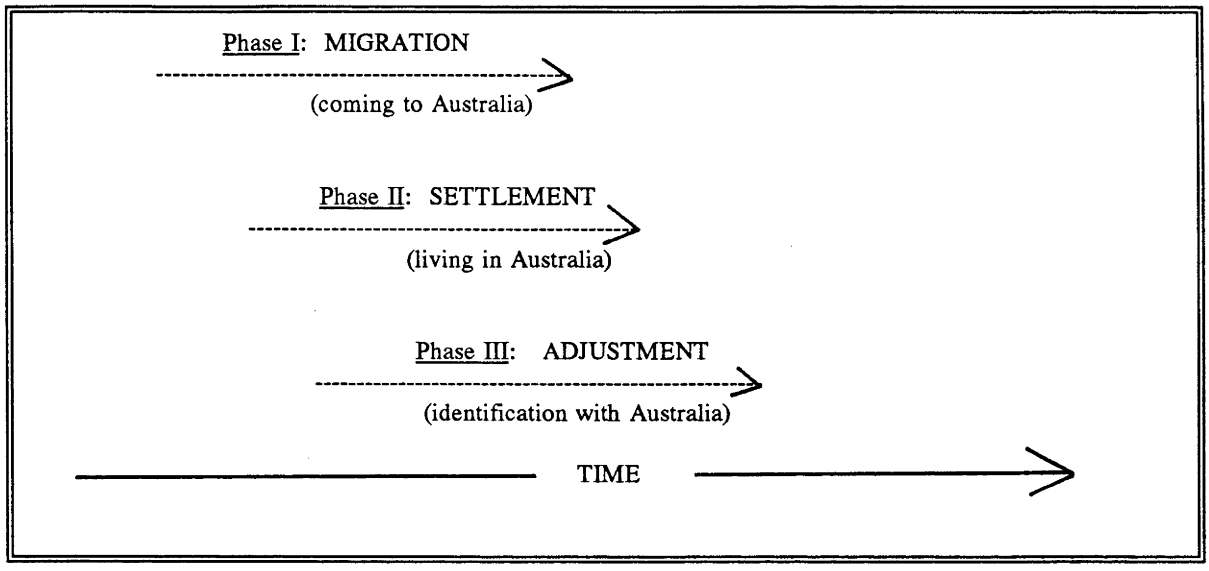
[5] Note however, that her original PhD thesis was later published in 1984.

Figure 2.1:

Phases of Immigration



2.3.1 Phase I: Migration

The notion of 'migration' denotes geographical mobility, an outward bound journey from one place to another. When applied to human beings, it includes moving from one country ('home') to another country ('host') to be followed by a period of settlement and adjustment. Zubrzycki (1966: 61) describes immigration as "an essentially human matter" since this movement often precipitates tremendous social and emotional upheaval as a consequence of uprooting oneself from established and familiar cultural contexts. Legally, there is an underlying assumption that the immigrant intends to reside permanently in the 'new' country. However, many immigrants, especially those who came in the early years, did not come to Australia with that intent. Those immigrants were motivated predominantly by economic factors and migration was seen as a temporary means of improving their material status. This was certainly true of the Scots, Finns and Indians who came prior to the turn of the century (Prentis, 1983; Koivukangas, 1986; de Lepervanche, 1984).

Large scale international labour migration from Europe, especially to North America and Australia, burgeoned during the twentieth century. Governments,

particularly those in the immigrant recipient countries such as Australia, entered the field to control those mass population movements across the world. The functionalist, consensus perspective holds the view that in the free market, migration is a harmonious process which benefits all, since the needs of the immigrant as well as the host country are both fulfilled. This view contradicts existing social reality, in most cases (see for example, Stoller, 1966; and Milne and Shergold, 1984). Marxists, for instance, argue that migration promotes the power and position of the privileged classes by exploiting the immigrants. This is well illustrated by evidence which shows that immigrant minorities are the first scapegoats during periods of economic depression (see for example, Collins, 1984).

Furthermore, whilst some people have the freedom of choice in deciding to leave their country of birth, others may be forced to leave. In general, based on their mode of migration, one could identify four types of migrants as follows:

(a) Assisted migrants which include those who were government sponsored or recruited by private employers, and received financial assistance to pay for travel costs. Government assisted passages were given mainly to British citizens first between 1905 to 1914 and later between 1921 to 1930 when the Empire Resettlement Scheme was in operation.

(b) Chain migration occurs when people of a particular village or region move to a new country and assist the remaining relatives to also migrate. Consequently neighbourhoods based on kinship, village or regional ties may develop in the new country. This was a common occurrence with many southern European immigrants, such as Greeks and Italians, who have settled in Australia (see Price and Martin, 1975).

(c) Free settlers were those who came independently paying their own passage and this group consisted of families as well as single persons ranging from adventurers to

business migrants.

(d) Refugees include destitute, displaced persons and those seeking protection from political persecution. For example, Ukrainian and Jewish refugees from the great wars in Europe as well as the Indo-Chinese who have come more recently.

Government policies on migrant selection are subject to modifications depending on current economic and political thought. For instance, the government sponsored schemes such as '*Bring out a Briton*' are no longer in use. The families who participated in this study all came as free settlers. Their collective reasons for migration varied. The majority of the parents (consisting of five Scottish, three Indian and one Finnish couple) indicated that their motivation was primarily economic; they wanted a better standard of living. Another four Indian and two of the Scottish families, stated better education for their children, as their main motivation. Only some of the Finns, six of the nine families said that they had come to join their relatives and friends who had migrated earlier. Their situation, accordingly, illustrates chain migration. To date, family reunion, though not a given 'right', remains an integral feature of Australia's immigration policies (FitzGerald, 1988: 86).

2.3.2 Phase II: Settlement

Settlement refers to the process of locating and residing in a particular area. The pattern of settlement was generally closely linked with the mode of immigration as discussed above.[6] Studies on migrant settlement, both in Australia and overseas, have shown that concentration of particular ethnic groups in certain localities was a direct result of chain migration, for example, Maltese settlers in Yallourn North, Victoria (Zubrzycki, 1964) and Greeks in Sydney (Bottomley, 1979). Parkes (1974) refers to such high concentrations of particular groups as 'ethnic enclaves'.

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[6] This is a phenomenon studied mainly by urban geographers. See Price and Martin (1975) for further details and other references.

Residential segregation along ethnically defined lines can and does have both positive and negative connotations. On the negative side, apartheid denotes segregation at its worst. However, when residential location is voluntary, it may be seen as a protective mechanism emanating from within the group itself. Particularly during the early years of settlement, studies have shown that living close to one's own kith and kin has helped many immigrants to make the transition into the new society less traumatic. Here the ethnic enclave becomes a buffer zone cushioning the impact of the 'pull' of the old and the 'push' of the new country to adapt.

The settlement patterns of the Finnish immigrants illustrate this point well. Continued use of the mother-tongue and the practice of familiar cultural customs and traditions, were characteristic of initial settlement and self segregation of new arrivals. Because of problems experienced in communicating in English, most Finnish immigrants arrived in groups and settled together in the same towns and cities. Although economically

> *Finns have adjusted well to the Australian society ... social and cultural integration has been slower largely as a result of difficulties with the English language. It appears that Finns in Australia lead a somewhat isolated life, developing their own subculture* (Koivukangas, 1988: 471).

This helps to explain the emergence of 'Finntowns' in the farming districts of Nambour in Queensland and Mullumbimby in New South Wales. A similar pattern developed in the metropolitan areas during the 1950s when seamen from Finnish seaports of Turku, Helsinki and Oulu settled down in the dock areas of Pyrmont, in Sydney.

According to the 1986 Census, it appears that the majority of all Scots, Finns and Indians, lived in New South Wales (that is, approximately 30 per cent in each case) and that only a small proportion resided in the Australian Capital Territory (ACT). It is however worth noting that in 1971, over 10 per cent of the Finnish population lived in the ACT, where only 1 per cent of the total Australian population resided at that time (Koivukangas, 1983: 34). Due to the rapid growth of the ACT, Finnish immigrants (who were mainly carpenters) came to Canberra

because of the building industry boom. In fact, 80 per cent of the Finnish participants in this study belonged to this group, having decided to settle in Canberra.

Personal observations indicated that the Finns who participated in this study lived primarily in the older Belconnen suburbs, close to family and friends. In contrast, the Scots and Indians in this study, who were relatively recent arrivals, resided in the newer suburbs in the Tuggeranong Valley and generally had fewer or no extended family living in the ACT (see chapter 6). This may be a reflection of the duration and sequence of settlement of each birthplace group. That is, it was shown earlier that whilst Finnish immigration to Australia peaked out during the 1980s, migration from Scotland and India has continued to grow (see table 2.1). Moreover, Canberra had never been a port of disembarkment or initial entry and employment opportunities were limited to the tertiary and government service sectors. Hence, unless they had a job or family and friends living in the ACT, few immigrants came directly to Canberra.

2.3.3 Phase III: Adjustment

Adjustment in this context refers to the process of adaptation to the new country. For many immigrants, getting to know the people and the places, let alone the norms and values of the new country, can be a long, slow and gradual process. It is a hazardous path and the immigrant may encounter conflict and contradictions in the ways between the old and the new. One could say that socially and politically, it is therefore potentially the most volatile phase of the migration process. For it is at this stage that the reality of learning to share limited resources between many diverse groups within one country is most intense and difficult to manage.

Theories incorporating both the mechanisms or methods of adjustment and the development of attitudes and behaviour of people living within pluralistic societies, are plentiful. A detailed discussion of these theories is not warranted because the focus of the thesis is the process of child ethnic identification, not

settlement of the adults per se. Hence, it is sufficient to present a brief overview of three basic models which reflect Australia's immigration policies, and thus sets in context the mode of migration adopted by the participants of this study.

(a) Assimilation: as a policy upheld by the Australian government prior to the 1970s, it was built on the premise of preserving Anglo-Celtic homogeneity. Immigrants were required to relinquish and replace their own cultural mores with those of the dominant British. The aim was to enforce conformity to one single culture, that of the British and thereby become indistinguishable (see for example, Park 1950 and Gordon 1964).

(b) Integration: or the adoption of the 'melting pot' theory as discussed by Glazer and Moynihan (1970) saw the beginning of the acknowledgment (within limits) of mutual benefits that could be gained through interaction of diverse cultures in one country. It was believed that the natural blending of diverse (and unequal) cultures would produce an all absorbing, common and homogeneous culture.

(c) Cultural Pluralism: coming into prominence in the 1970s, pluralism represented the acceptance of cultural diversity. Implemented as multicultural policies (for instance, see Falke and Harris (1983) on multicultural education) this model allowed immigrants to retain the core values of their homeland, accepting that similarities and differences with others were inevitable.

Australia has come a long way since the establishment of the penal colony over 200 years ago, where assimilationistic policies were inexorably imposed on both the indigenous Aboriginal people and the non-British immigrants. Both models (a) and (b) were based on false assumptions and neither has produced satisfactory

outcomes for intercultural contact and communication. In contrast, model (c) implemented through multicultural policies initiated during the Whitlam era (1972-75) evoked a spirit of optimism (Martin, 1978).

Yet, the 1980s have seen the decline in the appeal of multiculturalism, coming under threat by those who challenged its basic premise of unity in diversity as being too divisive and discriminatory. Claims of historian Geoffrey Blainey in 1984, who wanted to limit Asian immigration, provided a catalyst for the dissidents and led to widespread community confusion and anxiety. This was reflected in the recommendations of the 1988 FitzGerald inquiry into immigration. In presenting his recommendations, FitzGerald felt compelled to call for urgent reforms on the basis of a commitment to Australia, to accept and respect its basic institutions and principles which recognised the fundamental importance of Western liberal values (FitzGerald, 1988: 4-5). It was found that some one million immigrants (including 60 per cent from the United Kingdom and Ireland) have declined Australian citizenship. Accordingly, acquisition of Australian citizenship was perceived as a "watershed in the immigrant's experience"; and "the final achievement" (FitzGerald, 1988: 11-12).

2.4 The People and their Origins

Using the three authors Prentis, Koivukangas and de Lepervanche together with other more general sources, such as Manning Clark's *History of Australia* series, I attempted to look at some specific features of immigrants from Scotland, Finland and India, focussing on the people and their origins. Prior to Cook's voyage in the 18th century, little was known about Australia. Combined with the geographical isolation of the continent and the acquisition of Australia as a British penal colony, it was not an attractive place to go. This was reflected in the type of people who came to Australia: mostly single men who were convicts and those who came in search of adventure or economic independence.

In order to appreciate the broader context of ethnic identification one needs to look back at the history of Scottish, Finnish and Indian immigration to Australia.

For convenience, I have adopted the following time frames:

2.4.1 Pioneer settlers: 1788 - 1900
2.4.2 Federation and the two World Wars: 1901 - 1950
2.4.3 Post-War Years: 1951 - 1988

2.4.1 Pioneer Settlers: 1788 - 1900

To begin with, I examined the **first** Scots, Finns and Indians to arrive in Australia. Who were they? When did they come? and what did they do? In 1788, when Australia had a population of about 300,000 people comprising Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders, the first boat load of British came to stay. To establish a link with Captain Phillips and his 'First Fleeters' was seen as a useful starting point given that they make up Australia's first wave of immigrants, albeit sent here 'by force'. This proved to be an interesting task. The list of people on board the First Fleet as published by Fidlon and Ryan (1981), certainly contains Scottish names. However, since this listing did not provide much detail (birthplace information for example was not given), it was not easy to verify how many Scots were actually on the First Fleet.

More specifically, Koivukangas (1983: 31) claimed that there was a Finnish Scientist, H. D. Sporing, who was a member of Cook's landing party and hence was one of the first white persons to set foot on Australian soil. However, little was known about Sporing because he died on the return voyage. Information on the Indians was even more difficult to come by. Manning Clark has suggested that there were 'some' Indians on board the First Fleet, but he did not specify the numbers and Blainey (1983) cites trade links with India as far back as 1792, suggesting that Bengal Rum, 'Australia's first national drink', was introduced this way (in Bilimoria and Gangopadhyaya, 1988: 17). Scots living in Australia prior to 1820 were either convicts or served in the British civil and military services. The first application for a Scottish free settler was received in 1814. Arrival of free settlers from Scotland during this time was minimal and those who did come, came from the lowlands and were literate Presbyterians. Between 1830 and 1850, many Scots travelled to Australia under the government assisted passage schemes. Available statistics suggest that of the 110,000 assisted migrants who came between

1832 and 1850, approximately 16,000 or 14.5 per cent, were Scots (Prentis, 1987: 23). Many were forced to leave Scotland due to economic hardships caused by land clearances in the highlands.

In contrast to the Scots, official policy vehemently precluded the entry of Indian immigrants. Prevailing community sentiments were captured in a communique written by James Stephens, Permanent Under Secretary for the Colonies, 1836 to 1847. He wrote:

> *They would debase by their intermixture the noble European race. They would introduce caste with all its evils. They would bring with them the idolatry and debasing habits of their country. They would beat down the wages of the poor labouring Europeans until the poor became wholly dependent on the rich* (in Yarwood, 1980: 10).

So strong were these feelings, that almost a century later, history records showed that the desire to preserve the purity of the 'noble European race', continued to be rigorously upheld by Arthur Calwell, the Federal Minister for Immigration, appointed in 1947.

Despite this, Indians did come to Australia by way of private sponsorships. The first 'free' Indian settlers arriving in Australia in 1816, belonged to the landless class of domestic servants who had worked for Europeans in Bengal (Jayaraman, 1988: 542). The next forty years saw the arrival of the hawkers and peddlers who became known as the 'Ghans', and they traded in the remote country areas. They were mainly Punjabi-Muslims or Sikhs who later settled as cane cutters in New South Wales or Queensland and as potato pickers in Victoria. (Bilimoria et al, 1988; and Jayaraman, 1988).

The pioneer Finnish immigrants in comparison, were mainly solitary seamen who were attracted by the better wages in Australia. This was particularly reflected in the later part of the 19th century which forms the 'crest of the wave' of Finnish immigration to Australia. This was directly related to the extension of the Queensland government's assisted passage scheme to include Scandinavians such as Finns for the first time. The first Finnish immigrant who came under this scheme

arrived in Australia in 1899. The 1860s boom in the coastal ship building areas in Finland was deteriorating by the 1880s (Koivukangas, 1986: 351), leading to massive unemployment. This was a major factor which influenced increased migration to Australia by the turn of the century.

In Australia, the discovery of gold during the 1850s saw the surge of immigrants into the Victorian goldfields. Of these, about fifteen per cent or about 90,000 were Scots (Prentis, 1987: 25). However, little was known about the numbers of the other two nationalities during this time. It was possible to show that Scandinavians, including Finns who went to Victoria at this time, generally settled around the biggest goldfields in Ballarat, Bendigo and Castlemaine (Koivukangas, 1983: 89). Moreover, although there were only a few Indians in the goldfields, in 1854, the Bendigo unrest involving the Chinese, sent fears about an 'Asian invasion' and eventually culminated in the implementation of the 'White Australia' policy.

2.4.2 Federation and the two World Wars: 1901 - 1950

In 1901, immediately following Federation, the Federal government proclaimed the Immigration Restrictions Act, better known as the 'White Australia' Policy. Based on the now infamous dictation test[7], its intent was systematically to exclude the entry of non-European immigrations to ensure Australia's racial homogeneity. This meant the virtual end to Indian immigration at the turn of the century. Yet India's participation in World War I on the side of the British demanded reappraisal of the Indians' right to free migration to any country within the Commonwealth. In 1922 Srinivasa Sastri, a delegate at the 1921 Imperial Conference, visited Australia to plead for better conditions for domiciled Indian residents. Yet the size of the Indian community in Australia remained small until the 1950s when Anglo-Indians and Indian-born British citizens were granted entry (Bilimoria et al, 1988: 33).

At about the same time, from January 1900, Finnish immigrants were

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[7] The test of 50 words could be taken in a European language only and the choice was left to the discretion of the administering officer.

suspended from the Queensland government's assisted passage scheme because of difficulties being experienced by those who were unable to speak English (Koivukangas, 1986). This however did not prevent the entry of Finns as free settlers. Furthermore, after 1917, under threat of Russian invasion and many Finns were looking to migration as a way of escaping communist oppression. By then the quota laws restricted the entry of Finns to the United States, their preferred country of migration. Subsequently, many turned to Australia. By the 1930s those who had already settled in Queensland started to bring out women and families.

Similarly, until the 1960s, most Indians were of peasant and pastoral backgrounds and settled in the rural areas in New South Wales and Queensland (de Lepervanche, 1984: 25). Like the Finns, these Indians were mainly adult males who had left their homelands alone without their families. Many returned to India and found it difficult to gain re-entry until government policies were relaxed in 1919. Consequently, domiciled Indians could return bringing their families, provided that they could produce evidence of good character and residency status. At the Federal level, by 1925, unlike other non-Europeans, Indians were able to vote and by 1926 they were eligible for pensions. Yet, they "remained victims of much State legislation that put barriers in their way with respect to property rights and job opportunities" (de Lepervanche, 1984: 60).

In comparison, the Scottish immigrants of the early part of this century came from the urban, industrialised lowlands and settled within the urban areas in Australia (Prentis, 1987: 25). In contrast to the Finns and Indians as well as other British immigrants, the Scots migrated predominantly as families. Unlike the Finns and the Indians, their ability to speak English and their high level literacy skills based on a solid Presbyterian ethos, were significant advantages for the Scots. As Prentis (1987: 33) states "for the first 130 years, the Scots were the best educated immigrant group and possessed valuable commercial and industrial skills".

Mass immigration to Australia was interrupted during the Great Wars between 1914-18 and 1939-42 as well as during the world wide Depression during

the 1930s. As a consequence, the Census of 1947, showed that of the total population of 7.6 million, only about 10 per cent were born overseas (Jupp, 1988: 977), the lowest proportion of the overseas-born ever recorded. This necessitated the introduction of planned large scale immigration after the second World War, which led to the entry of thousands of immigrants from a wide variety of national backgrounds.

2.4.3 Post-War Years: 1950 - 1988

The main significance of this period was the liberalisation of Australia's immigration policies signalled by 1973, with the establishment of the Committee on Community Relations and the removal of the "discrimination between British and non-British in regard to citizenship rights" (Jupp, 1988: 978). Whilst the pre-war era was dominated by the 'pull' of the sea and lure of gold in Australia, the post-war era was fired by the pressures of the 'push' factors of worsening economic conditions in Scotland, Finland and India. Although Australia had not escaped the effects of the Wars and the Depression, attractive advertising campaigns were mounted to draw immigrants primarily due to diminishing domestic birth rates and shortage of labour to keep up with the rapid economic expansion.

Although the notorious Dictation Test was abolished in 1958, government policies and programs retained its bias towards British and European migrants. The importance of colour and physical appearance in selecting immigrants persisted, as illustrated by the case of

> *Kenneth McBride, a sixteen year old Scottish boy born of Scottish parents was refused entry to Australia in 1961. It was thought, although not known for certain, that one of his grandparents was coloured. The fact was he did not look Scottish enough. It was sufficient to exclude him* (in Shergold, 1984: 14).

In 1973, the Whitlam Labour government finally abolished the selection of immigrants on the basis of race, colour or nationality and by 1975 the Racial Discrimination Act proclaimed equality for all races. In 1979, a Numerical Multifactor Assessment System (NUMAS) was introduced to select prospective

immigrants and it favoured those with family ties, employability and English language skills. Remnants of this points scale can be seen in the current immigration selection procedures which consist of three categories as per family reunion, economic or business and refugee or humanitarian categories. In general, the family reunion category would apply to all three birthplace groups of Scots, Finns and Indians. Yet, it was likely that only the Indian immigrants would avail themselves of the economic (such as those living in Hong Kong) and refugee (such as those living in Sri Lanka) categories.

The dismantling of the 'White Australia' policies was evidenced when restricted entry was granted to highly qualified Asians, which facilitated the entry of those such as doctors and engineers from India during the 1960s. It has been recorded that "between 1966 and December 1971, a total of 6,418 ethnic Indians had been approved for entry" (de Lepervanche, 1984: 24). Unlike their predecessors, these immigrants "were drawn from many parts of India" (Jayaraman, 1988: 543) and settled in the urban areas of Sydney and Melbourne, a trend that has continued to the present.

Depressed economic conditions had once again led to the increase in migration from Scotland. "In 1966, a peak year for migration, approximately 60 per cent of the total number of migrants leaving Scotland were bound for Australia" (Bain, 1988: 785). Given their similarity with the wider Australian community, Bain (1988: 785) claims that the modern Scots have submerged into the wider population, "indistinguishable in all ways except by their accent".

For the Finns, the past decade marked the consolidation of Finnish communities in Australia. Although direct migration from Finland is negligible today, Koivukangas (1988: 471) states that "in 1986, there were 16 Finnish societies or clubs, co-ordinated by the Australasian Federation of Finnish Societies and Clubs founded in Canberra in 1962". He added that the second generation of Finns were not only bilingual but also upwardly mobile, having achieved higher levels of education than their forbears.

2.5 Participation in Australian Society

> *The breadth, depth and persistence of the ethnic communities' attachment to their own identities is not yet known. The present interest is clearly deeply felt and real but is not shared by all ethnic people, certainly not in the pure form claimed by the activists. The form the ethnic identity will take over the coming years is also unknown. Certainly it will vary from group to group, over time, over life cycles and across classes* (Liffman, 1988: 918).

Yet, one cannot deny the contributions of immigrants to the development of Australia. Although detailed published information was scarce, certain socio-cultural, economic and political patterns pertaining to the participation of Scottish, Finnish and Indian immigrants could be ascertained from the literature. For example, divisions which exist within an immigrant's country of origin was an important issue which was often overlooked, when addressing migrant settlement and adjustment.

In Scotland, there were social and linguistic differences for instance, between the Gaelic speaking clans in the northern Highlands and the looser family groups more common in the lowlands, where Scots English was spoken. Likewise, Finland can be divided between the sparsely populated Lapland in the subarctic north and the densely populated, industrial south. Moreover, because of the constant flow of guest workers from adjoining countries, Finnish, Swedish and Russian were the three main languages spoken in Finland. The divisions within India based on socio-cultural phenomena (such as the caste system and religious diversity), as well as Federal and State politics (there are about twenty different State governments compared to Australia's eight) and linguistic variations (as many as ten major languages), are many and more pronounced.

Such regional differences in language or religion, observable within Scotland, Finland and India however did not appear to be so marked following migration to Australia. One of the reasons for this was that, unlike the southern European immigrants (such as Greeks and Italians), Scots, Finns and Indians have been geographically more mobile, willing to travel to different parts of Australia, led largely by employment opportunities (Bilimoria et al, 1988, Koivukangas, 1986 and

Prentis, 1987). Without a high degree of segregation along ethnic lines and the persistence of such enclaves, it can be rather difficult for outsiders to gain an immediate insight into such 'local' divisions within a migrant community.

2.5.1 Public Prominence

In general, the Scots stand out for two main reasons. Firstly, of the three groups included in this study, only the Scots can lay claim to a convict heritage. Of the "approximately 153,000 convicts sent to New South Wales and Van Dieman's Land between 1787 and 1852, 8,200 were Scots" (Prentis, 1983: 18). These Scottish convicts, though they tended to be mostly 'hardened criminals,'[8] numbered relatively few as compared to the Irish (Prentis, 1987: 18). Of course, if one looks at the early Indian immigrants who came as 'coolies' or indentured labourers, they too can be classified as another type of 'forced immigrant'. For the Indian coolies, like the Scottish convicts, did not come voluntarily. The Finns, in contrast have always been free settlers.[9]

Secondly, over the past 200 years, the level of migration from Scotland as compared to Finland and India has remained significantly higher (see table 2.1). More importantly, unlike the Finns and the Indians, the Scots have enjoyed unrestricted entry and favoured access to Australia. Hence, the nett effect of the Australian government's immigration policies have reflected negatively on the rate of migration from Finland and India rather than on Scotland.

This pattern was also reflected in the predominance of Scots and their descendants, as compared to the Finns and Indians who have rarely risen to any place of public significance in Australia's colonial history. That is, there was an abundance of Scottish heroes and heroines in all aspects of Australian society. The

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[8] Scottish criminal law was more humane than the English and one had to have committed a serious offence or have a long record of previous convictions before they were deported to overseas penal colonies.

[9] Note however, that when Britain declared war on Finland on 6/12/41, many Finns in Australia were placed in internment camps as "enemy aliens and were regarded with prejudice and hostility" (Koivukangas, 1986: 294).

most famous of these include Australia's longest serving Prime Minister, Robert Gordon Menzies (1939-1941 and 1949-66), explorers such as John McDougall Stuart who opened up large areas in South Australia and Northern Territory; sports personalities such as Dawn Fraser (Olympic swimmer and former member of the New South Wales State parliament), Neil Fraser (Davis Cup Tennis captain) and Bob Simpson (former Australian cricket captain, now coach); painters Arthur Boyd and Russell Drysdale, who were "both descendants of the Scottish squattocracy" (Prentis, 1987: 101); writers such as Joan Lindsay (Picnic at Hanging Rock), poets such as Dorothea MacKeller and opera singer Dame Joan Sutherland.

Neither the Finns nor the Indians can boast of such prominent public personalities in Australia. Bilimoria et al (1988: 108-109) argues "that the 'local Indian doctor down the road' is becoming a common part of the Australian life" and that "after Chinese cuisine, the Indian cuisine has become the most popular Asian delicacy" (sic). In addition, in the sporting arena, Bilimoria et al (1988: 109) notes that there were five Indian immigrants in the first Australian hockey team to reach an Olympic finals (in Mexico, 1968) and that Vanessa Brown from Western Australia, who represented Australia in high jump at the 1982 Olympics and at the 1984 Commonwealth Games, was of Indian descent. Similarly, Koivukangas (1986: 319) writing about the pioneer Finnish settlers said that

> *the Finnish sporting achievements soon gained them a good reputation. The best known Finnish athlete was Eino Keskinen, Australian champion and record holder many times before his return to Finland in 1932.*

In comparison to the Scots, these were but modest claims; yet, not unusual for numerically smaller and geographically scattered immigrant populations such as Finns and Indians.

It could be said that

> *the religious, educational and occupational traditions of Scotland gave the Scottish immigrants formidable advantages as pioneers. Their political attitudes (nationalism and liberalism), education and special skills made them acceptable and valuable during the developing years of Australia* (Prentis, 1988: 780).

This did not mean that neither the Finns nor the Indians have contributed to the economic development of Australia. On the contrary, though numerically insignificant compared to the Scots, the Indians were well represented in the high skill professional occupations such as medicine and computer science (Bilimoria et al, 1988). Finns, on the other hand were found mainly in the building and construction fields. This pattern was directly linked with their history of immigration. As Koivukangas (1986) explains, the Finns, confined to manual labour and farming, had the lowest occupational status of all Scandinavians who migrated to Australia.

2.5.2 Political Participation

Historically too, Scots have been (and remain) over-represented in farming, financial institutions as well as the whole spectrum of government. For instance, "most of the pioneers of the sugar industry were Scots" (Prentis, 1987: 43) and those who settled in the rural areas have become graziers and large property owners. In 1986, the President of the National Farmers Federation, Ian Murray McLachlan and the Leader of the National-Country Party, Ian Sinclair, were both well known descendants of Scots families. Throughout Australia's colonial history Scots have been inextricably connected in shaping its political heritage. Three of the six governors of New South Wales, including Lachlan Macquarie (1810 - 1821) and the first Governor General of Australia Earl of Hopetown, were all Scots. This tradition has continued well into the twentieth century as highlighted by Bain (1988: 789): "... of the overseas born Federal members of parliament and senators elected between 1972 and 1984, twenty per cent were Scottish born". Prentis (1987) also points out the long history of Liberal Party Ministers of Immigration with Scottish origins including Billy Snedden, Ian Macphee and Michael MacKeller.

Against this background, the Indians and the Finns were conspicuous by their absence in achieving high office in government, especially within parliamentary politics. Bilimoria et al (1988: 109) comment that the Indian respondents in their study, though the majority were highly educated and politically aware, refrained from participating in any direct political activity. They were however interested in

discussing politics particularly about matters usually concerned with 'local' Indian issues such as the crises involving Sikhs in India and the death of Indira Gandhi. Similarly, the Finns too have by and large stayed in the outer periphery of Australian politics. Overt public reaction to political events was least visible among the Finns. Overall, none of the major writers (namely, Bilimoria et al, 1988; de Lepervanche, 1984; Koivukangas, 1986; and Prentis, 1987) have made any conclusive statements about the political affiliations of either Scots, Finns or Indians.

2.5.3 Cultural Maintenance

Participation in socio-cultural events and activities provide perhaps more easily recognisable signs of Finnish and Indian immigrants' community involvement. Like the Scots, the Indians are also family minded and achievement oriented. Though information about family life was scanty, several significant modifications have been identified. Bilimoria et al (1988) and de Lepervanche (1984) found that use of caste distinctions in day to day life in Australia have weakened, and living with extended families and joint households were not common. The relevance of caste can still sometimes influence the choice of marriage partners in arranged marriages between Hindu Indians and "persist in jokes when a mother teases a naughty child by calling him a sweeper", denoting a low caste occupation (de Lepervanche, 1984: 143). She also found that the significance attached to kin ties were retained in terms of respect for elders. Bilimoria et al (1988) however found the decline in importance of traditional authority vested in elders and this may be due to the separation of generations between countries, such as Australia and India.

Such contrasting evidence lends support to the following claim: "the ethnic factor, in this view, is not a subjective issue of personal choice so much as an objective condition created by the community" (Liffman, 1988: 918). This can also be applied to observance of religious customs and practices. Bilimoria et al (1988: 3) wrote that Indians were "not particularly a close knit or cohesive community". This stems partly from their diverse linguistic and religious origins. Unlike the Scots and the Finns, the Indians did "not congregate as a group, for worship or otherwise, or belong to any specific common 'institution' such as a

church or an overarching club..." (Bilimoria et al, 1988: 12). In fact, in the ACT, whilst both the Scots and the Finns had well established club-houses, the Indians did not have a club house, an ethnic school or place of worship. However, Indians elsewhere in Australia, have built places of worship such as the Hindu Sri Venkateswara temple in Sydney (1985) and the two Sikh 'gurdwara' in Woolgoolga. The degree of religious practice and participation in ritual, was nevertheless difficult to quantify. According to the 1986 Census, there were 21,454 Hindus in Australia. This did not however indicate the proportion of Indian immigrants who practised this faith nor did it clarify the extent of actual practice.

This was perhaps better described by Jayaraman (1988: 545) in his discussion of Sikhs in Woolgoolga. The orthodox Sikh followers adhered to the five symbols known as the Five K's: *kesh* (unshorn long hair), *kanga* (a small curved comb), *kaccha* (short under garment), *kara* (a steel bangle or bracelet) and *kirpan* (a small steel dagger or sword). In Woolgoolga, whilst the older women refrained from cutting their hair and wearing the traditional *salwar* and *kamis* (loose trousers and tunic), the younger girls cut their hair and wore western clothes. Also, "few Sikh men observe all the symbols .... many have cut their hair and have abandoned not only beards but also wearing of turbans in public" (Jayaraman, 1988: 545). Nevertheless, they identify themselves as Sikhs.

There was a similar link between self identity and religion among the Scots and Finns as well. There was however, a major difference between the Indians and the other two groups because the former did not have an established central religious hierarchy like the Scottish Presbyterian Church and the Finnish Lutheran Church. One of my informants actually described the Canberra community in terms of those who belonged to the Finnish Lutheran Church (mainly older more conservative people) and those who belonged to the Finnish Uniting Church (most of the younger open minded Finns).[10] Referring to pioneer settlers, Koivukangas (1986: 286-287) describes the key role played by the church in the preservation of culture by

[10] This is a personal view expressed by an Anglo-Australian man married to a Finn. This couple was very active in the Finnish community.

ensuring that "... virtually all Finnish children were confirmed despite the difficulty of arranging (religious) classes and confirmation by a Lutheran minister". However, no written information was available about the religious activities of contemporary Finnish families.

Referring to Celtic immigrants such as Scots, Jupp (1985) states that religious affiliation has little or no significance for Scottish identification. According to Jupp (1985:19) "the major social characteristic of Celtic Australians is their lack of adherence (however formal) to the Anglican religion". Other researchers (such as Huber, 1977) have indicated that the traditional church has lost its importance as a vehicle for cultural maintenance, first by losing its welfare role, so vital in the initial period of migrant settlement prior to the 1950s.

Non-sectarian ethnic social and cultural clubs and friendly societies have also provided a rallying point for the homeland traditions of immigrants. For instance, the Finnish voluntary societies not only "provided relief from the ardours of work" but were "also an important channel of information ... to keep in touch with local, national and international events..." (Kovukangua: 1986: 307). Over the years, a wide variety of regional and national associations serving immigrants and their descendants from Scotland, Finland and India have been established in various localities. Celebration of special events was one of their major functions, for example, the Easter Games for the Finns, Divali or the Festival of Lights for the Indians and the Highland Games for the Scots.

Such societies too have, however, lost patronage in recent years. For instance, according to Lucas (1988: 774) there were 123 Scottish societies and 70 Highland pipebands in Australia in the late 1940s. Bain (1988: 790), however argued that Scottish immigrants of the post-war era were more likely to evoke their Scottishness through their preference for a Scottish soccer or football team. She added that Scots generally disliked public displays of status. Their demonstrated willingness to participate with other ethnic groups in community events as well as the availability of television, improved travel and telecommunication links have all enabled

immigrants to maintain contact with kinfolk more easily, bypassing the need for a friendly society.

2.6 Conclusion

Moving from assimilation to integration to cultural pluralism, the government's immigration policies, in part, reflect changes in community attitudes toward immigrant settlement. It is possible to trace the broader historical trends underlying the movement of people from Scotland, Finland and India to Australia. Review of Prentis' (1987) writing on the Scots, suggests that the continuation of pipe-bands and country and Highland dancing may be seen as two symbols or overt expressions of the preservation of Scottish heritage in Australia. On the other hand, traditional foods such as haggis, and tartan colours depicting clan lineage are brought out for public display only during special occasions such as Hogmanay or New Year. Although, the Scots' use of Gaelic had all but "disappeared within one generation of the major settlement of those speaking it" (Jupp, 1985: 17), according to Koivukangus (1986), the Finnish language which is maintained through families, voluntary organisations and the ethnic media, is a centripetal force crucial to the preservation of the Finnish identity. In this regard, Koivukangas (1986: 284) assigns credit to the Finnish women, whom he describes as "the preservers and promoters of the culture". On the other hand, Hindi, the state language of India does not have a similar effect on the Indians. Yet, Bilimoria et al (1988: 129) claimed that "preference for the native languages in the home" was an indicator of the Indian's strong sense of cultural identity. To this he added other variables including dress, diet and visits to homeland with the expressed desire to maintain contact with extended family. However, it is difficult to rank these variables in any order of importance representing the preservation of Indian heritage in Australia. This is mainly because of the complexities arising out of diversity within India, and the study of a relatively small number of Indians who have migrated to Australia, have rendered comparisons meaningless.

In their research among people of diverse cultures, Whiting and Whiting (1975: 97) found that "new settings demand new learnings, sometimes a change in

the nature of old dyadic patterns (and) sometimes new patterns". In this thesis it will be argued that the nature of child - parent interactions will indicate the immigrants' adaptation to the changes in their lives, in making the transition from the old to the new country. In contrast, the nature of child - teacher interactions will reflect mainstream society's response to the presence of immigrants in Australia. The nature of these relationships applicable to young children of Scottish, Finnish and Indian descent will be presented in the next three chapters.

Whiting et al (1975: 96) also add that

> ... *many ritualistic beliefs and behaviours stem from the early childhood experiences that are shared by the members of a society and that they are reinforced throughout the individual's life by the very fact that they are indeed shared.*

It should be clear from the preceding discussion that no such claims can yet be made about the socialisation of young children in Scottish, Finnish and Indian immigrant families living in Australia. For instance, the three major authors, de Lepervanche (1984), Koivukangus (1986) and Prentis (1987) each mentions children only in passing and have only hinted at the nature of social relations within families. Their comments merely scratch the surface and simply serve as a reminder that with deeper probing, richer insights would be possible. To this end, one must rely on the participants' desire to share their experiences with others. The outcomes of my efforts form the basis of this study.

Chapter 3
MAKING A CHILD: CHILDHOOD SOCIALISATION

3.1 Introduction

A child is born into a society where diverse groups share common attitudes, beliefs, customs, symbols, values and have recognised roles and positions. Through interactions, these established collective cultural patterns are passed on from one generation to the next through the children, who are the novitiate members of that society. By internalising this knowledge, it is expected that the children will acquire an appropriate self-image about themselves and their roles within that society.

This view of socialisation is concerned with the preservation of the existing formal system of ideas and beliefs. It fails to recognise the importance of experience as well as conflict in values and power relations in modifying the attitudes and behaviour of members within the same society. It also presents the child as a follower of common value orientations (Parsons, 1955), incapable of defining her/his social goals and orientations. This thesis will however embody an interpretative paradigm which portrays the child both as the 'actor' as well as the 'agent'. That is, as the actor the child is capable of and responsible for determining actions. As the agent, on the other hand, the child can influence the actions of others. Accordingly, it is assumed that social knowledge is subject to negotiation, may undergo modification prior to internalisation, and that experiences provide the basis of understanding the phenomenology of childhood (Denzin, 1982).

The purpose of this chapter is threefold. Firstly, the concept of socialisation and agents of socialisation will be defined. This will be followed by an examination of the major theoretical foundations underpinning the study of early socialisation. The aim is to answer two basic questions: What is socialisation and what is the nature of the socialisation process during early childhood? Secondly, based on review of current literature, it is argued that the child's home and school environments together provide

the two most important settings for early socialisation. Thus, parents[1] and teachers can be described respectively as the primary and secondary agents of socialisation and a general discussion of their roles will be presented. Thirdly, the developmental process leading to the emergence of the self-concept will be described and the importance of early socialisation for the development of the child's self-concept will be explored. Here, it will be demonstrated that children's self evaluations form an integral part of their construction of social reality (Berger and Luckmann, 1979). The discussion of the above issues will however be preceded by looking at the way the notions of 'children' and 'childhood' have evolved over time. By examining the position of children in human history, one could better understand the changing nature of the process of socialisation. Where appropriate this discussion will focus on urban western industrialised societies in general, and on Australia in particular.

3.2 Children and Childhood

Descriptions about childhood have for the most part embodied a sense of mystery, magic, mirth and myth, unparalleled in any other stage of the human life cycle. For the purpose of this study, 'early childhood' was earlier defined as the period between 0 to 8 years age. Based on the assumption that the state of being a 'child' is different from being an 'adult', the term 'childhood' in general, may be regarded as the phase of socialisation the immature novice experiences in becoming a full member of society.

Developmental psychologists such as Jean Piaget (1966) and Erik Erikson (1963) use this notion of life stages, each with its biological and cognitively distinct characteristics, to explain the growth and development of the child from birth to adulthood. Notwithstanding this biological association with chronological age, in sociological terms, childhood is not a biological given (Breusch, 1978). That is, at birth, although a child may be described as a biological organism, this is not the same as being born a member of a society. Membership as such is not possible until the

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[1] Note that the children who participated in this study all came from two parent families and the discussion of the home context throughout the thesis will refer essentially to nuclear families consisting of mother, father and their biological children, unless otherwise indicated.

child has learnt to internalise the distinction between the 'self' and the existence of 'others' and then the 'self' (Berger et al, 1979).

Hence the significance of *rites-de-passage*, which must be observed in gaining access and acceptance as a full member of the group, were highlighted in early studies on childhood (for example, Mead (1955), and Whiting and Child (1953).

> *Within the phenomenological paradigm*[2] *the terms 'child' and 'adult' are considered to be part of the commonsense world of negotiated reality within society. This approach implies that childhood is socially constructed and that our treatment of children is determined by the current ideas held about them. Each historical period, therefore, is seen as having a reality of childhood determined by the prevailing social definition of childhood* (Breusch, 1978: 11).

Thus, one could say that a child is a product of her/his historical, sociocultural, economic and political milieu. As such through children's perceptions one can learn much about the attitudes and values prevalent within the larger adult community. For instance, Philippe Aries in his classic study *Centuries of Childhood* (1962) describes how the image of the child in the western world has been modified by taking us on a journey through a time tunnel, travelling from the Middle Ages into the early twentieth century. We meet

> *... the 'small adult' of the Middle Ages, the 'sinful child' of the Calvinists, the 'naturally good and innocent child' of the Humanists and Rousseau, the child 'moulded by the environment and sensory experience' of John Locke, the 'conditioned' child of the behaviourists, and the 'sexual child' of the Freudians* (Edgar and Ochiltree, 1983: 4).

Such images are a reflection not so much of the life of the children themselves, but more so of the adults, the context of childhood, and the attitudes, values and perceptions which shaped the lives of children during past centuries. In fact, Aries' study (1962) is based not so much on actual life experiences or living conditions of the children *per se*, but rather on the images of children as depicted in contemporary artefacts such as toys, games, clothing and paintings of the time.

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[2] This is a descriptive approach based on common sense interpretations which are usually taken for granted. More importantly, this approach "refrains from any casual or genetic hypothesis, as well as from assertions about the ontological status of the phenomena analysed" (Berger et al, 1979:34).

Writing about the 20th century child, Dreitzel (1973: 11) says that instead of being the basic unit of production, the modern family has become the consumption unit. Consequently, today's child is the central target of consumption, an image consistently reinforced by the electronic media (such as television advertising) which are geared to 'get the children' from an early age. More recently, Kelly-Byrne (1986) extends the economic analogy by saying that children have always been a 'hot' item of investment for adults. She claims that the essential change that has happened in our perceptions of children is in the way society places a 'value' on children. By equating childhood to the stock market, Kelly-Byrne (1986) says that today, children are no longer measured as an economic commodity with a utilitarian value. Instead, children are embalmed with the rhetoric of sentimental value, in keeping with a domesticated and idealised image of childhood, which makes Zelizer (1985) declare that today's children have become "economically worthless but emotionally priceless".

Other writers such as Elkind (1981) and Postman (1982) also bemoan the loss of childhood. Elkind (1981) draws a disturbing picture of 'the hurried child', under pressure to perform and succeed academically from an early age. Postman (1982), for instance, attributes blame on the media, television in particular, for the loss of innocence by introducing children to the seamier side of adulthood, including drugs and violence, too soon. Reviewing such literature, Edgar (1989) calls for a reassessment of the child's place in today's society. Rather than promoting the development of individual self interests, Edgar (1989: 6-7) advocates an intergenerational approach to family policy, one which builds on the links between children, parents and grandparents.

One cannot ignore the pressures of modern living which affect children. Children's lives are continuously altered and modified through shifts in labour market activity (increase in maternal employment in particular), impact of international and domestic politics on family policy and programs (including immigration) and pollution of the environment, to name a few. The underlying issue is whose responsibility is it to care for children: is it a private or a public concern? Examination of the context of socialisation within the family and the school, may explicate the interconnections

between the private and public domains.

The view of the child as an active, autonomous human being capable of influencing and being influenced by others is not new. However, such a view rejects the classical cognitive developmental model of Piaget (1966) which portrays the child as dependent and object-like, set apart from the social context. This has been cited as one of the major weaknesses of the Piagetian child development theory. Over a decade ago, substantial research evidence was collected on child social development, enabling contemporary scholars to contest Piaget's views by demonstrating that it has been shown that the child cannot be understood in isolation from her/his social surroundings (Samuels, 1977).

Writing in the 1970s, those such as Denzin (1977) and Goodman (1970), concerned with childhood socialisation and culture, lamented the lack of a sociology of childhood. Reviewing the literature in the field during the 1980s, it is difficult to assess how much further sociologists have progressed in developing a coherent theory towards understanding childhood socialisation. Thorne (1985: 695) for instance, demands:

> *Where are the children in sociological thought? When studied at all, their lives and experiences have been ghettoized in a few subfields - the family, education or the socialisation portion of social psychology. Few studies of social organisation, work, political or urban sociology, or even stratification pay close attention to the lives of children. Sociological theory is deeply adult-centred considering children mostly under the question of how the social order is reproduced. The twin frameworks of 'socialisation' and 'development' - ahistorical, individualistic and teleological (defining children more by their becoming than by their being) - have largely eclipsed other sociological approaches to children and childhood.*

Tracing the history of sociological interest in childhood studies, Furstenberg (1985) remarks that family sociologists lost interest in this area during the post-war era. During this time we also see the increasing division between sociology and psychology. Although psychologists branched out into the area of child growth, sociologists became involved in the later life cycle stages (especially adolescence), kinship relations and marriage. It is historians interested in family history (such as Aries, 1962 and De

Mause, 1974) and, more recently, the growth of feminist scholars looking at the changing family roles (for example Burns, Bottomley and Jools, 1983), have been influential in rekindling the interest of sociologists in their return to the field of socialisation.

Much of the early research on young children and childhood was slow to recognise the relative importance of culture and socialisation, particularly the role of the family as sociological phenomena (Furstenberg, 1985 and Jakubowicz, 1985). Although not negating the social influences, the cognitive and psychological aspects of child growth assumed more importance at the time. Thus, the Piagetian view for instance holds that "the social environment merely provides the raw material on which the cognitive processes actively operates" (Yussen and Santrock, 1978: 428).

There are several reasons why the study of children and childhood is a much neglected area within the major discipline of sociology. One of the main drawbacks in doing research in this area rests on the problematical nature of working with young children. Most adults find it difficult to communicate with young children, particularly because children's cognitive and verbal skills are under-developed during the early years of life. This is only part of the problem, and a minor aspect at that. I would argue that it is the adults who fail in their lack of ability to listen, observe, talk and understand children's expressions. Instead, we often misunderstand or misinterpret what children actually say or do. This problem arises because most adults try to force the child's explanation to comply with those of the adult's perceptions.

Piaget (1966), for instance, claimed that children are not capable of logical thought until about the age of 7 years. Yet there is a growing body of data which demonstrates clearly that it is the adult's inability to understand the child's perspective, which often leads to misinterpretations and misunderstandings. Tizard and Hughes (1984: 238) found that it was usually left to the preschoolers

> *... to give the staff the appropriate information in a clear and comprehensible form. They could be helped if the staff asked the right questions but this did not always happen.*

By default, it assumes child competence by assigning responsibility for clarification to the child. Although the teacher continues to maintain the position of power and authority, for the child the outcome of such a situation is usually one of frustration and disappointment. In so doing, one undervalues the child's capacity for independent thought and action as the child's views are not accepted seriously. Goodman (1970) calls this the 'underestimation fallacy'. MacKay (1973) also agrees that theoretical formulations about childhood socialisation based on perceiving children as 'incomplete beings' are fallacious. Such a view, like a mask, conceals the rich interactive dimensions between children and adults. This mask, he adds, is a symbolic representation of the inadequacy of adult perceptions of children and is also symptomatic of our inability to conceptualise children as independent beings in their own right. MacKay (1973: 31) concludes that:

> *If the two claims are correct, that children are competent interpreters of the social world and that they possess a separate culture(s), then the study of adult-child interaction (formerly socialisation) becomes the study of cultural assimilation, or, more theoretically important, the study of meaningful social interaction.*

In this case it is the adults who must learn to empathise, by being able to imagine social reality the way the child sees it.

As a possible solution to this dilemma of assessing adult - child interactions, Davies (1982) suggests that perhaps what one needs to do is to look at children and childhood as an anthropologist would view a 'Stone Age tribe' in a remote part of the world. That is, the emphasis is placed on the need to look at children for their own sake as competent and complete citizens in their own right. Children creating their own experiences, and giving them their own meanings, are often a source of conflict because of the different interpretations adults place on them. Adults usually tend to dismiss the children's perceptions as merely 'childish' denoting that they are irrelevant or irresponsible simply because it is a child's point of view. Like Goodman (1970) and MacKay (1973), I believe that this is a mistake and that this can have serious consequences by undermining the rights of the child as a citizen.

Over the years, finding an appropriate methodology to work with young children

has been a major challenge to researchers in this field. During the 1960s and 1970s, the dominant research paradigm saw the use of the process-product model which attempted to establish a causal link between family processes and outcomes of child rearing practices (such as language development). These studies were more concerned with the end product and failed to come to terms with the underlying processes which either help or hinder the course of childhood socialisation. Schaffer (1984) also points out that most of the evidence was collected indirectly (as reported by parents or others; not by the children) and little or no notice was taken of the time gap between assumed cause and effect and the impact of intervening events. As Ogbu (1982) adds, outcomes cannot be viewed in isolation from contemporary historical, social, economic and political realities in the wider community. Consequently, all these have meant an overloading of the concept of socialisation with inferences as to what in fact transpires between parent and child that could account for the latter's developmental change (Schaffer, 1984: 168). Such problems are in part due to the nature and form of socialisation, as will be discussed below.

3.3 Socialisation: A description.

Socialisation may be defined as a complex, interactive social process which occurs between two or more individuals. Conventionally, it is the means by which existing knowledge, beliefs and values of a community are passed on from one generation to the next. This process as a whole may be described as both ubiquitous and universal, in that it is present everywhere, and applicable to all persons. That is, traditionally, childhood has been described as an universal phenomenon experienced within all human societies. As Berger et al (1979: 156) explain it, early socialisation is based on the

> *... social recognition of biological growth and differentiation. Thus every program, in any society, must recognise that a one-year-old child cannot be expected to learn what a three-year-old can.*

More importantly, one must recognise that the nature and outcomes of socialisation will also vary according to time and place as well as gender, social class and ethnicity.

Breusch (1978) argues that childhood is neither an automatic nor an ascribed

status; rather it is a status which is socially acquired and ideologically constructed. The newborn child has no conceptual understanding of childhood or its expectations. Through interaction with socially significant people, children begin to learn that there are differences between themselves and the older generation in terms of various social constructs such as wants, expectations, rights and responsibilities. Invariably, they will find that because of their stage (or age) in the life cycle, children's access to resources and power are limited and are controlled by adults. Determination of compulsory years of schooling and lack of voting rights are two examples of adult control over children found in many western societies.

Socialisation also is not a mechanically structured event or a process which is strictly controlled by the adults and passively followed by the children. Nor is it a magical process which 'just happens' without human involvement, thought and action. Moreover, despite the functionalists' stress on consensus and conformity to social norms and values, socialisation is neither smooth nor uniformly effective. Empirical studies on deviance and inequality, for instance, provide ample evidence confirming that socialisation as a process of teaching and learning is neither passive nor one-directional. Instead both the child and the adult are active participants, each one influencing the other in understanding the social reality of the world in which they live. This process is not restricted to childhood, and is continuous and changeable throughout one's lifetime. Socialisation is therefore individualistic because the nature of the process, how and where it occurs, varies from one individual to another.

Individuals or structures which impart social knowledge about a society's values, norms and beliefs, are called 'agents of socialisation'. Based on their proximity and association with the child, these agents may be classified as either primary or secondary. As such, parents and other close family members may be regarded as primary agents, and in most societies the family is the child's first and major socialising agency during childhood. Entry to school introduces the already socialised child to another social context. Any such subsequent socialisation process may be described as secondary socialisation. Teachers, one of the main agents responsible for the child's social induction into the schooling context, therefore may be described as secondary

agents of socialisation.

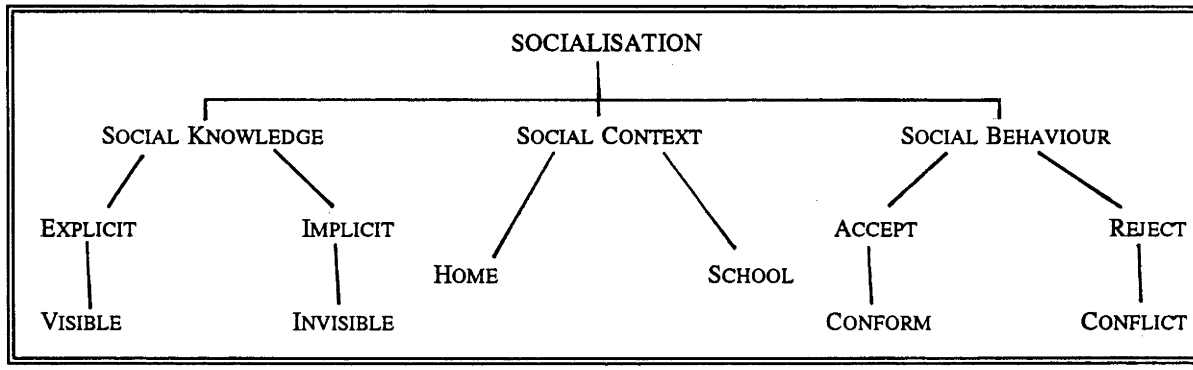
Early explanations of child social development stressed the importance of both ecological factors (such as adaptations to the climate and the physical environment) as well as human biological factors (including the child's sex, skin colour and facial features) as determinants of socialisation.[3] Moreover, traditionally, religious institutions (such as the church or temple) have been used as agents of socialisation. Likewise, today, the media, especially the television, exerts considerable influence over young children's lives[4].

Since this study is aimed at understanding home and school influences, the central focus is on the roles of parents and teachers. This does not negate the influence of any other social context experienced by children of this age; for example, after-school-care programs. A discussion of such settings will be included depending on their relevance and perceived importance to the participants of this study.

Overall, socialisation may be characterised by three basic social elements: knowledge, context and behaviour as shown in figure 3.1.

Figure 3.1:

Process of Socialisation



[3] Refer Werner (1979) for an extensive examination of these aspects based on an array of cross-cultural studies.

[4] Refer Holman (1980) and Edgar (1977) for a discussion on the role of television in children's lives.

Social knowledge is the shared body of information pertaining to the values of a society. Values are general guidelines or standards, which are either explicitly stated and deliberately taught (that is, it is visible); or they are understood subconsciously, indirectly acquired and are taken-for-granted (or invisible). For instance, in urban Australia, it is expected that when appearing in public, a child will be clothed but if attending school, whether a child has to wear a school uniform or not, is specified by the school. Accordingly, the child learns that there are different social contexts containing various institutions such as the home, the school, the government, and religious institutions, which make up society. In turn, the child also learns that there are expected social behaviours (that is, roles and norms) linked with particular positions, which may be linked to these institutions.

The child's behaviour will be accepted or rejected depending on whether s/he conforms or is in conflict with the norms of the society. Consequently, depending on the degree of accommodation and adjustment to given social norms, an individual may be regarded as either 'over socialised' (that is, highly conformist) or 'under socialised' (or depict a lower level of conformity).[5] It is, however, more important to recognise the existence of differential levels of socialisation because socialisation is not a linear, self-contained system.[6] On the whole, an awareness and an ability to co-ordinate these three elements are necessary to participate in society.

On the one hand, given the interdependence of various societal parts, learning to become a member of one's society is a significant aspect of child growth and development. From birth, the child's survival is linked with learning how to relate to others. The infant's first smile is a significant sign of this early learning. On the other hand, socialisation also enables the continuation of society as discussed earlier. Taken

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[5] Refer to Berger and Luckmann's (1979) use of the terms successful/unsuccessful socialisation.

[6] Note that figure 3.1 was used merely as an illustration for ease of discussion.

together, socialisation explains how and why society is possible. Thus, Denzin (1977: 5) claims:

> *... the nexus between self and society lies in the socialisation process and any theory of 'how society is possible' (Simmel, 1950) must be one that accounts for the social and therefore the socialising experiences of the young child.*

It is through interactions with 'significant others', both adults (for example, parents and teachers) and other children (for example, siblings and peers) that the child learns about the social world. Meanings arise from interactions and may be changed and reshaped over time. More importantly, what is acquired during early childhood has significant implications for the child's future life chances. For, there is a substantial body of research[7] which highlights the importance of the effects of and the enduring nature of socialisation during early childhood. Berger et al (1979: 162) go so far as to assert that "... it takes severe biographical shocks to disintegrate the massive realities internalised in early childhood; much less to destroy the realities internalised later".

3.4 Genesis of the Self

> *Aside from the early observations of Baldwin (1897), Mead (1934; 1938) and Cooley (1922), few sociologists have directly addressed themselves to the subject of the genesis of self in early childhood. (For important exceptions, see Bain, 1936; Kuhn, 1954; Allport, 1961; Shibutani, 1961; Blumer, 1969; Parson and Bales, 1955; Parson, 1968; Stone and Farberman, 1970.) These exceptions have been seldom grounded in empirical observations; they represent conceptual additions or revisions of the Mead-Cooley perspective or, as in the case of Parsons, Freud* (Denzin, 1977: 115).

As the child grows her/his physical, cognitive and emotional skills develop in a variety of ways. Physically, during the early years, rapidly gaining in weight and in height, the child's neurological functions are matched with motor maturity. The child is able to walk, talk, push and pull whilst interacting both with people and objects in the environment. Cognitively, for instance, the child learns to coordinate language with

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[7] Evidence from international longitudinal studies such as the Head Start Programme in the USA and the Newsome's studies (1976) in the UK are particularly pertinent.

thought to solve problems. Likewise, emotionally, with increasing maturity together with the gradual loss of egocentrism, the child's dependence and reliance on others decreases.

These developmental aspects by themselves do not tell us the way in which a child becomes a member of society. For instance, how does the child know what is acceptable behaviour at home, school, temple or railway station; which specific techniques are used for food preparation; or what is the relationship between parents, peers and parliamentarians? Cooley (1902) calls this aspect of development 'human nature'. It consists of sentiments or skills which enables us to empathise with others by being able to imagine how the others (not just the self) may feel in a given situation. It also denotes our ability to symbolise by giving meaning to various forms of expressions. These sentiments, Cooley (1902: 30) added are essentially acquired within the 'primary groups':

> *... those simple face-to-face groups that are somewhat alike in all societies; groups of the family, the playground, and the neighbourhood. .... Man does not have it at birth; he cannot acquire it except through fellowship and it decays in isolation.*

Thus, just as much as mothering is not an innate skill at birth, the child too is not genetically endowed with the necessary skills to participate effectively in society. Instead, these skills are learnt, slowly, over time. This process is called socialisation. The awareness of the 'self' or the self-concept, refers to the sum total of the individual's feelings and perceptions of the self.

By the turn of the last century, scholars were able to show that acquisition of the self-concept is not an innate skill. The newborn can neither distinguish the self from others nor separate its physical body from the surrounding environment. Attachment, or the development of a close bond between the newborn and the primary caregiver, who is traditionally the mother, is one of the first and critical developmental milestones of infancy. John Bowlby (1951) and later Mary Ainsworth (1972) claimed that secure mother-child attachment is critical for healthy development, and their views influenced attitudes and approaches to parenting in the 1960s and 1970s. More recently, Bowlby's claim that "mother love in infancy and childhood is as important

for mental health as are vitamins and proteins for physical health" (Bowlby, 1951: 62) has been widely rejected mainly because of his failure to examine the role of fathers in infant socialisation. Those such as Park and Swain (1976) and Russell and Russell (1987) provide clear evidence which negates the traditional cultural stereotype of fathers who were portrayed as men who were uninvolved, uninterested, less affectionate and inept in their fathering role. To what extent this situation is more real than imagined remains to be confirmed when applying it to contemporary Australia.

Also, Erikson (1963) wrote of the importance of consistency in maternal love in the development of trust as a necessary foundation for identity formation. Piagetian theory suggests that with the acquisition of language skills, self awareness accelerates. Mead (1934) saw this as important because the expansion of the child's ability to exchange ideas verbally with others increases the need to become better organised in defining what belongs to the self. This is demonstrated in the use of terms such as 'mine', 'me' and 'I'. It provides the child with a sense of oneness or unity, capable of independent action. 'Identity' on the other hand refers to the composite amalgam of various roles an individual adopts when interacting with the environment. A child may be described as a girl, a daughter, an extrovert or a skilful chess player all within one self. The expression of these separate identifications is contextually situated and culturally influenced. Moreover, the silences, what you do not actually say, do or show explicitly, may also be crucial. This may indicate either taken-for-granted things about the self or, alternatively, it may be a sign of acting out an expected set of roles or behaviours.

The child's understanding of self and the development of self identity are both linked to the process of socialisation the child undergoes during early childhood. These two concepts of self and identity, when put together, show the formation of 'selfhood' or self concept, by combining both the affective and behavioural characteristics of the individual.

Self concept incorporates personal perceptions about one's physical and sexual characteristics (that is, body image), sociability (including religious and cultural

expectations), cognitive or academic skills and self esteem, which consists of the subjective evaluations of one's self. Its growth cannot be easily measured or explained. A reasonably accurate picture may be obtained by asking the individual to provide a personal description about self,[8] for each of us carries with us a sense of who we are and why we are different from everyone else. The question of 'Who am I?' is one which is consistently evaluated during childhood either consciously or sub-consciously.

To get an accurate understanding of an individual's self concept one needs to get access to that person's conscious and subconscious self evaluations. Followers of the Freudian psychoanalytic tradition hold the view that the unconscious (instinctive and subjective) factors are more powerful than the conscious, rational determinants of the self concept. Samuels (1977: 46) states that "it is easier to abstract the unconscious meanings from the behaviour in the young child" rather than an adult because children's behaviour is largely spontaneous and not contrived. She adds that problems arise "when we attempt to obtain a scientific and testable definition of underlying processes" (Samuels, 1977: 46). Reviews of self concept studies in fact raise more questions than answers about the validity of the instrumentation and procedures used by scholars to measure self concept.

Accordingly, self evaluations and naturalistic observational settings provide the best means of understanding a child's self concept. This approach is compatible with Cooley's notion of the 'looking glass self': the development of the self based on the child's ability to look at the self as s/he imagines others do. Since there is no specialised sociology of childhood (refer Denzin, 1977 and Adler and Adler, 1987), as foreshadowed in chapter 1, the symbolic interactionist perspective following Cooley (1902) and Mead (1934) will be used to present a contextual framework to explore the nature of childhood socialisation. Davies (1982: 16) describes this as the 'ethogenic approach'

> *... the way individuals struggle to present themselves coherently as worthwhile people, and in the power of social contexts which facilitate or detract from each individual's attempts.*

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[8] Following the work of Carl Rogers (1951) this approach has been used by guidance counsellors to help improve a person's self esteem (in Yussen et al, 1978).

In other words, an ethnogenic approach enables the researcher to get inside the participants' own world, and allows them (in this case the children) to account for social reality from their own perspective. More specifically, the children in this study are not only the principal players but they were given the opportunity to speak directly to the researcher indicating their perceptions relevant to the process of ethnic identification.

Clearly, the development of the self is essentially an interactive process (Cooley, Mead and Piaget) based on the assumption that such change is inevitable. Mead and Piaget have each postulated a stage based model with fixed levels through which the child must pass through in order to acquire an understanding of the self. Because of the fixed nature of these stages, each model represents a different pattern of growth. However, both focussed on the affective and cognitive processes, stressed the importance of interaction and "rejected associationist and stimulus response theories of learning" (Denzin, 1977: 118).

Piaget (1966) and Mead (1934) are also similar in that each one adhered to an orderly progressive sequence of development in which the child's awareness and level of conceptualisation improves with age. More importantly, it must be noted that both stated that the recognition of others precedes the recognition of the self. That is, in order to be able to conceptualise the self as a distinct entity, the child must first be able to separate the self from other persons and objects in the environment. This also means that the child must be able to recognise other perspectives, link the concept of the self as being separate from appearance (that is, as a part of the physical body), both as object and subject.

Denzin (1977) however challenges the orderliness and direction of the developmental sequence proposed by Mead and Piaget, suggesting that the child's understanding is contingent on symbolic and interactional experiences. He proposes that selfhood begins with the child's awareness of her/his given name. This is a label, a mark of identification which the child is given at birth. Use of this name repeatedly at home first and then later away from the family helps to teach and reinforce the

notion of a separate person. In this way Denzin (1977) claims that the recognition of the self and the other occurs almost simultaneously.

This view is supported by the work of those such as Allport (1958) and Goodman (1970). Allport also agrees that the development of selfhood begins with learning to refer to the self by one's given name. Goodman's work with Japanese children highlights the need for caution regarding the global application of such explanations. She found that although Japanese children have a strong sense of self, they "seldom refer to the self at all, either by name or by possessive pronoun ('my sister', 'my book', etc)" (Goodman, 1970: 27). One could therefore suggest that the parameters of self identification may be gender related or class related and the significance of each denominator varies between cultures. This is supported by Lambert and Klineberg's (1967) eleven nation study of young children. They found, for instance, that gender was the preferred self description used by American, Canadian and German children in comparison to race for the Bantu children in Africa.

3.5 Contexts of Socialisation

Historically, it can be shown that the role and functions of the school and the home as agents of socialisation have undergone significant changes (Bronfenbrenner, 1984; Dreitzel, 1973). Whilst the family has moved away from being overtly restrictive (as in the 18th century) to becoming more permissive, the school too has lost its early glamour as a mandatory societal institution.[9] According to Dreitzel (1973: 12) "schools have become an instrument of status conflict rather than an institution of meaningful education". On the other hand, Parsons (1955) maintained that the traditional nuclear family unit of parents and children did not become extinct, rather it became more specialised and performs less functions better. The Parsonian approach has been much criticised because of its concern only with the positive outcomes of socialisation; for its failure to recognise the role of other agents (such as peers), and its failure to acknowledge the existence of diverse family structures (such as single parent

[9] In Australia, although within certain age periods, schooling is regarded as compulsory, the forms of educational institution the child attends is not restricted to public schools. Some parents may and do choose to educate children at home even during the compulsory years.

households) (Sargent, 1983). Yet, although the traditional structure and organisation of both family and school have been modified, parents and teachers continue to play a role in socialising young children to participate effectively in the wider society. Accordingly, it will be argued that one aspect of their role function is the promotion or suppression of ethnic identification.

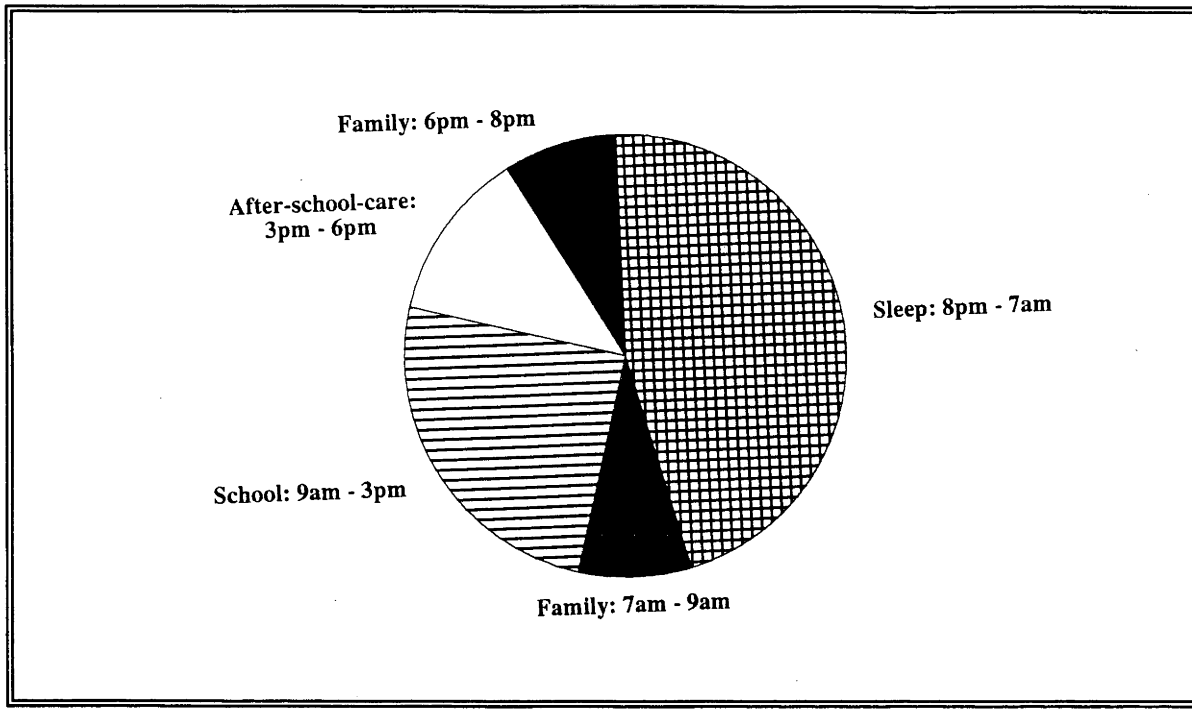
There may also be numerous differences between and within home and school environments. In the case of the immigrant child, the school may represent her/his only contact with the host community, which may be alien and quite separate from the known, familiar home setting. As Ogilvy, Boath, Cheyne, Jahoda and Schaffer (1990: 1) state,

> *(F)or ethnic minority children the quality of their interactions at nursery school is likely to be of particular importance, since nursery schools are not only the ethnic minority child's first encounter with the education system but also with a predominantly white English-speaking environment.*

However, it is also possible that with the increasing number of working mothers, more children are being placed in the care of outsiders from an early age. In 1988 for instance, 45 per cent of married women with children under 4 years of age, were in the paid workforce, indicating a new social phenomenon in Australia. Unless these children have another relative (such as, the father or grandfather for that matter) to care for them at home, they have to be placed in care outside the home. Consequently, more and more children will spend a large proportion of their daily lives away from their families. This point may be illustrated diagrammatically by taking the 24 hours of a young child's day in Australia, as shown in figure 3.2.

Figure 3.2:

Twenty four hours in a young child's day in Australia



The distribution of hours is applicable for children aged 5 to 8 years of age, as figure 3.2 was constructed on the basis of daily routines of the families who participated in this study. There were variations depending on factors such as the age of the child, presence/absence of older children, parental occupation, climatic seasons and hours and days of school operation. In general, as figure 3.1 shows, most children spent about half of each day asleep. Though this time is usually spent at home, the focus of this thesis is on what happens during the hours awake. Clearly, as shown, on school days, if both parents were in paid employment most children would spend potentially 75 per cent of their awake hours away from home. Accordingly, only about four hours per day (usually between 7 to 9 in the morning and 6 to 8 at night) was potentially available for child - parent interactions. In contrast, nearly one quarter of each day (that is, the six hours between 9am to 3pm), was spent at school, interacting with teachers and peers. If one adds the three hours at after-school-care it shows that children remain isolated from their families daily for at least nine of the thirteen hours awake. One of the important aspects of this is that such children encounter socialisation in peer group

situations not unlike the school, prior to beginning school.[10] Little is known about children's socialisation relations with these auxiliary care-takers outside the family nor their long-term effects on the children.

The home may also be regarded as a relatively intimate, permanent and on-going social environment in comparison to the school, which provides only a temporary setting during a particular period of the day and life of a child. Of course, with increasing age, the time spent at school increases: that is, at the age of four years a child may attend preschool only for about two hours a day; ten years later, the child is expected to stay at school for at least double that time. However, rather than assess the amount of time spent either at home or at school, it is more useful to explore the quality of what actually happens within these two contexts. Thus, in keeping with the ethogenic approach one should ask the children, what s/he sees as the most important aspects of home and school life. The responses of the child participants of this study are discussed in chapter 7.

Furthermore, the size and composition of the group also affects the amount of interaction and level of reciprocity between members. Within the family, the potential for individual adult attention is greater because of the smaller size and kinship links between parents and children. In contrast, the school and the classroom are larger, more diverse and access to individual interaction is not always possible between the classroom teacher and students may be determined by external factors such as the school curriculum and time-table as well as internal or individual factors such as the child's academic abilities, skills and teacher expectations and attitudes. Moreover, research also indicates that the child's gender, age (particularly, as it relates to birth order in the family) personality and social class background can and do mediate the direction of socialisation in both settings.

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[10] The long term ramifications of these early group socialisations in various child care settings, particularly as it relates to Australia have not yet been studied. It is hoped that the Australian Institute of Family Studies Early Childhood Care Contexts project involving over 8,000 five year olds and their families, will be able to shed light on such issues.

For instance, in his study of Australian children and families, Amato (1987) presents a useful model to analyse the resources provided by the family which influence child social development. Amato uses the term 'resources' in the broad sense and divides these into structure and process resources. Structure resources, "... from the child's eye view are those internal family characteristics which are relatively objective, stable and beyond the child's control" (Amato, 1987: 15). For example, the number of children in the family or family size. This has a direct bearing on the child's access to the family's material goods as well as the level of social interaction that is possible within the family (for instance, does the child have any siblings to play with or share the bedroom?). On the other hand, 'process resources' refer to things like behaviour, emotions and expectations held by individual family members, which are more changeable and difficult to quantify. In this study for instance, the nature of the family's contact with its ethnic community can influence the maintenance of cultural customs and traditions practiced.

Research evidence shows that both types of resources, consisting of what the family has (that is, structure resources) and what the family does (that is, process resources), influence the child's future life chances. Like Amato (1987: 14) I believe that self concept is linked with the range of resources available. Secondly, structural resources are likely to change more slowly than process resources and "it is assumed in the model that the direction of influence is mainly from structure to process" (Amato, 1987: 7). Availability and accessibility of resources do not however, necessarily ensure interaction or utilisation of these resources by the child. For instance, if the family's diet consists of food peculiar to their ethnicity (say rye bread from Finland), whether the child eats it at home or at school is another matter. More importantly, how and why does the child make these choices? Who directs the child's learning?

Overall, home and school teaching and learning cannot be equated because there are significant differences between these two settings. Above all, schools provide a planned environment, with a relatively structured routine within which teaching and learning take place. Schools are also dominated by less personal ties. Within the family, the child is with people who are related through blood and kinship, and by

virtue of this, the adults in the family setting have a personal obligation or an emotional commitment to care for the child. At school in contrast, the child is among strangers, who may or may not express any strong sense of attachment or commitment to the children, who are merely part of their professional (not personal) lives for a temporary period (usually, only about six hours a day for less than twelve months of the year).

Consequently, schools play an important role in lessening the child's emotional dependence on the family in meeting day-to-day needs and wants. The child learns to organise social relationships on the basis of other variables, external to kinship ties. These may vary from gender, physical attributes (such as skin colour, height and body shape) and cultural characteristics (such as language usage and religion). These aspects may be considered together, or separately, in forming relationships with peers. Friendships during early childhood are also relatively short-term, transient and could be based on a single attribute such as living in the same street or neighbourhood. Nevertheless, smaller family sizes have meant that schools provide one of the most important venues for peer group interaction and socialisation during early childhood. This is important for a number of reasons.

Firstly, schools provides consistency and regularity in terms of meeting other children. Secondly, the classroom composition is relatively consistent with the local community outside the school, providing a window of opportunity to observe and experience the world at large from the safety of a protective environment. Accordingly, the child will be able to develop and maintain social relationships with a group of individuals at least for a year. In order to survive within this environment, the child needs to learn a variety of skills about group behaviour, about sharing and communicating one's wishes effectively, as well as being aware of other's feelings and the ability to resolve conflicts and deal with aggressive behaviour of other children.

During the early years, teacher - child interactions are more open and relaxed than they are in the upper levels of the school. Teachers anywhere in the system nevertheless have the power, by virtue of their position, to define and set the limits within which students must behave. In spite of this, just as much as teachers evaluate

students, the students can and do address the teacher's actions. Studies by those such as Davies (1982) and Goodnow and Burns (1985) provide illuminating evidence of such child evaluations, ranging from simple descriptions about their favourite teacher to more sophisticated analysis of what makes a good/bad teacher.

Research also shows that there are significant differences in the nature of adult - child interactions within the classrooms as compared to the home. An extensive study undertaken by well known British scholars Tizard and Hughes (1984) highlighted some of these major variations. For instance, in their study they found that children tended to ask more 'business' questions (such as can I do a painting?) than 'curiosity' questions (such as, who turns the street lights on?) which indicated that perhaps unwittingly, the teacher "must have transmitted the message that it was the children's role to answer, rather than to ask questions" (Tizard et al, 1984: 201). The length of the classroom conversations were brief, concerned with the present (or the here and the now), where as at home, children's conversations with their mothers[11] may persist for longer and include a wider range of issues relevant to the childrens past, present and future lives. Tizard et al (1984: 186-187) also reported that teacher - child conversations were mostly initiated and dominated by the teacher, concerned with giving instructions or asking questions pertaining to task completion.

Much of the learning at school happens 'out of context' (Goodnow et al, 1985: 93). As Bruner (1980) says, at home children 'learn-on-the-job' by helping in the kitchen, wiping dishes or going shopping with a parent. In contrast, at school, children 'learn-off-the-job' by sitting in the classroom talking about people, places and things which are not necessarily present. This can be frustrating, especially when children find it difficult "to make connections between the world of the school and the 'real' world" outside, and consequently may loose interest in education (Goodnow et al, 1985: 92). Such differences demonstrate the impersonal nature of the learning environment of the classroom. Writing about the paradoxical nature of adult - child interactions within the classroom, MacKay (1973: 39) argues that the "teacher relies on the child's

[11] This study include mothers only and did not look at the role of fathers in early socialisation.

interpretive competencies to understand the lesson but treats him (sic) throughout as incompetent". Consequently, it is not surprising that many children may feel that their teacher never really gets to know them as individuals with unique needs, interests and attributes. It also shows that there were significant differences between adult - child interactions within schools as compared to the home context.

By comparing and contrasting the home and the school contexts, I hope to ascertain which resources (or structural and process variables) are more important for the child's understanding of self. This understanding underpins the child's concept of self identification. Here the importance of ethnic cultural factors, particularly from the immigrant child's point of view will be considered. This association between self identity and ethnicity is the focus of the next chapter.

Chapter 4

THE NATURE OF CHILD ETHNICITY

4.1 Introduction

Child ethnicity incorporates the concepts, the developmental processes as well as attitudes, values and beliefs about social interactions based on ethnicity relevant for childhood socialisation. It will be argued that the emergence of ethnic identification is an important aspect of childhood socialisation because the development of the self is inextricably linked with one's cultural background. Both the development of the self in general, and ethnic identification in particular, must be considered as parts of the wider process of socialisation. This is a life long process built upon the paradox which shows "... that at the same time we are both social and individual beings, connected with others in a multitude of ways, as well as ultimately alone in the world" (Damon, 1983: 1). Thus, while learning to become a social being or a member of society, in relating to significant others in the environment, the child also learns that s/he is an individual being, a separate and discrete entity. At first, it may seem as though the child is being pulled in opposite directions, inwardly by individual needs and outwardly by societal needs. In effect, the forces of self development and ethnic identification are intertwined and may either complement or conflict with each other.

The development of a balance between these two seemingly contrasting forces is however, essential in developing a positive self concept. The way children feel about themselves (that is, the child's self esteem) affects their behaviour and perceptions about themselves (that is, the child's self concept). Herein lies the significance of ethnic identification in the development of the self. One's ability to define oneself and relate to one's ethnic background, may be described as products or outcomes of the overall process of socialisation. That is, both concepts are learnt, and evolve throughout an individual's life-time depending on the nature of social interactions s/he experiences. On the one hand, integration, which refers to the development of social relations may be called "the integrating function since it ensures the integration of the individual into society as a respected participant" (Damon, 1983: 2).

As such, ethnic identification is basically a sociocultural characteristic related to the child's awareness and association with others from different cultural backgrounds. Accordingly, child ethnicity may be described as the process of learning to recognise a person, including oneself, as coming from a culturally distinctive background. To have any social significance, such differences must be felt by the individual, and be seen by others to be distinctive. On the other hand, the differentiating function relates to the child's understanding of the self as a unique person, set apart from the rest. Both the integrating and the differentiating functions are necessary for children's social development, in adapting and relating to the social world in which they live. The way in which children incorporate and balance the group and the individual elements of identification has implications for their social and emotional well being.

Ethnic identification is, as indicated earlier, one of the main sociocultural products of early socialisation. The discussion of this concept and its growth during childhood will be the main focus of this chapter. 'Ethnicity', in general, is a socially acquired characteristic, something which an individual shares with only certain other people and does not share with the rest. It is "a symbolic tie" (Lewins, 1981: 15), an identification tag which may reflect affiliation along cultural characteristics such as a common language, shared history and religion. This does not mean however, that ethnicity always entails ethnic group membership or that it forces the individual to become an active member of the group (McKay and Lewins, 1978). It serves merely as a sign or a symbol around which groups can form. Becoming an active group participant, who upholds and maintains the cultural customs and norms of the group, may largely be a personal choice. This freedom of choice can, however, be constrained by wider social, economic and political pressures of a given society. For instance, Australia's assimilationist policies condemned Chinese and Indian immigrants' religious practices as pagan worship. Accordingly, some of the forces which either prevent or promote the development of such associations with one's ethnic background, may be beyond the control of the individual, contingent upon wider community beliefs, attitudes and values as well as government policies.

One's ethnicity can also designate the boundaries of social interaction (Barth, 1970) for that individual and these may be marked by symbolic elements such as

> ... *kinship patterns, physical continuity (as in localism and sectionalism), religious affiliation, language or dialect forms, tribal affiliation, nationality, phenotypical features or any combination of these* (Schermerhorn, 1970: 12).

By assessing the relative importance of such cultural markers, one could explore the nature of ethnic identification during early childhood. In this regard it is important to establish:

a) whether children are aware of ethnicity during childhood?

b) how do children become aware of ethnicity, their own and others' ethnicity? and

c) what are the sources of this learning?

These questions will be addressed by reviewing available literature on race and ethnicity. Mapping the developmental course of child ethnic identification will be part of this discussion. Here, a distinction will be made between understanding the concept of ethnicity and the evaluation of attitudes and behaviours related to ethnic identification by the child. However, though I am interested in understanding the nature of the growth process itself, it is not possible to chart a detailed developmental course using the data from this study. This is because this study is not a longitudinal one and the sample size of twenty-seven children is not sufficient to indicate significant growth patterns. However, it is possible to look at specific points in the developmental course since this study includes children between the ages of 5 to 8 years. That is, as discussed in chapter 7, it will be possible to show at least some age related patterns in ethnic identification during childhood.

Overall, a general discussion of ethnicity is necessary before addressing the specific questions related to child ethnicity, as identified above. Accordingly, this discussion will begin by defining ethnicity as a concept, and include an examination of how other scholars have approached the study of ethnicity. Next, the developmental process of child ethnicity will be looked at more closely. Finally, a conceptual framework will be introduced to analyse the role played by parents and

teachers in the development of ethnic identification during childhood.

4.2 Clarification of the Concept

What then is ethnicity? There is universal agreement that it is a complex concept full of ambiguities since it can not be easily defined, quantified or measured. As Zubrzycki (1977: 133) puts it, ethnicity "... can not be clearly quantified or expressed in a regression equation". Nevertheless, linguistically, its origin can be traced to

> *the Greek word ethnos meaning 'nation' or 'people', and refers simply to a group that has a sense of 'peoplehood', and of belonging to each other, of being different from other people, whether they be in their ancestral homeland or in a new land like Australia* (Price, 1988: 119).

By linking ethnicity with a nation, an individual's country of birth is sometimes used as the only indicator of ethnic identification. However, use of the concept ethnicity in this way is rather problematical. Ancestry or birthplace may enable one to trace the blood line or the genetic connections with one's ancestors (Price, 1988). But, it does not, however, specify whether that individual will then see herself/himself as being socially and culturally different from others. The enactment or expression of one's cultural connections depends on contextual or situational variables such as the audience, the place and the time. This requires the individual to assess the context and evaluate her/his self concept in relation to it.

It has been suggested that ethnicity is a fact of life "bestowed automatically at birth" (Salamone and Salamone, 1979: 168) on all of us. This is related to Geertz's notion that ethnicity is a "primordial given" (1963). Van den Berghe (1978: 404) concurs by adding that ethnicity is a form of social affiliation based on kinship which is "ascriptive, defined by common descent". Such characteristics usually provide the basis of collecting demographic information on various populations. In Australia, for instance, the general population Census included a question on ancestry for the first time in 1986, in an attempt to get better information on the origins of the present population. This reflects Weber's claim that "... scholars concerned with global comparisons have been more prone to use ethnicity and ethnic

group in their pristine sense of involving a sense of common ancestry" (in Connor, 1978: 387). As Price (1988) indicates there has to be a shared sense of solidarity and bonding (described as 'peoplehood') which is of essence in understanding ethnic identification. Usually there is an interaction of multiple characteristics which may include a common history, a language or dialect and a religious faith, which unifies people. On the basis of such characteristics, an individual may be perceived as being distinct, making it possible to separate and categorise an individual or a group of individuals.

During the 20th century, the word 'ethnicity' has taken on a wide variety of meanings, and its salience changes according to time and place (Hechter et al, 1979: 262). So much so that ethnicity has been described as "a vessel of meaning and an emblem of contrast" (de Vos and Romanucci-Ross, 1975) reflecting the symbolic imagery and significance usually attached to it. Wallman (1977: 532) provides one such definition:

> *Ethnicity refers to the perception of group difference and so to the social boundaries between sections of a population. In this sense 'ethnic difference' is the recognition of a contrast between 'us' and 'them'.*

In this sense, one could say that ethnicity is a tool for differentiation, an instrument of social division, used to categorise individuals into separate groups. That is, 'ethnicity' is "a key idea" used in wider debates on social and political conflict (Lewins, 1981). It helps explain differences in resource allocation along recognised characteristics - physical, cultural, religious, linguistic, geographical and/or political, at the individual and/or group level(s). However, as an explanatory tool, ethnicity cannot be used in isolation without looking at its relationship with other facets of social relations including power and status.

In linking ethnicity to children and childhood, the following terms require clarification, namely, i) ethnic awareness, ii) ethnic consciousness and iii) ethnic attitudes. Ethnic awareness denotes one's perceptions or discrete view of particular issues. During childhood, it reflects the child's ability to recognise visible, easily

observable differences using rudimentary cues such as skin or hair colour. Ethnic consciousness, on the other hand, as explained by McKay et al (1978), refers to the priority the ethnic factor assumes in a person's life. Its application to childhood is problematical and this will be elaborated in section 4.5. As stated earlier, the outward expression or suppression of one's understanding and/or association with a particular ethnic background is dependent on a variety of internal and external stimuli. Ethnic attitudes, accordingly, reflect the child's disposition or feelings towards her/his cultural background. None of these terms are mutually exclusive; rather they represent four facets of the same process, that of ethnic identification (McKay et al, 1978).

Broadly speaking, ethnic identification is a sociological phenomenon, a product of social interaction. It is a characteristic which individuals acquire by relating to, and interacting with others in the social environment. Such interaction does not necessarily have to include others who are like oneself for it has been shown that when accounting for ethnic identification, one needs to consider the impact of the wider historical context including prevailing community attitudes and values about race and culture. For example, Hallinan and Teixeira (1987: 1359) demonstrate that behaviour expectations, educational philosophy and "pedagogical practices that a teacher employs also affect the likelihood of positive interracial interactions and crossrace friendliness".

There is also empirical evidence to show that parental values and beliefs about child rearing have a similar impact on children's racial attitudes. For example, consider Branch and Newcombe's longitudinal studies of 4 to 5 and 6 to 7 year old African-Americans growing up in the USA. Their findings suggest that

> *... specifically, single mothers of girls were less ethnocentric and expressed a less strong pro-black teaching position than parents of girls in two-parent families. .... The belief that black males are especially vulnerable and in need of special socialisation to survive in American society may have been held by the parents of this study. It is a position that is also held by several black scholars (Akbar, 1982; Jackson, 1980; McAdoo, 1977)* (in Branch and Newcombe, 1986: 720).

Both examples above also indicate the role significant adults such as parents, play in influencing child socialisation. This is a critical aspect of ethnic identification during childhood, and is the underlying theme of this thesis.

Ethnicity as a 'primordial given' is therefore not static (Geertz, 1963); rather, it is a dynamic process (McKay et al, 1978) continually challenged and changed during an individual's life time. In this sense, ethnicity has a reciprocal quality which Barth (1970) describes in terms of intergroup interactions within and without boundaries. Thus, one could say that "ethnicity is a variable" (Cohen, 1974: xv) which is situationally sensitive. Accordingly, Harris (1980: 11) asserts that

> *the meaning, the mode and the salience of ethnicity varies not only between different ethnic categories (Harvey, 1974) but also between similar categories placed in different sociohistorical contexts (Patterson, 1975; Fitzgerald, 1977) as well as between generations in each of these categories (Kramer et al, 1961) and between individuals in the same generation* (Smolicz and Secombe, 1977).

Whether one chooses to express or suppress one's ethnicity depends on the individual's particular circumstances because ethnicity is not an essential element in every social interaction. Ethnic identification is therefore an individual's subjective description or response to particular circumstances. So for instance, when a child says "I am Finnish because I was born there", it is a personal description but one that is neither a necessary nor a sufficient condition of social interactions. However, ethnicity is not merely being born somewhere (that is, one's birthplace) nor is it the fact of being a citizen of a particular country (that is, one's nationality). It is of course possible that one's ethnic identification (subjective) may coincide with one's birthplace and/or nationality (objective); but ethnicity is only one aspect of an individual's self concept and identification.

Thus, for ethnicity to have any social significance and for that part of an individual's identity to have meaning, that individual must be able to distinguish particular types of relationships such as national and religious traits. The confusion arises as Bottomley (1976) points out, when one group dominates another along ethnically determined elements or characteristics. However, ethnicity also makes it

possible

> *... to differentiate between one's own 'people' or group and other groups. Naturally, the differentiation is evaluative as either 'better' or 'worse', so that prejudice is inherent in the nature of ethnicity* (Bostock, 1981: 29).

Hence, ethnicity is both an individual and a group characteristic. However, when an individual is identified or described according to her/his ethnicity (based on visible differences such as skin colour, cultural customs or language) it flows from her/his perceived group affiliation. For, an 'ethnic group' is:

> *a segment of a larger society whose members are thought, by themselves and/or others, to have a common origin and to share important segments of a common culture and who, in addition, participate in shared activities in which the common origin and culture are significant ingredients. Some mixture of language, religion, race and ancestral homeland with its related culture is the defining element. No one of these by itself demarcates an ethnic group* (Yinger, 1985: 159).

The survival of the group is dependent on whether its individual members are conscious and aware of the significance and are committed to the celebration and maintenance of its distinctive objects (for example, flags) and practices (for example, food taboos). Accordingly, ethnic identification reflects a type of group loyalty or moral commitment (de Vos et al, 1975: 368). The individual's self conscious rejection or projection of group identifications in turn, reflects that individual's sense of identification with an ethnic background. This is important when analysing the revival or rejection of studying ethnicity over the past decade. For instance, writing at the beginning of the century, Park and Miller (1921) predicted that the Americanisation of immigrants would result in the production of a homogenised culture in the United States. Over sixty years later, this has not eventuated. As Lal (1983) explains, the irony is that Park and Thomas failed to see the rise of ethnic consciousness as a focus for organising and mobilising group action. This was almost inevitable in order to resolve the dilemmas concerning the access and distribution of scarce resources (see for example, Glazer and Moynihan, 1970). This has however, not been a smooth, regulated or uniform process. Which groups and which (potential) members of the groups have maintained, assimilated or

heightened their ethnic consciousness over the years, need to be assessed.

Following this line of argument, van den Berghe (1976: 244) suggests that ethnicity is like social class in the Marxian sense, although

> *... any attempt to reduce class to ethnicity or ethnicity to class results in a serious distortion of reality. Indeed, an a priori theoretical position that one is more important that the other is untenable.*

The difference between class and ethnicity is easy to see in the operationalisation of these two concepts: whilst ethnic action may be more easily identified along visible cultural symbols, class organisation is more problematical, "being based on the rather abstract notion of interest" (van den Berghe, 1976: 251-2).

As shown above, defining ethnicity as a sociological concept is both complex and confusing. Falk (1985: 11) adds,

> *the word ethnicity has no precise, consistent connotation as used in the context of social sciences and education in Australia; it is sometimes broad enough to include all citizens of Australia.*

This is because there are several misconceptions associated with the application of the term 'ethnicity' and its derivative ethnic group. Historically, ethnicity has been linked with race by referring either to the cultural or the physical characteristics respectively. Clearly, as Chambers and Pettman (1986: 5) points out, this distinction between ethnicity and race is a misconception; that is, there is insufficient evidence to support this view. Yinger (1985: 158) agrees that if one takes only the physical characteristics of race, then it has no place in ethnicity. For, although individuals differ from one another physically "race is not a valid biological concept". However, as Chambers et al (1986: 5) argues, "race is important not because it is 'real' biologically, but because people believe it is real, and therefore make it real in its social consequences". This, in essence is what sociologists in particular are concerned with, the significance of social divisions which flow from human diversity, whether cultural or biological (see also van den Berghe, 1978: 222; McConnochie, 1973). This association between ethnicity and race is further complicated when issues of nationalism and nationhood are being discussed (See Connor, 1978). This happens when ethnicity or "the sense of community and place"

becomes politicised (Pi-Sunyer, 1985: 82; see also Van den Berghe, 1976: 243). Global conflicts over territorial ownership and political autonomy being fought along ethnically channelled disputes[1] within countries such as India, Sri Lanka, South Africa and Fiji provide well known illustrations for this case.

A similar difficulty arises when ethnicity is linked with migrants. In the Australian context, most scholars use Jean Martin's definition of 'migrant' (Jakubowicz, 1985). According to her, migrants are permanent residents of Australia who were born overseas and are recognised as a separate legal category for whom the State provides special services (Martin, 1978: 16). Alas, however "ethnicity has, as yet, no formal definition in Australian law" (Falk, 1985: 4). Popularly labelled as 'ethnics', this classification usually includes only those who migrated from non-English speaking countries and has in this sense, also a derogatory connotation (Falk, 1985: 11). At the same time, within schools, it has been found that teachers use the label 'Australian' to indicate mainly children from Anglo-backgrounds (see Cahill, 1985). It is argued that although some scholars may find this an academically useful short-hand way of describing non-English speaking migrants, it is neither correct nor helpful in the long term. To begin with,

> *... to legislate the degree of relationship by birth or descent which determines ethnic affiliation is to ascribe status to a person. Such ascription, acts as a preclude either to granting privileges or to enforcing special restraints, is incompatible with the notion of distinct but equal citizens* (Falk, 1985: 5).

Moreover, Martin's definition of a migrant (1978) directs attention to a single specific attribute, English language competency. That is, Martin's definition implies lack of competency in English and thereby this definition in fact excludes the majority of Australian migrants who came from the English speaking countries; namely, England, Scotland and Ireland. Furthermore, the loss of one attribute of ethnic identification does not mean the total demise of ethnic consciousness. "Thus, the Irish and the Scots could lose their language without losing their conviction of a separate national identity" (Connor, 1978: 389).

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[1] Such factors include freedom of religion and land ownership.

There are other difficulties also because it is rarely made clear when an 'ethnic' stops being a migrant (Falk, 1985). For example, is the child born in Australia to parents who came from Vietnam, also an ethnic, irrespective or the child's own country of birth? Not, necessarily. In effect, by suggesting that ethnicity is only a characteristic of non-English speaking Australians it merely serves to reinforce the subordinate position of these people. As Jackubowicz (1985: 2) points out "... ethnicity cannot explain social behaviour but is rather the outcome of other relations of social power in which those differences are signified as being important" (original emphasis). It underlines the tenuous relationship between attitudes (what you believe) and behaviour (what you do).

The concept of ethnicity is also subject to misuse when ethnicity is linked with the term 'minority'. In the numerical sense, minority means smaller group size or the lesser in numbers. However, as a theoretical concept, when used in discussions of power relations, it indicates the existence of a superior, dominant group ruling over the minority in terms of power and irrespective of numerical size (for example, South Africa). However, the term ethnicity which helps to differentiate between groups along certain characteristics, such as religion, language, location and customs, does not necessarily imply competition over resources or power. Like Glazer et al (1970), Connor (1978: 386) also rejects this notion of equating ethnicity with minority because

> *in the traditional sense of an ancestrally related unit, it is evident that an ethnic group need not be a subordinate part of a large political society but may be the dominant element within a State (the Chinese, English or French for example) or extend across several states, as do the Arabs.*

In sum, misconceptions and variations in interpretation are rampant in this area of sociology, symptomatic of the lack of conceptual clarity (Lewins, 1981) and theoretical advancement. Most of the scholarly disputes are real and the main problem is over determining the value or importance of ethnicity as an explanatory tool which denotes social structural divisions within a society. As indicated earlier, ethnicity can also act as a homing device, to bring together people with certain

common interests. This collective quality in turn links ethnicity with identity.

4.3 Approaches to the Study of Ethnicity

The primary objective of studies on ethnicity is understanding the intergroup divisions and relations between various ethnically different groups within a society. Terms such as 'dominant / subordinate groups', 'majority / minority relations', and 'assimilation / integration / multiculturalism' are associated with such work. Over the years the focus of emphasis has shifted considerably, moving from 'differences' to 'similarities', from 'traits' to 'relationships', and from 'detachment' to 'involvement' (Rose in Schermerhorn, 1970: vii). Whatever the focus, the issue of coming to terms with how ethnic groups interact and live together in one society continues to be a key research area, with implications for educational policy and practice of young children living in multi-ethnic countries such as Australia.

How a writer approaches the study of ethnicity is dependent on several aspects. Firstly, the definition and use of the concept 'ethnicity' vary considerably according to the aim(s), the academic background, ideological position or political beliefs of the writer as well as the issue(s) being addressed. For instance, a sociologist concerned with the distribution of power is likely to explore the ethnic factor in relation to the participation of immigrants in politics. Likewise, a Marxist sociologist, may use ethnicity as an ideology which disenfranchises the working class. A linguist on the other hand, would be more interested in language competence and usage and would therefore examine the methods of teaching, learning, maintenance or rejection of such languages.

Secondly, the paradigm or the method of analysis used to study ethnicity also varies, again, depending on the writer's academic interests and political orientations as discussed above. Accordingly, studies on ethnicity range from those based on simple descriptive accounts of individual's experiences to those using an interpretive framework (for example, Bottomley, 1976) or a clarifactory system (for example, Berry, 1958), to more esoteric studies which are theoretically more abstract (for example, Blalock, 1982). In addition, there are policy documents, the most recent

category of ethnic literature prepared by and for various government instrumentalities in multicultural countries such as Australia, England and the USA. Proliferation of such reports, particularly between 1978 and 1986 in Australia for instance, illustrates the increasing prominence of ethnicity as a political and public issue. The works of Galbally (1978), McNamara (1979), AIMA (1980), Zubrzycki (1982) and Jupp (1986) for example, illustrate this point. This interest is, however, declining with political debate being more focussed on 'survival issues' such as poverty, (re)education and (un)employment.

These days ethnicity enters public debate on the periphery as a 'special issue', more to do with minorities, social disadvantage or inequality. Together with class and gender, when analysing social structural divisions in a community, an individual's ethnicity continues to be recognised as one of the three most important variables linked with inequality (see Bottomley, 1976; and de Lepervanche, 1980). In other words, denial of rights and access to resources (or discrimination) is one of the basic characteristics of community attitudes to ethnic minorities. A shared sense of group solidarity arises through their common experiences of racism and discrimination. Observable physical characteristics (such as skin colour and texture of hair) and residential segregation patterns (that is, formation of ethnic enclaves), serve to sharpen the structural divisions and differences between such groups.

Studies on ethnicity also differ according to the style of writing adopted by various scholars. As such, discussions have been at times subjective, highly emotive, personalised, impressionistic and sentimental or dynamic, polemical and objectively analytical. Here it is also possible that the writer's perspective is coloured by her/his own personal cultural heritage, whether s/he is writing poetry or prose, for autobiographical or academic purposes. In Australia, for instance, there is a large body of writing based on the personal life experiences of migrants settling down in a new country. *'Alien Son'* written by Judah Waten (1952) who migrated to Australia in 1914 from Odessa with his parents, is one of the first books to be published in this tradition. In addition, during the 1980s there has been a number of studies published on specific ethnic groups in Australia. These include, Lewins and

Ly (1985) on the settlement of the first Vietnamese refugees, Mackie (1983) on the welfare of Turkish and Lebanese Muslim families, and Smolicz and Secombe (1981) on Polish immigrant children's school experiences, to name a few.

Although today there is a bewildering array of studies on ethnicity, most findings often remain inconclusive. One of the main reasons for this has been the lack of sound empirical evidence. Hence, in his review of American literature in the field, Roche (1984) warns writers to be cautious when using previous studies (such as Glazer et al, 1970 and 1975; Novak, 1971; and Greeley, 1971 and 1974)[2] and in particular, not to overgeneralise the findings across cultures, to extrapolate and to make predictions for the future. For instance, he found that there was no conclusive evidence to support Hansen's notion of ethnic resurgence in the third generation[3] because the nature of ethnicity is such that it is changeable, situationally specific and individually specialised.

4.4 Ethnicity During Childhood

This discussion on ethnicity would be incomplete without a review of current literature on ethnicity during childhood, a much neglected area of mainstream academic writings on race and ethnicity. Formation of ethnic identification will be described as a cognitive developmental process. Secondly, the behavioural aspects of child ethnicity will be examined by looking at the sources of learning. In addition to this basic orientation, there is a substantial body of empirical evidence, mostly from international research, which has contributed significantly to our understanding of child ethnicity. Accordingly, the usefulness of these studies will be critically evaluated.

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[2] In his survey, Roche (1984) found that Andrew Greeley's books *Why can't they be like us?* (1971) and *Ethnicity in the United States* (1974) were the most frequently cited books by other authors. Roche however criticises Greeley for his reliance on secondary data for analysis.

[3] In his original proposal, based on his study of the establishment of Swedish associations in the Midwest during the 1930s, Hansen (1952) predicted that although the second generation immigrant rejects the ethnic heritage and culture, the third generation returns to it (in McKay, 1980).

4.4.1 Developmental Processes

Given that this study is essentially child centred,[4] let us return to the questions asked at the beginning of this chapter. The first question proposed was are children aware of ethnicity during childhood? The short answer is 'yes' since there is now a plethora of empirical research which reveal the developmental processes underlying the development of child ethnic identification. During the last fifty years, a variety of studies[5] have provided empirical evidence which suggest that ethnic identification emerges during early childhood and continues to develop in stages.

Some researchers, such as Goodman (1973), Katz (1976) and Semaj (1980) have attempted to chart a developmental course which shows the acquisition of child ethnicity. Two of these models are presented below in figure 4.1.

Figure 4.1:

Developmental models showing the acquisition of child ethnicity

(a) Model I: Mary Ellen GOODMAN[6]

AGE	DEVELOPMENTAL PATTERN	
3-4 Yrs	Phase I:	ETHNIC AWARENESS Beginning of perception of differences in self and in others by using simple cues such as skin colour.
4-7 Yrs	Phase II:	ETHNIC ORIENTATION Beginning of likes/dislikes about groups with learning and synthesising of related words, concepts and their values.
7+ Yrs	Phase III:	ETHNIC ATTITUDES Establishment of identification with and preference for own group.

(Adapted from Black, 1976)

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[4] That is, the basic unit of analysis is the children themselves.

[5] These include in chronological order of publication, Clark and Clark, (1939); Radke-Yarrow, Trager and Miller (1952); Goodman (1973 original in 1952); Moreland (1962): Jahoda, Thomson and Bhat (1972); Davey (1983) and Hallinan et al (1987).

[6] In her original model, Goodman (1973) used 'race'. When using Goodman's model for her Australian study, Black (1976) substituted 'ethnicity' for race, as shown in Model I above.

(b) Model II: Phyllis A. KATZ

AGE	DEVELOPMENTAL PATTERN	
0-3 Yrs	Stage I:	Early observation of racial cues; no internalization.
3-4 Yrs	Stage II:	Formulation of rudimentary concepts; evaluative component is implicated.
4+ Yrs	Stage III:	Conceptual differentiation; elaboration of basic concepts about race.
4+ Yrs	Stage IV:	Recognition of the irrevocability of cues; skin colour is permanent, as is gender.
5+ Yrs	Stage V:	Consolidation of group concept; integration or disparate aspects of racial concepts.
	Stage VI:	Perceptual elaboration; sharpening of 'us' versus 'them' distinctions through further contact.
	Stage VII:	Cognitive elaboration; racial concepts become more sophisticated and form attitudes.
	Stage VIII:	Attitude crystallisation; attitude becomes rigid.

(Adapted from Hall and Jose, 1983)

Some general conclusions may be drawn from the two models above. Goodman's model, one of the earliest in the field, describes a broadly based process as compared to Katz, who provides a more detailed analysis of each stage of development. Although these two models differ in the labelling and content learnt at each age period, there is striking similarity in that both use a cognitive developmental approach following Piaget (1966). However, unlike Piaget, these scholars, do not espouse a notion of fixed stages, where development is sequential and invariant. Recognition of each stage is thus not an essential prerequisite for the one following. The problem is however, as Milner (1983) states, that such models have not been empirically tested sufficiently to show the conceptual attainment of each stage at the specified age. Hence, the universal applicability of these models remains to be established.

There is little or no agreement amongst scholars about the exact age at which ethnic awareness and/or understanding develops. Initial investigations carried out by

those such as Clark and Clark (1939) suggest that racial awareness begins around 3 years of age, during the preschool years (refer Katz, 1976; Milner, 1983 and Derman-Sparks, 1991). Their studies have been replicated by others (refer Milner, 1983 and Branch et al, 1986) and they continue to support the belief that conceptual development about ethnic identification begins during the preschool years. Other research undertaken by Stevenson and Stewart (1958) indicate that racial awareness may emerge earlier, at about two years of age. This is supported by the Katz (1976) model described earlier (see figure 4.1). It suggests that "by 2 years of age, children are learning the appropriate use of gender labels (girl, boy) and learning colour names, which they begin to apply to skin colour" (Derman-Sparks, 1991: 2).

Understanding the permanence of the biologically determined attributes, such as sex and skin colour, is a pre-requisite for later development (see figure 4.1). By then children learn to incorporate attitudes and values about various cultures into their growing sense of ethnic identification. For instance, based on his study of 512 white, Asian and West Indian children aged 7 to 11 years, one British investigator concluded by stating unequivocally that

> *... racial and ethnic distinctions are extensively employed by primary school children in the process of adapting to a multi-ethnic society. By the age of seven or eight, they have not only learned the standard classification system but also what attitudes should be adopted to people classified in a particular way* (Davey, 1983: 3).

These studies indicate therefore that a degree of crystallisation of ethnic identity occurs between the ages of 7 and 8 years. Beyond this stage, there is "gradual intensification of prejudice" (Milner, 1983: 112). The relationship between feelings (the emotional component), beliefs (the cognitive intellectual component) and behaviour (action) "undergo integration, so that there is greater consistency between them" (Milner, 1983: 113).

Two points must be reiterated as this stage. Firstly, children's awareness at the initial stage is limited to physically observable attributes, mainly skin colour.

One must also remember that

> *colour is an early visual category for children and a concept stressed in most preschool programs, it is (therefore) not surprising that skin colour is more salient than hair or facial features* (Ramsey, 1986: 80).

Another writer adds to this by saying that it is usually the adults, especially significant people such as parents and preschool teachers, who introduce children to "pairs of polar opposites" (Milner, 1983: 112) such as good/bad, yes/no, black/white and even smiling/crying.

Secondly, preschoolers' descriptions about ethnicity rarely include an evaluative component since their cognitive abilities have not sufficiently developed to enable them to do so (Samuels, 1977; Katz, 1976; Ramsey, 1986 and Derman-Sparks, 1991). However, this explanation is incomplete without taking into account the historical and community context within which children are reared. Increasing exposure to black/white imagery either through the media (including television and storybooks) and direct community contact "will help to cement the evaluative connotation" (Milner, 1983: 112).

> *In sum, the evidence on early racial awareness suggests that the twig may be bent at a very early age - perhaps much earlier than our current evidence suggests. The parameters underlying its development are not yet known at the present time* (Katz, 1976: 127).

There is however more acceptance that the formation of ethnicity correlates with the child's cognitive development as indicated by the above models (see also Clark, Hocevar and Dembo, 1980; Davidson, 1977). This is plausible given that in order to make sense of her/his social world, the child must

> *first learn objects exist, have permanence, and differ one from the other. Identification and subsequent naming follow. Further, he (sic) must learn not only to identify the whole object but also to define its manifold characteristics* (Sigel, 1964: 210).

For instance, most of us would know our parents' country of birth and even our grandparents' birthplace. This requires the acquisition of factual information. Yet, explaining the importance of that background for the adult or for the child is a separate and a far more difficult task. In fact, "evidence of the salience of this

knowledge and of its behavioural outcomes is scarce" (Yinger, 1985: 155) particularly because of methodological difficulties and the failure to separate group identity from self identity.

In addition, there is ample evidence to suggest that children's ethnic awareness and consciousness increases with age (Ziegler, 1979) and that this may depend on the child's own ethnic background (for example, Goodman, 1973; Aboud, 1977) as well as social class (Katz, 1983). However, Whiting et al (1975: 2) argue that although "many studies have shown the differences between social classes or between ethnic groups ... the meaning of the differences in terms of cultural values was rarely explored systematically".

Overall, in answering the second question, how do children learn about ethnic identification, one could identify the interaction of three major factors as follows:

- *experience with their bodies,*
- *experience with their social environment, and*
- *their cognitive developmental stage* (Derman-Sparks, 1991: 2).

It is not possible to rank or indicate the relative importance of each of these factors, in relation to each other. It is more important to examine their interaction or the combination of two or more factors in producing positive or negative perceptions of ethnicity.

4.4.2 Sources of Learning

Given that children <u>are</u> aware of ethnicity during childhood, it is therefore necessary to address more closely the third question: What are the sources of children's knowledge about ethnic identification? Hall et al (1983: 260) state that:

> *when children learn about race, they seem to be highly dependent on the type of experiences and information they are exposed to in the process of developing feelings about themselves vis-a-vis an ethnic identity. As Proshansky and Newton (1968) have noted, children learn about race both directly and indirectly - at home, at school, in the streets and from parents and peers.*

Thus, the task of identifying the determinants of ethnicity is not simple and it can

vary with the given learning environment ranging from the home, the school, the shopping centre to the skateboard rink. Depending on their field of interest, researchers have provided personal psychological, cognitive developmental or social learning explanations.

The discussion on the developmental process has so far focussed on the physical (for example, racial cues) and cognitive dimensions (for example, ability to categorise) linking ages and stages of ethnic identification. This discussion will be incomplete without addressing the social dimensions, which take into account the historical and community context within which children are reared. In this regard, earlier it was shown that parent and teacher values can influence child ethnicity. At the macro level, one needs to also consider the operationalisation of community attitudes about race relations and racial preference. For instance, examining the difficulties experienced by Asian immigrant children in the USA, Kim (1983) found that there was a strong link between stereotype-inspired teacher expectations, and low referral rates for psycho-educational intervention. He states that this situation warrants critical review because the inaccurate characterisation of Asian American children as being passive and well adjusted has meant that "these children remain largely invisible and their many and varied needs largely unmet" (Kim, 1983: 87).

Early studies on children and race relations also indicated a high degree of preference for white playmates. They concluded that

> *whites are more likely to form cross-race friendships in classrooms where relative academic achievement is deemphasised and where they are assigned to the same ability groups with blacks for instruction. These 'status-levelling' factors help overcome ingrained white resistance to making black friends* (Hallinan et al, 1987: 1370).

Some scholars argue that aversion to black may be universal, as it is a colour usually associated with darkness, evil and fear (see Ramsey, 1987: 83). Others take it further by suggesting that factors, such as the black civil rights movement and empowerment of ethnic minorities for instance, may help explain the increasing trend amongst black minority children to indicate a preference for own-group friendships during childhood (refer Blatchford et al, 1985).

4.4.3. Methodological Limitations

Internationally, those such as Allport (1958), Katz (1976) and Milner (1983) have provided comprehensive reviews of available research in the field. Progress in research is however impeded by two major problems. First, the pragmatic and ethical concerns of doing research with young children has meant that almost always the studies are adult based and adult centred. Second, 'ethnicity' itself, as stated earlier, is difficult to define, let alone quantify or measure. In doing a content analysis of related research[7] done between 1920 and 1970[8] Katz (1976) found that over half the studies cited (that is, 167 out of 278) were concerned with the measurement of ethnic attitudes and behaviour, particularly between 1951 to 1960. The consequent decline in research since the 1970s may be related to this inherent complexity for,

> *some researchers have returned to their laboratories to pursue professionally safer and perhaps more trivial areas. The reward structure for social scientists is, after all, still based upon a 'publish or perish' philosophy. Others, however, have recently exhibited renewed interest in race relations research, despite (or perhaps because of) the challenges involved* (Katz, 1976: 11).

For almost fifty years now, research in the area of child ethnicity has also been troubled by the paucity of appropriate measurement instruments. Traditionally, researchers have used dolls, picture-line drawings and socio-metric scales to assess children's ethnic awareness and consciousness. Matching research methodologies to children's conceptual development is far from easy. In this regard, the use of dolls and pictures has been criticised because, due to their limited conceptual development between 3 to 5 years age, "dark skinned dolls may have been confused by lighter skinned black children" (Samuel, 1977: 147). Consequent misidentification makes it difficult to validate the results of such studies. Another major difficulty is the

> *... problem of non-equivalence for minority and nonminority children in items, words and performance requirements (Beiser, 1981).*

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[7] I use race and ethnicity interchangeably in this context because traditionally, the study of ethnicity has been linked with race relations research. Much of the early studies especially prior to 1970, used the term race rather than ethnicity.

[8] This was based on the bibliography cited by Harding, Proshansky, Kutner and Chein's 1969 review, which is recognised as "the most authoritative one in the field" (Katz, 1979:8).

> *Instruments are generally designed for and normed on the middle-class Anglo population* (in Spencer and Markestrom-Adams, 1990: 303).

It is also assumed that there is homogeneity or unity within minorities, with little regard for internal variation on the basis of other structural features such as social class and religion. Such factors question the validity of early investigations done in the 1930's and 1940's in particular. Milner (1983: 127), who is critical of those who use socio-metric scales exclusively, adds that "without detailed observation, there is no way of knowing how far these choices correspond to children's actual choice of friends and companions".

Within Australia, evidence showing the development of child ethnicity comes from four main sources as follows:[9]

i) socio-historical studies on immigration and ethnic affairs (eg. Price, 1966; Martin, 1978; de Lepervanche, 1984)

ii) government policies and documents on immigration and children of migrant/ethnic backgrounds (eg. Horvath, 1980; Jayasuriya, 1987)

iii) educational studies on the schooling of migrant/ethnic children (eg. de Lemos, 1975; Smolicz et al, 1981 and Taft and Cahill, 1978)

iv) studies on child growth and development dealing with ethnicity (eg. Black, 1986; Wiseman, 1983).

During the 1980s in Australia, there has been a growing interest in ethnicity in general, and an expression of interest in doing research involving young children in particular. Unfortunately, given the state of early childhood research in this country,[10] it is difficult to assess or predict progress. Most of the major projects have been done by those outside the field, by sociologists (such as Smolicz), educationalists (such as Wiseman), or psychologists (such as Black) who have had a particular interest in young children. The heavy reliance on overseas literature for this study also reflects the paucity of published Australian research on child

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[9] This is adapted from the Schools Council Report (1981: 2).

[10] Despite the former Prime Minister, Bob Hawke's promise to eliminate child poverty by 1990, early childhood research is not an area of 'national significance'. Existing projects are few, scattered and small scale and therefore have limited validity, reliability and applicability.

ethnicity. This historical overview suggests that the early childhood specialist has yet to do a great deal of groundwork in understanding child ethnicity in the Australian context. To date, it has been dominated by those in the fields of psychoanalysis, social psychology, anthropology and to a lesser extent, sociology.

4.5 Significance of Child Ethnicity

Child ethnicity has relevance both in the schooling of young children (that is, in terms of their ability and achievement) and more importantly in the promotion of the child's social development and well being. Firstly, young children are ethnically aware and able to evaluate the positive and/or negative consequences of their personal ethnic identification. Research evidence was presented earlier which shows that ethnicity is a social-cognitive phenomenon based on the child's experiences and ability to perceive and classify. Let me provide a simple illustration from my own study: While I was sitting at a table with a group of kindergarten children, suddenly one of the children touched my hand and said: "you're different". I replied "am I?". The child continued, "yes, you are. Your skin is different to mine. It's brown." I agreed and asked, "what colour is your skin?" and the child replied "it's sort of white". The point is that, unsophisticated as it may seem at first glance, this five year old identified differences between himself and another through what was physically observable. Accordingly, I am interested to see whether young children's understanding of ethnicity goes beyond this. Do children become ethnically aware and conscious only in terms of skin, eye or hair colour or is there something more to it which is less overt?

What is perhaps also significant is the popular disbelief or rejection of this fact that young children can identify skin colour variations. For instance, in my discussions with teachers, the majority believed that generally ethnic awareness for children below 8 years of age is a non-issue. This is not uncommon, as found in a study done by the Schools Council in the United Kingdom (1981). It was reported that

> *... teachers of the very young (were convinced that these children) are oblivious of racial differences (and) that colour prejudice does not cause much difficulty in young children. Later when the same*

> *teachers were asked to examine their own classrooms and playgrounds... their reports on children's attitudes almost exactly matched those cited in the published research evidence* (Schools Council, 1981: 4),

thus confirming that children definitely are aware of ethnicity during childhood.

Child ethnicity is also a relevant and important issue for young children's socialisation and education. Early childhood (the period between 0 to 8 years of age) is critical for an individual's overall growth and development. Ethnicity is an important facet of the child's self concept which takes shape during these formative years of life corroborated by a substantial body of research which highlights the significance and enduring nature of early socialisation (Edgar and Ochiltree 1983). As well, cross-cultural studies on child rearing (such as Piaget and Weil, 1951; and Whiting et al, 1975) have identified the significance of cultural heritage during early socialisation. In essence, a child's ethnic identification is inextricably bound to her/his culture, meaning that, as Rado (1975: 5) puts it, "culture, in other words an individual's language and value system, is not a set of clothes that can be changed over night" or to be worn at home and not at school.

Finally, ethnic identification has implications for the welfare of the child as well as Australian society as a whole. Those advocating pluralism as a social policy objective pursue the importance of ethnic identification. However, in so doing Yinger (1985), for instance, cautions us about falling into the trap of overlooking pressures toward assimilation as well as the resultant divisiveness and possible inegalitarian effects that may flow from promoting diversity and distinctiveness. Of course, multiculturalists (such as Smolicz) would vehemently argue that the promotion of separate cultures actually improves our understanding of other cultures by making one appreciate one's own. Nevertheless, despite this meeting of various cultures through the process of continuous migration, there is still much to learn about living together in a multicultural society.[11] The real task is not to be

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[11] For a discussion of other relevant issues see for instance, Jupp (1984) on ethnic politics, and Bottomley and de Lepervanche (1984) on the interconnections between ethnicity, class and gender.

multicultural in composition alone, but to be multicultural in consciousness.

4.6 Ethnic Identification: A typology

Sifting through the data that was collected during the fieldwork, it became apparent that the adults, the parents and the teachers could be divided in terms of whether they believed that ethnic identification should be promoted or suppressed. The adults' roles could be further described as either active or passive. The two words 'active' and 'promote' both reflect a sense of directed or guided growth and enrichment. In contrast, 'passive' and 'suppress' suggest the opposite, that is, lacking in direction, stagnation and discontent. By combining these four terms a typology was developed as a tool to examine the role played by parents and teachers in the development of ethnic identification during childhood.

Figure 4.3:

Framework for categorising the adults' role in ethnic identification

	SUPPRESS	PROMOTE
ACTIVE	Type I	Type IV
PASSIVE	Type II	Type III

These four terms are defined as follows:

Type I: ACTIVE - SUPPRESS

This adult will be virulent in resisting any moves to promote a separate cultural identity. Links with the parents' country of origin will be intentionally abandoned. Pressure will be exerted on the child to conform to life in Australia by relinquishing her/his cultural heritage.

Type II: PASSIVE - SUPPRESS

Though not concerned about fostering the child's ethnic identification, this adult will be more restrained and less direct than the Type I adult. The child will not be encouraged to develop an interest in her/his cultural background.

Type III: PASSIVE - PROMOTE

Though interested in enhancing the child's ethnic identification, this adult will be less impassioned and more quiescent than the Type IV adult. The child's interest in her/his culture will be accommodated without much fervour or fuss.

Type IV: ACTIVE - PROMOTE

This adult will be eager to stimulate and nurture ethnic identification through direct intervention. Steps will be taken to bolster vigourously the child's interest in the family's cultural heritage.

As can be seen, the above typology has been constructed essentially by using the participants' subjective perceptions of ethnic identification. This follows van den Berghe's argument in defining an ethnic group. He states:

> *I define an ethnic group, much as Marx did a class, that is both objectively and subjectively. An ethnic group is one that shares a cultural tradition and has some degree of consciousness of being different from other such groups* (1976: 242).

The operationalisation and measurement of ethnic identification will be discussed in detail in chapters 5 and 6 which follow. In this regard however, one further aspect requires clarification at this stage. McKay (1980) argues that scholars have failed to differentiate between ethnic awareness and ethnic identification, which are two levels of the same process. He describes the ethnically aware individual as one who "possesses a certain ethnic trait(s) which is no more meaningful than his or her other cultural, physical, social or territorial characteristic" (McKay, 1980: 42). To be ethnically conscious however means that the "... individual possesses an ethnic trait(s) which assumes considerable importance vis-a-vis other personal characteristics to the extent that ethnic identification can be the mode of identification" (McKay, 1980: 44).

Whilst I agree with McKay (1980) that awareness and identification are two distinct levels of the process of ethnic identification, rigid application of this difference is problematical in this study. For one thing, if one takes into account the

children's cognitive development, it was shown earlier (see figure 4.1) that some of the children are at a stage where they are, as yet, developmentally unable to conceptualise ethnicity beyond awareness. Moreover, no attempt was made to obtain details about the teachers' identification with their own ethnic backgrounds. The primary purpose of the study was to assess the adults' roles (parents and teachers) in the development of the children's ethnic identification. So although ethnic awareness vis-a-vis consciousness would be relevant to adults' sense of ethnic identification, this is a separate matter and not the focus of this thesis. Adults' perceptions will be examined only in so far as they impinge on the roles adopted by parents and teachers in either promoting or suppressing child ethnicity, during early childhood.

Chapter 5
CHILD ETHNICITY WITHIN THE SCHOOL

5.1 Introduction

Most of us spend at least ten years of our early life in schools. Available statistics show that more and more Australian students are staying longer at school[1], without leaving at the end of the compulsory years.[2] If one adds to this the length of time today's children spend in child care (often two or three years before beginning school), one can see that many children spend a significant proportion of their childhood away from their families (see chapter 3). This has also meant that much of early socialisation took place outside the child's home, within institutional settings such as preschools, child care services and primary schools. "The shift in the locus of socialisation from the family to the other, outside agent .... has been caused by major changes within the family that have reverberated throughout our society" (Adler et al, 1987: 6). This is an important area of interest for Sociologists because the context of socialisation within various settings, influence the child's construction of social meanings, norms, attitudes and behaviour. Since this study was based on children aged 5 to 8 years, the focus here is on the primary school setting.

The school, like the family, also plays a significant role in ethnic identification (Davey, 1983; Marjoribanks, 1980; Smolicz and Secombe, 1981 and Wiseman, 1983). For many immigrant children, the school provides one of the main means of introduction to the mainstream culture as well as contact with the values and practices of other (ethnic) groups within that society (Black, 1986; Davey, 1983; and Denscombe et al, 1986). Upon entering the formal school system at the age of 5 years, the child who has learnt what it means to be a daughter or a son in a family must there onwards learn the norms and expectations of being a student in a classroom and a school. The child would also become aware that the school

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1 Data obtained from the ACTSA's Statistical Unit showed that in 1985, the ACT had a 85 per cent retention rate for Year 12 students and that by 1988, this had increased to 90 per cent.

2 Under the *Education Act* (1937) school attendance is compulsory in the ACT between the ages of 6 and 15 years (Castles, 1991: 750).

represents a 'miniature version' of the community at large, the implication being that if that child can 'survive school', then coping with the outside world, the community at large, should not be too difficult. In effect, this is the broader socialisation goal of the school which in turn influences the individual's future life chances (see for example, Dreitzel, 1973; Shipman, 1976; Verma and Bagley, 1982). Debate about schooling and the effects of structural forces of opportunity and social status is an enduring theme in the sociology of education. Theoretical interpretations which focus on the objectives and purpose of education are complex and too detailed to do justice to them here.[3] The purpose of this chapter is to describe the context of schooling within the ACT schools, in relation to its multicultural education policies (see appendix 2).

The link between individual and community functions of school socialisation was encapsulated within the ACT Schools Authority's (hereafter ACTSA)[4] *Report to the Canberra Community* (1984: 11) which stated that

> *It is the responsibility of the ACT Schools Authority to offer all children in the Australian Capital Territory an education of the highest quality, which will assist every child to develop fully as an individual and a member of the community.*

The Authority also recognised that schooling was shared jointly between parents and teachers (ACTSA, 1984: 5). Hence, it was possible that there would be a degree of overlap of roles and responsibilities between parents and teachers, at home and at school. In this chapter, the emphasis will be on the school and classroom settings and issues of congruence and conflict between home and school will be discussed in depth in chapter 8.

In this chapter, two key aspects of child ethnic identification within the

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[3] For a general introduction, consult Tyler (1977) and for background on Australian education, consult Edgar (1980) and Foster (1981).

[4] When the ACT commenced self government in 1989, the ACTSA became the Ministry of Education, Arts and Environment. However, I will continue to refer to ACTSA because the findings of this study deal with the education system which was in operation prior to 1989.

school context will be examined. This discussion will commence with a brief historical overview of ACTSA's policies on the development and implementation of multicultural education programs in government schools in the ACT. This is necessary as

> *The link between family and school cannot be understood if it is taken just at one point of time. Each family has a history, each school has a history and so does the connection between them. Understanding that connection means understanding the way it has developed* (Connell et al, 1983: 43).

Chapter 2 provided the background on the participants' family history. In this chapter, the policies which set the context for the ethnic focus of classroom programs, will be examined. In other words, government school teachers in the ACT must operate within the broad policy guidelines set by ACTSA.

Secondly, characteristics of the school setting will be examined based on data collected during the school visits and interviews held with classroom teachers. For the purpose of analysis, the data was categorised into three major sections: features of the school setting, characteristics of the teachers, and school - home relationships. It was assumed that these school variables were important in understanding the nature of interactions between teachers and students in general and child ethnicity in particular.

5.2 Multicultural education in the ACT

'Multiculturalism', a term which came into public prominence during the 1970s, became entangled in controversy and confusion during the 1980s (see for example, FitzGerald, 1988). It is a "shorthand term for cultural pluralism, and in many publications is used interchangeably with it" (Bullivant, 1981: 1). Pluralist notions of multiculturalism are essentially founded upon the three key elements of equity, identity and understanding, and "each of the three elements is an indispensable component of education in and for an multicultural society" (Jayasuriya, 1987: 24). Broadly speaking, multicultural education policies reflect both changing community attitudes as well as policy planners' recognition and response to the growth of ethnic diversity in Australian society. Referring to the

role played by schools in this regard, Martin (1978: 84) asserts that

> *Education is the only clearly identifiable area in which there has been a comprehensive nationwide response to the presence of non English speaking migrants in Australia.*

The extent to which this was applicable within the government schools in the ACT will be examined with a brief review of the multicultural education policies of the ACTSA during the early 1980s. Where relevant, attention will be drawn to significant national studies and reports on multiculturalism and immigration which influenced ACTSA's policy directions.

The roots of Australia's multicultural education programs may be traced back to 1970 when the Commonwealth government established the Child Migrant Education Program (CMEP) arising out of community concern for the plight of migrant children at school. This situation was defined as 'a communication problem' based on immigrant children's limited English language skills. That is, the children were the 'problem', not the inability of the schools to meet their needs. Administered through the Immigration Department, the primary purpose of the CMEP was to teach English to immigrant children from non-English speaking backgrounds (Martin, 1978). The program consisted of withdrawing these children from the mainstream classes for a period of time each day so that they may receive special tuition in English from another teacher. These classes came to be known as English as a Second Language or 'ESL classes'. Many immigrant children from Asian and European countries, who were not sufficiently fluent in English, spoke another language at home. Given that English was the medium of instruction at school, they had to learn English as a second language in order to learn to cope at school. In reality this meant that schools paid little or no attention to either a child's linguistic competence in another language or other socio-cultural differences between immigrants such as variations in learning styles. Instead, classroom teachers also differed in their concerns about migrant children to the ESL teachers, irrespective of whether they were English language issues or not (Martin, 1978). Most of these original ESL teachers were poorly trained, had little experience in working with immigrants, and there were no standardised procedures to identify and monitor the

progress of these children (Campbell, Barnett, Joy and McMeniman, 1984).

In effect, both children and staff remained isolated from the mainstream curriculum and school operations, enjoying a (false) sense of security within their withdrawal classrooms. For instance, recalling her experiences, one of the Finnish mothers who participated in this study said: "The only place I belonged was the special English class, because the teacher was different; she cared". The ESL teachers were generally motivated and keen to help the children and the children preferred to stay with a sympathetic teacher and peers experiencing similar difficulties (see also Taft and Cahill, 1978). This system thus ensured that the dominant monolingual, Anglo-Celtic values remained and the onus was on the immigrant children, not the schools, to adopt and adjust to the 'new' circumstances.

During the next few years, politicians and policy planners alike became more aware of migrant children's hapless schooling conditions and realised the magnitude of the situation. In reviewing the CMEP, Martin (1978: 113) wrote

> *What was not foreseen at the beginning was that CEMP would 'flush out' children whose educational difficulties were being ignored or being accepted as irremediable or as a sign of backwardness. The expected levelling off in demand did not occur. Instead, CMEP generated its own clients and expanded from year to year.... the number of teachers working under the program increased from 246 to 2,291 between 1970 and 1976; the number of children in special classes from 8,800 to 90,810;..and expenditure from $0.1 million to $13.1 million for the last full year of operation.*

In December 1972, the election of the Whitlam Labor government heralded a new era in migrant relations in Australia. In January 1973, the Federal Government announced the dismantling of the While Australia policy, and family reunion became an important focus of immigration policies. By September 1973, the *Australian Citizenship Act*, made it illegal to discriminate between British subjects and the non-British, in regard to citizenship (Jupp, 1988). These were just two of the significant achievements of the 1970s which facilitated the growth of multicultural education in Australia.

In its Report for the Triennium 1976-78, the Commonwealth Schools Commission indicated a new direction in Federal government policy. In presenting their report, the McNamara Committee (1979) recommended that school operations and curriculum require reformulation to be more appropriate for education for a multicultural society such as Australia. As recommended, the CMEP in its current form was terminated in 1976, replaced by block grants available through the Schools Commission for 'Migrant and Multi-cultural Education' and funds were disbursed at the discretion of the State Government (Martin, 1978: 123). These policy changes were supported by the findings of the 1974 surveys of schools with high migrant density in New South Wales and Victoria. Later, in 1976, in presenting his Report to the Minister (Mather (1976: i), the Chairman of the Committee on the Teaching of Migrant Languages in Schools stated that the Committee's "... investigations revealed that in our increasingly multicultural society the teaching of migrant languages in schools cannot be isolated from the study of the cultures of migrant groups". These were some of the first signs of the beginning of the recognition by educationalists that needs of immigrant children must be looked at in a more broader context, not just as a matter of linguistic deficiency.

Pressure for the ACTSA to become active in promoting multiculturalism within the government education system in Canberra came from several directions. Firstly, from the Federal Government, primarily thorough policy changes recommended by the Schools Commission as discussed above. Secondly, and perhaps more importantly, the pressure came from the people of Canberra. In March 1978, at a major community conference the public's growing interest in incorporating multiculturalism into the school system was reiterated. At this conference, in his keynote address, Grassby,[5] said that

> *the schools should be crucibles of tolerance ... We must surely look to the schools which today is perhaps the only place where all Australian children meet before withdrawing and going off to their respective ethnic, religious and socio-economic groups. Too often still*

[5] As the Minister for Immigration in the Whitlam Government and later as the Commissioner for Community Relations, he played a key role in promoting the recognition of cultural diversity within Australia (see Grassby, 1973).

> *the teacher is the only alien in the classroom ...* (in Phillips and Houston, 1978: 15).

Other speakers, including academics and ethnic community leaders, all expressed similar views. Resolutions passed at the conference made it clear that the Canberra community wanted immediate action from the ACT Schools Authority.

By 1978, multicultural education had thus been raised as a discussion topic at several Authority meetings and in August of that year "the Authority agreed to 'define a statement indicating the philosophical acceptance of multicultural education'" (Cullen, 1979:4). Later that year in November, the ACTSA established the Schools Office Multicultural Working Party. In addition to developing a philosophical statement, this working party was also asked to look at the practical implications of implementing the resultant policy changes (Cullen, 1979). In May 1979, the Working Party presented its report to the Authority and four months later, at a Special Meeting the *'Statement of Philosophical Acceptance on Multicultural Education'* (for the full text, see appendix 2) was adopted. It advocated a holistic approach (Lewins, 1979), which translated to practice meant "that multicultural education is not an additional or optional subject, but an ethic which should permeate all curriculum areas" (ACTSA, 1979: see appendix 2). It also stated that children should be allowed "to maintain their ethnic identity", and that whilst "as a priority" those with English proficiency problems must be given "special assistance", that "all children" should be given "the opportunity to learn a (community) language" (ibid.). This was a landmark decision: the ACTSA had finally, publicly declared that it would promote educational programs which acknowledged the cultural diversity of the ACT.

Consequently we see a period of intense activity involving the government, the schools, and the community at large working together with a spirit of optimism. The federal government provided funds to the Authority to set up a community based Multicultural Education Advisory Committee (MEAC) including a representative from the non-government school sector and the Ethnic Communities Council. MEAC's main task was to disburse and supervise the administration of

federal funds provided under the Galbally recommendation[6] to promote multiculturalism through education (Wells, 1980: 20). Under this scheme between 1980 and 1981, a diverse range of more than 50 school based Multicultural Education programs were funded in the ACT.[7] These included the development of community language programs (such as Indonesian and Spanish), special ethnic studies units and the production of bilingual materials.

However, all was not well. It soon became apparent that the implementation of the proposals required a significant commitment of the Authority's funds to develop and maintain programs on an ongoing basis. In 1980, a Multicultural Advisor was appointed and in-service courses for teachers continued to be offered. However, staffing bilingual programs were administratively complex and problematical because of issues such as recognition of overseas teacher qualifications. Although community demand and interest in bilingual programs remained high, ACTSA's funding of bilingual staff was somewhat fragmented and many programs "ceased because of lack of resources and financial support" (Wells, 1980: 37).

The Galbally funding was also useful in getting multicultural education programs started within schools, but "within tight financial and staff ceiling constraints it was extremely difficult for the Authority to further develop and extend" (Wells, 1980: 35) the MEAC initiatives. Similarly, staff development in planning courses, developing curriculum documents and raising awareness, were also hampered (Wells, 1980: 36). Consequently, by 1985, enthusiasm for school based multicultural education programs was waning, precariously propped up by a few committed teachers and principals having to resort to staging "international

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6 "The Galbally Report recommended that $5m be allocated over three years for multicultural education in Australia" and amounts of $25,000 in 1980 and $45,000 for 1981 were "recommended for the ACT" (Wells, 1980: 22). However, these figures did not match the amounts specified in MEAC's reports for 1980 and 1981. Suffice to say that in both years, the primary schools received less than 40 per cent of the grants identified in the MEAC reports.

7 Some schools also received funds through embassies (such as the Spanish and Italian embassies) to fund bilingual teacher's aides.

days" or "food tasting" to retain awareness and interest in the issues. At the same time, multicultural programs were also competing for public funds with other community priorities such as sex education, the participation of girls in mathematics units, and computer education. At this stage, it would have been timely for ACTSA to undertake a thorough evaluation of the multicultural education programs, at least to show the critics how much had been achieved between 1980-85. Regrettably, this did not eventuate and multicultural programs in the ACT government schools continued to slide. By 1985, multicultural education was off the public agenda, making room for other political issues such as system wide reductions in staffing levels announced in the government's May economic statement, which led to strike action by teachers. This was the climate of the schools at the time when the fieldwork was carried out.

5.3 School organisation

Schools may be described as "social organisations in which behaviour becomes predictable" (Shipman, 1976: 172). By and large, social relations are controlled through predictable organisational aspects of the school which attempt to bring regularity to the schooling process. There is a substantial empirical evidence to show that design of space (such as partitions between classrooms), arrangements of furniture (such as placement of desks in rows or clusters), and selection of play material (such as dolls and books from various countries) can set limits or facilitate social interaction in classrooms (see for example, Ramsey, 1987). More specifically, it is argued that the organisational setting of the classroom can either foster or suppress social interaction between multi-racial children. When the data on the schools were collated, three organisational characteristics emerged as being important for setting the context for teacher - child interactions, in relation to child ethnicity. namely,

5.3.1 School building design;
5.3.2 Classroom size and composition; and
5.3.3 Curriculum or commitment to multicultural education.

The results of each of these will be presented in turn, and care will be taken to

identify any common patterns or differences and similarities between Scots, Finnish and Indian children and their relationships with their class teachers.

5.3.1 School building design

In general, most government schools in the ACT could be categorised in terms of whether they were traditional or modern according to the period, architectural design and school organisation. For instance, the principal in one of the oldest primary school included in the study, described the teaching style at his school as "basically traditional", with an emphasis on the mastery of "... the 3Rs, the basic skills of reading, writing and maths". In these schools, much of the teaching was conducted within conventional 24' x 24' classrooms. In contrast, the newer, open plan schools advocated a more child centred philosophy. Teaching was less formal and alternative teaching methods were favoured. Composition of the 'classroom' could change during the course of a school day and team teaching was commonplace. Some units contained three home-groups (approximately 90 students) as compared to 30 students in a conventional classroom.

Open plan schools in the ACT came under much public criticism in the mid 1980s. For instance, Tony Orriell, the principal of an open-plan school stated that advantages override the disadvantages, but acknowledged that there were numerous bureaucratic dilemmas (such as ACTSA's staffing policies at the time), which had to be reviewed. He also publicly claimed that "many of the buildings are not ideal architecturally and the sizes of most of the class units designated as three or four teacher team areas are completely unrealistic" (in ACTSA News, 1985: 4). Table 5.2 shows the distribution of the study children according to the architectural design of their school[8].

Table 5.1:

[8] Some schools had a mixture of open plan areas and conventional classrooms. For ease of analysis, the study children were categorised according to the design and teaching style adopted in their classroom.

Distribution of children by school building design

School building design	Number of children			
	SCOTS	FINNS	INDIANS	Total
Modern	6	1	7	14
Traditional	3	8	2	13

As can be seen, the study children were fairly evenly distributed between modern, open-plan and traditional, single classrooms. Two thirds of the Scottish children and the majority of the Indian children (seven) were found in newer, open-plan classrooms. By contrast the majority of Finns (eight children) were located in older, more conventional self-contained single classrooms.

It is argued that school building designs have implications for teacher - child interactions. For instance, the shape of the classroom could influence not only the teacher's style of teaching and the arrangement of classroom furniture for instance, but also the children's motivation to learn and their learning styles. Tizard et al (1984: 204-206) assert that the open-plan schools exacerbate children's difficulties in communicating with "a large number of strange adults who know very little about their activities". As a consequence, staff working in these settings, either "misunderstood or failed to understand what the children said".

In this study, whole class teaching was more commonly found in the traditional schools. It was relatively difficult to adopt this teaching method in an open-plan situation where more than two classes may be run simultaneously in the one area, without any solid physical structural barriers to keep the classes separate. Often this meant that children had to learn to cope with surrounding noise, listen, concentrate, and get the work done, in spite of environmental factors which may interrupt and inhibit their learning. To succeed under such circumstances, it required a great deal of self discipline from the children and careful planning and organisation from the teachers.

Research evidence also suggests that there was wide variability between cultures in terms of both teaching and learning styles (Chattergy, 1983; Jalongo, 1983; Laosa, 1977 and Soto, 1991). For example, Western education systems, such as Australia, may value the importance of independent self directed learning. In contrast, Asian countries such as India may emphasise traditional, teacher directed, whole class learning methods. When children migrate to Australia from another country, it was expected that they, the children, make the necessary adjustments. There was little or no obligation on the schools or the teachers to change the system to meet the children's needs (Martin, 1978).

Unfortunately, none of the teachers in this study had any specialised knowledge or understanding of differences in learning styles of children of Scottish, Finnish or Indian descent. Having worked in either Canada or the United Kingdom, the three teachers who taught the children F1, I1 and I8, expressed a general awareness of cultural diversity in the classroom. More importantly, the majority appeared not to be overly concerned about their lack of awareness or feel the need to take into account cultural patterns of learning when implementing the curriculum. In effect, there was an implicit notion that even if the teachers were unhappy about teaching in traditional or open plan buildings, it was expected that just as much as the teachers have to put up with it, so did the children. It was assumed that neither the teacher nor the child had a choice or could do very little to vary the situation, except change schools.

Thus, one could be persuaded to suggest that the school building designs promoted the permeation and preservation of the middle-class Anglo-Celtic orientation of the ACTSA's education system. Interestingly, the majority of Scottish parents (that is, the parents of S3, S4, S5, S7 and S8) expressed their dissatisfaction with the open-plan system. The following comments made by S4's father echo their sentiments:

> *I don't like this .... open-plan schools. That's why we took him out of X school. I like the old system where the teacher is in control. How do you expect the children to concentrate when one group is doing reading and one group is doing maths or whatever, at the same time? No*

> *wonder you find so many children who can't read and write and can't add or multiply without a calculator.*

Such comments implied that many parents preferred traditional methods of teaching, specially in terms of achieving high standards in literacy and numeracy as well as school discipline. As S7's mother remarked,

> *I think he would be better off at a traditional or Catholic school. He's a bit slow to pick up things and I feel he's not as advanced as my niece in Scotland. She's the same age as S7, but she writes much better. I don't know whether it's because of how they teach at R. Primary* (the child's school, which was one of the newest, open-plan schools in Canberra at the time).

As can be seen, in making such comments these parents usually made reference to the system of education available in their country of origin. About half of the Indian parents also made similar remarks as illustrated by I5's father who said "we prefer a private school because the discipline is better. We're waiting for a vacancy at a Catholic school close by". Some of the Finnish parents (such as F1's) also made comparative remarks about schooling in Finland and Australia; but on the whole their comments did not indicate a strong preference or rejection of either modern or traditional schools. Having being exposed to the Australian school system for much longer than either the Scots or the Indian families, they were aware of the potential difficulties for non English speaking immigrants but they also appear to be more pragmatic. As F3's mother said, "it's a long time since I went to school and times are changing (even in Finland)". However, by the time my fieldwork was completed, S7, the Scottish boy and I5, the Indian boy, had been removed from the government schools and placed in Catholic schools.

5.3.2 Classroom size and composition

For over two decades, scholars have been debating the effects of classroom size or the number of children in the group on educational achievement. During the 1970s, class size was at the centre of debate in Australian secondary education (see Eastcott, 1973 and Keeves, 1972). More recent studies, such as the work of Tizard and her colleagues (1982 and 1984) in Britain, and Goodnow et al (1980 and 1985) in Australia have brought the debate on class size and teaching and learning to the

early childhood arena. By comparing school and home learning, they highlight the differences between child - adult interactions in the two settings. Whilst at home, unless the child has more than one sibling, s/he will have direct access to the parent(s) at all times. Hence, much of home learning is personal, individualised and rarely has a time limit (Tizard et al, 1984). In contrast, upon entering school the child is immediately placed in a highly structured environment with a cohort of strangers chosen externally by school policy. This means that the child has to adapt to learning within formal group situations, a concept with which s/he may be totally unfamiliar (Jalongo, 1983 and Soto, 1991).

The children who participated in this study were located in a mixture of small, medium and large primary schools as shown in table 5.4.

Table 5.4:

Distribution of children by school size

Number of students at school	SCOTS	FINNS	INDIANS
0-200 (small)	-	-	2
201-400 (medium)	4	3	3
401-600 (large)	5	6	4

Three Scottish children (S3, S6 and S7) were all located at the same school and six schools had two pairs each of either Scots, Finnish or Indian children. Although most of the Finnish and Indian children were located in the older more established schools in the northern suburbs, the Scottish children were found in the newer suburbs of the Tuggeranong Valley. This pattern reflects the trends in migration and settlement of Scots, Finns and Indians as discussed in chapter 3. Only the two Indian children, I1 and I4, were located in small size schools with less than 200 pupils. Of these, I4 was at a preschool attended by approximately 30 children per session. In the cases of I4 and I9 they were the only Indians in the whole school and this raises questions about the significance of skin colour in

attracting attention to a child's family background. As I7's father said

> *... most certainly being a child of .... I could say, coloured background or ... brown skin colour, they would certainly know that she comes from a different background. So it's automatically in place, her identity. We are coloured and there's no denying it. We can't change it.*

Under the circumstances, it could be argued that given the small size of a school, the child's visible physical differences could be magnified or stand out as a contrast. By the same token, the Scottish and Finnish children have a better chance of blending into the school population.

These two propositions were affirmed by the teachers in answering questions about how they came to find out about the children's connections with their respective cultural backgrounds. For instance, F1's teacher remarked "I didn't know about F1's link with Finland. But it was obvious that F1 wasn't an Australian child when she was with her mum. Her accent became more pronounced". The mother's first language was Finnish and she spoke English with a strong accent and, in her presence, this was copied, albeit unconsciously, by the child.

Class sizes of the children who participated in this study ranged between 28 to 43 children per classroom. The majority of the classrooms contained composite groupings, including a mixture of children of two different ages (such as seven and eight year olds together). The majority of these (that is, 15 out of 25 classes) consisted of team teaching situations, which meant that the children came into contact regularly with more than one teacher for their basic skills teaching.[9] This again could be potentially problematical for young children starting school for the first time (Tizard et al, 1984), especially in the case of S3, S6, I1 and F2 who were all in kindergarten or transition classes. For most young children, building a rapport with a significant adult who they can trust and have easy access to is imperative in the early years of schooling (Feeney, Christensen and Moravcik, 1987).

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[9] Note that I interviewed only the main teachers, who are the study children's primary caregivers in the school environment.

This situation was compounded for the immigrant child who was just beginning school, having been at home with a parent up until then (for example, S6, the Scottish girl and I5, the Indian boy). Such children not only have to learn to adjust to a different linguistic and cultural environment, but also have to develop multiple relationships with both teachers and peers who were essentially strangers not related to the family (Ramsey, 1987; Soto, 1991). An older immigrant child may also experience feelings of alienation, having to adjust to a different system of schooling compared to the one s/he was used to in her/his country of origin. This applied in the case of I8 and S7, both 7 year olds, who had attended schools in India and Scotland respectively, prior to the family's migration to Australia. As stated earlier, although S4's parents were dissatisfied with his school, I8's parents remarked that their daughter "loves going to school here. We have no worries". This demonstrates that even in a small sample one can find considerable variations. This supports the view that each situation must be considered on its own merits.

Moreover, at least in the case of three Indian children (that is, I1, I2 and I5) their teachers mentioned that when they started school each one had sought the company of their siblings during recess. Similar comments were <u>not</u> expressed by the teachers of the Scottish or Finnish children, who also had older or younger siblings in the same school. Nevertheless, two of the Scottish children (S5 and S6) did find the transition from preschool to primary school difficult and their mothers spent time with the children at school during the first few years. Accordingly, one could argue that school readiness was inextricably linked with normal child development and that cultural discontinuities between home and school may introduce additional impediments, making the home to school transition a doubly difficult step for at least some immigrant children during early childhood.

Available research shows that young children benefit most from small group sizes, where there is a high staff to child ratio (Murray, 1986 and Watts and Patterson, 1985). The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), the American professional organisation recognised world wide for setting standards for early childhood education, has recommended an optimum of one to

twelve staff to children ratio for 5 to 8 year old children (in Watts and Patterson, 1985: 18). In practice, in Australia a staff to child ratio of one to twenty-five was more common. In reality, none of the classrooms in this study measured up to this ratio with the average class size being thirty-two children. This was also not always clear cut because team teaching situations in open-plan classrooms meant that the groups varied in size and composition during various lessons. This system was potentially hazardous for both children and staff, and both have to work closely together in achieving each other's objectives as learners and teachers respectively.

A situation I witnessed in one school illustrated this point further. Four groups of Grade 2/3s regularly came together for mathematics, language, social studies and sport. One day, when the unit co-ordinating teacher for mathematics unexpectedly fell ill, she was replaced by a relief teacher. This teacher was not familiar with the team teaching structure. Valuable time was lost in grouping the children and locating resources, and the relief teacher spent the rest of the lesson asking the children to explain and clarify how the mathematics groups worked. Though this may be treated as an isolated case, in this instance, the children's behaviour was more indicative of bewilderment and confusion. Thus, without skilful organisation, co-ordination and forethought, young children's learning could be easily jeopardised.

5.3.3 Curriculum or Commitment to Multicultural Education

In the ACT, school curriculum was usually determined by the school board, consisting of parents and professionals in the local community. Hence, one could suggest that

> *Logically, it is through the curriculum, which can be thought of as a selection of knowledge and experiences, which those responsible for schooling consider that which should be passed on to the children of the society* (Bullivant, 1981: viii).

Accordingly, the presence or absence of multicultural education programs reflect the school's interest and concern with the ethnic mix of the school population. By 1985, of the nineteen schools which participated in this study, only ten had formal written policies on multicultural education. This meant that two of the Scottish

children (S2 and S5), five of the Finnish children (F3, F4, F7, F8 and F9) and three of the Indian children (I4, I5 and I9) attended schools which had no officially endorsed school based policy on multiculturalism.

Having a school based multicultural policy however, was no guarantee that the teachers would implement it in their classrooms as shown in the following conversation with I3's teacher,

MW: *What are your thoughts on multicultural education?*

T: *That's too difficult to put into a sentence isn't it? I don't know. I have lots of varying thoughts.... (pause)*

MW: *Positive or negative?*

T: *Yes, there's a lot for and a lot against. There's a lot of danger in setting out to teach something I mean multicultural.*[10] (The teacher goes on to add the following comments a little later). *I don't think I'm here to teach, you know, multiculturalism!*

On the one hand, this teacher's comments were typical in that she saw multicultural education as something "dangerous" or too difficult and at best left out of the classroom. Her reluctance to raise issues regarding race and culture with students could be interpreted as a form of hidden racism, with unfortunate consequences at several levels: not only because the individual may have believed in it personally, but also professionally it demonstrated unequal treatment of children on the basis of ethnic identification. As the gate-keeper of information flow in the classroom, the teacher can control the curriculum content. By consciously suppressing multiculturalism from her curriculum plans, she limited the children's opportunities to discuss relevant issues about ethnicity.

Although most other teachers did not express similar views openly to me, S9's teacher agreed with the teacher above by saying "given the demands on

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[10] This teacher's anxiety was partially due to the fact that some of the senior students in the school have recently created some anxiety for the teachers by questioning their rights as students as part of their discussions on a Human Rights project.

teachers of today, there's a limit to what you can do". In essence, this remark illustrated another commonly held misconception about multicultural education. That is, it is misleading to regard multiculturalism as "something else to do" (S9's teacher), a separate entity, an additional unit of study that teachers have somehow to fit into their classroom schedule (Derman-Sparks, 1991; Ramsey, 1982). Rather, multiculturalism should be integrated across the curriculum and pervade all aspects of classroom interactions as stated in the ACTSA's policy statement (see appendix 2) and reiterated in Federal government policy (NACCME, 1987).

Flowing from this misunderstanding, however, many teachers were observed presenting the 'pizza-to-polka' version of curriculum planning, where children were seen to be getting a taste of multiculturalism by performing various cultural acts such as learning how to make pizza and/or dancing the polka. The schools attended by I1, I3, F1, F5, S4, S8 and S9 all organised annual multicultural events described as a 'multicultural festival' or 'international days'. Dressing in national costumes and eating 'ethnic food' were the main attractions. The difficulty was that such exotic cultural traits or popular activities were usually carried out in isolation, as a one-off event, without discussing with the children the underlying issues relevant to culture and ethnic identification.

Other teachers gave a variety of additional reasons why they were either unable or reluctant to present multicultural education programs. These reasons may be described as being systemic impediments and included

- lack of training - both preservice and in-service courses had not equipped teachers to work with children from diverse backgrounds;
- lack of resources at schools suitable for early childhood and not having time to search and obtain community resources; and
- lack of support from other staff, including the school principal, of multicultural activities and co-ordination within schools.

Similar problems of staffing and resource constraints were also identified by Wells (1980) who surveyed multicultural (and migrant) education activities in ACT

schools. Most teachers were quick to point out that there was no one simple method of presenting multicultural programs. However, to assume "that there should be a unified set of goals and curriculum for multicultural education, contradicts the underlying purpose... to provide relevant and meaningful education to children from all cultural backgrounds" (Ramsey, 1982: 15). Yet, as discussed earlier, the comments of the majority of participating teachers were more evident of a fragmented (as opposed to integrated) approach to multicultural education.

Several teachers (such as F6's and F3's teachers) also said that the ACTSA's two multicultural consultants ought to visit schools more often and initiate discussion in schools without waiting to be invited to come. Another (I3's teacher) added that the ACTSA policy was "not well publicised and not very well implemented. I know we got money but I don't know what it was used for". Others said that in order to succeed, multicultural education also needs community support. ACTSA policy stipulated that each school was responsible for deciding when and how it planned to implement multicultural programs (Wells, 1980). Accordingly, such teachers acknowledged that in developing school based policies, parents need to be involved. As the teacher of S9, put it "they've got a much better idea of what it's all about".

5.4 Teacher characteristics

Analysis of teacher characteristics is crucial to any sociological interpretation of the school in society. For instance, there is a substantial body of research on the self-fulfilling prophecy and teacher expectations (see review by Brophy, 1983). Yet, like children, sociologists have also ignored teachers' personal or private perceptions about their work by treating them merely "as vehicles of social control and therefore of little interest in themselves" (Connell, 1985: 2). In Australia, the work of scholars such as Connell et al (1983) and Davies (1982) have stimulated the growth of qualitative analysis in educational sociology, thereby presenting a different perspective on the world of teachers' work, incorporating both the personal and public dimensions. Accordingly, given below are the findings on

5.4.1 Teacher training and experience;
5.4.2 Teaching methods; and
5.4.3 Teacher expectations and attitudes.

Characteristics such as teachers' expectations and attitudes toward students are contained in the personal domain, and level of teacher training, experience and instructional methods are part of the public domain. As can be seen, both these dimensions were included in this study.

5.4.1 Teacher training and experience

For the purpose of this study, a teacher may be defined as a person who has undertaken some skill training, is certified and is "employed in schools in an official capacity for the expressed purpose of 'guiding and directing the learning experiences' of children" (Good in Anderson and Burns, 1989: 5). This definition incorporates the notion that teachers are trained professionals and that teaching is a purposeful, goal directed activity. Although, characteristics of teachers may be described in terms of their sex, ethnicity, training and years of experience, it is more difficult to isolate teaching qualities in terms of student outcomes. Anderson et al (1989: 7), for instance, connects this problem with

> *Getzels and Jackson's (1963) conclusion made a quarter of a century ago... 'very little is known for certain... about the relation between teacher personality and teaching effectiveness. The regrettable fact is that many of the studies so far have not provided significant results. Many others have produced only pedestrian findings' (p.574).*

The majority of teachers who participated in this study trained during the 1970s, undertaking two year training courses offered at teachers' training colleges. A few (such as the teacher of I3, I6 and S9) updated to a three year diploma during the 1980s. Most had over 10 years of classroom teaching experience. As I6's teacher said, this in itself posed difficulties:

> *I think most teachers tend to live in an unreal world. Most teachers started school when they were five and never left it - the school area has been their whole life and I think that has distinct disadvantages. It affects your ability to converse with people. It's a very insular world. I think it would be great if all teachers have to work in the real world for a while; to know what does go on in the other world. It's quite different.*

That is, having entered the school system as a child, that person would have then

continued to maintain links with the system through undertaking training as a teacher, later returning to the schools to teach without experiencing anything outside the school system. This, according to this teacher, would make it difficult for the individual to obtain an balanced view of life or schooling, having never stepped outside the education system.

It must also be remembered that all of the teachers in this study were women and all have Anglo-Celtic origins. However, two were trained in England (that is, I1's and I8's teachers) and both had taught in Australia for less than five years. Also, although I did not ask about their personal relationships, I6's teacher mentioned that she was married to a Russian and that this had changed her personal perceptions about migrants, as shown in her comments given below:

> ... *that* (her marriage) *put me into a world that I had no contact with. People with very little English and I guess I began to see problems. And now I feel... there's two sides to a story.*

This may denote this teacher's willingness to listen, discuss and even revise her own attitudes about cultural variations. This was an important quality of teaching because

> ... *without this degree of openness it is impossible to create an atmosphere of trust in which pupils are able to talk freely to one another and to the teacher, about their own attitudes and assumptions. Such trust is essential in the area of multicultural education which touches on highly controversial issues, about which pupils are likely to be confused and perhaps troubled* (Nixon, 1985: 61).

5.4.2 Teaching methods

To a large extent, as discussed earlier, the form of classroom instruction or the teaching methods were prescribed by the school building design and the curriculum. Likewise, personal characteristics of teachers, their verbal (voice quality for example) and non-verbal behaviour (such as eye contact) also indicate differences in interactional style between teachers and children (Ramsey, 1987). The teacher's method of classroom instruction is also influenced by her/his training experience, and to this extent, it is a personal choice or individual quality (see Saracho, 1983). Overall, the data collected showed that the main methods used by

the teachers in this study may be categorised as whole class, small group, mixed or individual. Whole class teaching involved teacher directed learning where all the children listened, observed and followed the teacher's instructions collectively. Many teachers used this method with basic skill learning during mathematics, writing and spelling lessons. However, the class teachers who taught I1, I5, F4, F5, S2 and S5 adopted this method with other curriculum areas, including social studies, music and craft work. This often meant that rote learning took precedence over creativity, with the objective being to complete a set task as directed, and without deviation.

Small group work on the other hand gave the children the opportunity to work together with their peers. In these classes the children usually sat together in groups, with the tables and chairs joined together as clusters or nests. Some of these clusters reflected friendship patterns, where each child was able to choose where s/he sat and the teacher had the veto power to move children when a group became disruptive. Apart from that, such groups usually remained stable during the year. Some small groups were also based on ability as defined by the teacher. Most teachers were at pains to point out that these were flexible groupings and that they mixed the children at least once a term so that the children did not get fixed at a particular ability level, consequently being labelled such as an advanced, average or slow learner.

Those teachers who adopted a mixture of instructional methods used both whole class and small group arrangements. The extent to which teacher direction was required was dependent on the contents or subject matter and the children's ability to cope with it. Similarly, some teachers used individual teaching techniques to work with one child at a time. This meant that a whole range of activities were simultaneously available to all the children and it was up to each child to choose what s/he wanted to do at any time.

Table 5.3 shows the distribution of predominant teaching methods which Scottish, Finnish and Indian children were exposed to most frequently.

Table 5.3:

Classification of teaching methods adopted by teachers

Teaching Method	SCOTS	FINNS	INDIANS	Total
Whole class	3	5	5	13
Small group	3	2	2	7
Mixed	3	2	-	5
Individual	-	-	2	2

Table 5.3 shows that whole class instruction was the most commonly used method and that the majority of Finnish (F4, F5, F6, F8 and F9) and Indian (I1, I3, I5, I6 and I8) children were exposed to this method of teaching. The Scottish children, on the other hand, were evenly divided in terms of their exposure to the three main methods of teaching as described above. Although all the teachers in this study used some form of grouping to categorise children based on interest or cognitive ability, not everyone used these groups to deliver lessons. This was particularly true of the 13 teachers who predominantly used whole class teaching as indicated in table 5.3. These teachers used groups, primarily as an organising tool to move children between teachers. This meant that, once the children moved between rooms, the method of teaching did not vary. The children continued to follow the teacher's directions with minimal intervention.

It was noted earlier that, of the total of twenty-seven children, fifteen were located in composite classes consisting of children of mixed ages. The children knew whether they were Year 2s or Year 3s in the home class. Some had to also remember that they had to go for mathematics with teacher X, for music with teacher Y and for social studies with teacher Z and that they may not necessarily be with the same group of children for each of these lessons. When two or three teachers shared the same age composite classes, it was common that the children were mixed and regrouped for various lessons. In most instances, the decision to divide children was based on whether a teacher was interested, able and willing to

share teaching a particular subject, such as mathematics and science, with other teachers who may have specialist skills and expertise.

Irrespective of the size of the group, it was also observed that most of the teaching was done in group contexts. Planned opportunities for individual teaching was observed only in the case of two 7 year olds, I9, an Indian girl and S7, a Scottish boy. Both were experiencing difficulties and were also considered to be disruptive to their peers in the same classroom. Class or group size has an impact on the degree of contact between the teacher and the students, and it can influence the extent to which the teacher can get to know students individually (Tizard et al, 1985; Soto, 1991). Yet, my observations revealed that individual teaching was merely used as a remedial teaching technique, a disciplinary measure or as a way of periodically assessing children's abilities. This denotes that individual teaching is a luxury, restrictively used in problem identification and resolution.

One of the Indian children's (I9) teacher did, however, have a system of individual contracts where by the children selected a number of daily tasks from a set menu for the week. This was a Grade 2/3 class comprising of 7 and 8 year old children. Working independently, each child set her/his own pace, and was allowed to consult the teacher or peers as s/he wished. At 7 years of age, I9 found the contract system difficult to adapt to and unable to pace herself adequately. She made careless mistakes in trying to catch up at the last minute and seldom finished the week's menu of set tasks. The teacher was unsure how to deal with the situation and sought the help of the ESL teacher. It was agreed that this child should be placed in the ESL class (withdrawal) so that she could get more one to one attention that the class teacher could/would not provide.

However, I9's English language skills were not at issue. Her English language comprehension and speech was fluent as her home language was English. However, she needed assistance with study skills, which would encourage the development of independence and discipline. This was her first year at an Australian primary school and she was not familiar with this teaching technique. It

was therefore possible that not only was she inexperienced, but that she had also emotionally not yet reached the level of developmental maturity required to work independently. Yet, the teacher had not even considered the child's lack of experience with the system. Though she felt that the child was perhaps emotionally immature, this possibility was regarded as secondary to her so called poor English language skills. This case illustrated how easy it was to use "the cultural hook" (as I7's teacher would describe it), in (mis)diagnosing the needs of an immigrant child. It was easier to blame the child, (the victim) than question the teacher or the appropriateness of her teaching techniques in meeting the needs of an individual child, immigrant or otherwise.

5.4.3 Teacher attitudes and expectations

ACTSA policy states that it values the unique potential of each child and that teachers must take into account individual needs in planning and presenting programs. It prides itself in being able to provide for equity and justice by having

> ... *a system capable of being designed from the ground up to ensure that each student would have the opportunity to acquire the sort of education best suited to his or her needs and abilities* (ACTSA, 1984: 5).

Success or failure of the system depends on child outcomes. There will be variations not only in terms of ethnicity, but also gender and other family structure characteristics as identified in chapter 3 (see also Blatchford, Burke, Farquhar, Plewis and Tizard, 1985). Parameters of diversity also vary between and across classrooms. There will always be fast/slow and gifted/disabled learners because of differential rates of development, physically, socially, emotionally or intellectually.

School readiness[11] research (for example, Ghaye and Pascal, 1988) indicates that at age 5 years some children may not be either academically or socially ready to

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[11] 'Readiness' is a concept defined by Arnold Gessell, one of the pioneers of the scientific study of child growth and development. It refers to "a period of development in which a specific skill or response is most likely to occur" (Feeney et al, 1987: 86). It is a generic term applicable in any area of physical, social, cognitive or emotional development.

handle the rigours of school life. Early childhood teachers are trained to observe and identify early learning difficulties and intervene appropriately. However, errors in assessment can arise when applying normative developmental knowledge without taking into account individual and cultural variations. Based on their work with teachers in the USA and Italy, Edwards and Gandini (1989: 18) claim that

> *Teachers' expectations about normal developmental timetables vary in relation to the cultures they come from, as well as in relation to child development and experience with children.*

It was difficult to say definitely whether a teacher's attitudes and beliefs about immigrants directly or indirectly would influence her objective assessment of a child's level of development. However, the potential for miscalculation was there as illustrated in the case of I1, an Indian boy aged 6 years. His story was as follows. During each of my visits, I1 always sat directly in front of the teacher. Yet, on numerous occasions he was unable to maintain his interest and concentration on a set task even if he chose it himself. The teacher was aware of this and told me:

> *... that worries me because as I said to you last time, I thought he might be deaf. He shows signs of ... the sort of patterns with deaf children (sic). If they are not hearing (sic) they switch off completely, and try to get someone else to join in.*

Concerned about the child's poor progress, the teacher called in the parents to discuss the situation. The teacher began the diagnosis by claiming that the problems were related to I1's English language skills. When the parents pointed out that "he does not speak any other language at home except English", the teacher had replied that "it would do him good any way to go to ESL because he gets a bit of extra language help which should help with his reading".

This teacher thus chose to ignore the significance of the parents' comments in evaluating the child's progress. It is unfortunate that even though the teacher had suspected that there may be some physical impairment, her perceptions were masked by the assumed ethnic characteristics. Yet, as a trained and experienced teacher (ie. she had been teaching for over 10 years, including teaching in multi-racial schools in inner London) she should have known that, though learning problems are often difficult to diagnose during early childhood, "age appropriate cognitive skills may be

slower to develop if hearing loss has resulted in a language delay" (Feeney et al, 1987: 348). The physical signs of deafness were there from the start. Parents' comments like "he loves coming to school" and the teacher's comments that "he doesn't say much to me but he's certainly not afraid of me" backed up by my observations, and reinforced the view that alternatives to poor English language skills had to be considered in trying to explain the child's disruptive behaviour in the classroom. Instead, the teacher fell into the common trap of labelling the child as yet another 'ethnic' with poor English language skills. At the time of my final contact, the results of a preliminary hearing test indicated that the child's hearing was damaged and further tests were being done to assess the extent of deafness and the need for remediation. It took almost a year to get to this stage.

Moreover, there was evidence to suggest that the education system actually assisted the misuse of cultural diversity through its ESL programs. Each of the 19 primary schools in the study included special classes to teach immigrant children ESL. Within three of these schools, the proportion of children who attended ESL classes constituted more than 10 percent of the total enrolment of each school. All of the Indian children in the study had been automatically placed in an ESL class at some stage of their school life by virtue of their ethnicity rather than the need for English language skills. When it was realised that some of them (like the above Indian boy and others such as I2, I3 and I9) did not really need additional assistance in learning English, there was no guarantee that they would be taken off the ESL list. Some class teachers felt that some of the immigrant children benefited from the one to one attention and pastoral care provided by the ESL teacher in a smaller group setting.

In essence, the classroom teachers revealed that they were either unable or unwilling to provide for the additional needs of immigrant children. These teachers also believed that they were in fact resolving the situation by delegating the responsibility to ESL teachers. The irony is that this practice goes against the ACTSA's policy of an integrated approach to multiculturalism. Once the children withdrew for ESL classes, there was little or no contact between teachers, a fact freely

admitted by many.

One of the teachers also admitted that since the government was cutting back on the number of ESL teachers employed by ACTSA, and since their existence had to be justified in terms of the demands (that is, student numbers), immigrant children such as the Indians in this study helped to keep the ESL teachers employed by boosting the ESL quotas. One teacher, who did not want her comments to be tape recorded, said that by virtue of their foreign names (and sometimes, dark skin colour) it was unlikely that such children's participation in the ESL programs will be closely examined by the bureaucrats who make and break funding policies.

5.5 School - Home Links

Most education commentators would agree that parent participation in preschool and primary school activities during their children's early childhood surpasses any other level of education (Silverman, 1985: 147). Teacher training institutions also stress the importance of building and maintaining good teacher - parent relations in presenting developmentally appropriate and culturally relevant programs for young children during early childhood (Feeney et al, 1987). There is also research evidence to support the claim that "when parents are involved in their children's education, achievement is enhanced" (Walberg, 1984 in Seefeldt, 1985: 98). Defining who (parents or teachers) should have the greater say about which issues, is a vexing dilemma. In this study, it was not clear how the responsibility for formal education should be shared between parents and professionals. Although, ACTSA policies stipulated that there should be a partnership between parents and professionals, the majority of parents and teachers in this study were either confused or concerned how this actually worked in practice, as will be shown in relation to two areas:

5.5.1 Parent participation in schools; and
5.5.2 Perceptions of teaching responsibilities.

Differences in perception can lead to frustration and friction on both sides. "Often it is not the actual behaviour we respond to but our perception of it. Perception is

culture related, but these perceptions often lie hidden from us" (Chattergy, 1983: 27).

5.5.1 Parent participation in schools

Overall, home - school contact and communication between the participants of this study were maintained through a variety of ways including:

- informal conversations at arrival and departure times when delivering and picking up a child;
- formal parent - teacher meetings, both individual and group occasions, usually initiated, planned and arranged by the teachers;
- participation in school based activities such as working in the school canteen and fund raising events (such as lamington drives); and
- classroom involvement on rostered days mainly to assist teachers with art/craft, reading and writing lessons.

However, interview comments and my observations suggested that the above avenues were not fully utilised by either parents or teachers to enhance continuity and consistency between home and school. This pattern is evident in table 5.4.

Table 5.4:

Parent involvement in school activities

Involvement	SCOTS	FINNS	INDIANS	Total
YES	1	1	3	5
NO	8	8	6	22

It was generally assumed by both parents and teachers that only mothers were available and interested in becoming involved at school. A notice in one of the school's newsletters read that the Parents' and Citizens' Association (commonly

known as the P and C)[12]

> ... *would like to encourage more men to come along and take an active interest in this aspect of their children's education. The P and C is not an organisation solely for women and our meetings would benefit from more male input.*[13]

Lack of input from fathers may be explained in relation to community perceptions that the father was the family's bread-winner, and that it was therefore the mother's responsibility to attend to the children's school needs. The mothers who participated in this study, irrespective of their country of origin, also subscribed to this view. The following comments from the Indian child's (I4) mother illustrated this point. When asked, 'do you think parents should be involved in the children's school?' the mother replied:

> *Yes, that's my job. I don't expect him (her husband) to because he comes from office and I think it's fun time with their father. I have more time as a mother. If I was working, perhaps he would come but he knows I'm there.*

Accordingly, table 5.4 refers only to the number of mothers who did/not participate in school activities. It was found that of the total sample of 27 families, only five mothers (S8, F1, I1, I4 and I8), accounting for less than one quarter of the parents, were actively involved in any type of on-going parent support work in schools. The reasons for non-participation varied.

The Indian mothers were the most actively involved, helping teachers with reading, art/craft and by working in the school canteen. Both mothers enjoyed going to the school and saw it as a bonus or privilege to spend time with their children at school. Two others (I2's and I6's mothers) who were not as involved at the time of my fieldwork, spoke negatively about their past experiences. I2's

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[12] The P and C is a voluntary committee usually found in every school. It meets monthly and serves as a forum for parent opinion and fund raising for the school.

[13] In order to safeguard the identity of this school, the source of this quotation cannot be referenced.

mother explained it thus:

> *... I didn't get to see or enjoy what the children were doing. It was always cutting fruit, mopping floors and doing this or that. Most of the time it was like a housemaid, the servant's job. Not enjoy the children. I mean when you go to the school you want to enjoy the children. But we were told we MUST (her emphasis) do it ... the mopping, the cleaning.. no time with the children. Not really. (she later added) You can't complain too much because they might take it out on the children. I really didn't want that.*

I6's mother's comments were similar, in that she too was concerned about the subservient role mothers had to adopt in order to please the teachers. In both cases the criticism applied to the preschool situation, and both were happier with the children's teachers in the primary school and felt there was no real need for them to become involved in the classroom. There was no pressure from the teacher either, as I6's mother (who also had a full-time paid job) said, "... you do roster work only if you want to".

The majority of Scottish mothers were also in paid employment and, collectively, they were the least interested in parent participation by saying that they simply did not have the time due to their jobs. On the other hand, the Finns were more reticent or reluctant to become involved, primarily because of language differences or because of the need to take care of a young infant as illustrated by the following comments:

F4's mother: *My English is not good. I don't think I can help the teacher much.*

F6's mother: *I don't want to go to the classroom with her. I need to keep an eye on her instead of helping a child to read or write a story.*

On the other hand, F1's mother who wanted to participate had a different reason for her non-involvement at the time. She said

> *I want to be involved with my children's staff, you know. I definitely want to know how they are going at school. But I don't want to go to the canteen or anything like that. I haven't got time and I'm not interested. But the teacher hasn't asked me to come and talk about Finland or do something like that.*

As in the case of the Indian mothers I2 and I6 described earlier, F1's mother's comments also demonstrated the mismatch between teacher - parent expectations about parent participation in the classroom. This situation was exacerbated when the mother, who had the necessary skills and put her name down for two activities (to teach children weaving and to listen to their reading), was embarrassed when the children had laughed at her accent. She was embarrassed and was more hurt when her own daughter (F1) had asked her not to come again. The mother explained that she did not want to make it difficult for her daughter and decided it was best she kept away, primarily for the sake of her child. In this case, the teacher was aware of the situation but did not pursue the issue further. From then onwards these parents went to the school only to attend school concerts and annual parent - teacher meetings, by invitation.

Although none of the fathers participated in day-to-day classroom activities, at least four fathers from each category of Scots, Finns and Indian fathers had attended an annual parent - teacher interview, school concert or parent information night. Among the fathers, there was a general lack of enthusiasm to attend such events held after work. As one father put it "I don't know what they learn (at school). I haven't got time to ask questions". There were others such as I7's father who believed firmly that parents should not intervene in classroom matters. When asked 'have you been to see her (I7's) teacher?', he replied "NO! We never get involved in these things. She goes to school and that's it. It's not our place to ask questions from the teachers. They, are the experts". It is possible that his views were shaped by his cultural past, as he had not experienced a similar practice during his schooling in India, his country of origin. Yet, other fathers, such as those of children S3, F2 and F9, who also agreed that the teachers were the 'expert', happily attended parent - teacher meetings which they felt were important to "know what your child do" (sic). Two fathers (I9 and S5) also implied that they would get involved in their children's schoolwork when they were a bit older.

5.5.2 Perception of teaching responsibilities

It was noted earlier that ACTSA's policies promoted individuality and

encouraged parent - teacher co-operation in order to enhance children's learning. Evidence from this study, however, suggests that in practice, the perceptions of parents and teachers differ markedly from stated government policy. Parent and teacher responses are reflected in the findings in table 5.6.

Table 5.6:

Comparison of parent and teacher[14] perceptions of their responsibilities for teaching children academic courses and cultural heritage.

Extent of responsibility	SCOTS		FINNS		INDIANS		TOTAL	
	PP	TP	PP	TP	PP	TP	PP	TP
I) Academic courses								
.teacher responsibility	6	6	8	7	6	5	20	18
.shared responsibility	3	3	1	2	3	4	7	9
II) Cultural heritage								
.teacher responsibility	3	6	8	5	7	4	18	15
.shared responsibility	6	3	1	4	2	5	9	12

Note: PP = parents' perceptions and TP = teachers' perceptions

The above results indicate that there was a strong belief among the parents (that is, a majority of twenty parents) that, although it was their responsibility to pass on cultural knowledge, the teacher's primary responsibility was to teach the academic content of courses. Although most teachers (that is, 18 out of 27) agreed with the latter, almost half (or 12 teachers) believed that parents and teachers should share the responsibility for culture.

There was also remarkable agreement between parents and teachers view on who should shoulder the primary responsibility for teaching academic skills. The majority agreed that the pursuit of academic activity was the preserve of trained professionals, with only seven parents and nine teachers recommending that it should be shared. The former was true for the majority of Scots, Finns and Indians, with

[14] Although the actual number of teachers who participated in this study was 25, to ease comparison with parents for this table, it was assumed that each child had a separate teacher. Similarly, it was assumed that a child's mother and father would have the same perceptions, unless otherwise indicated.

almost everyone referring to the teacher as "the expert".

In contrast, fewer parents (nine) than teachers (twelve) believed that teaching about cultures should be shared. The majority of parents again believed that teaching the children's cultural heritage was essentially a parent responsibility. This was particularly the case for the majority of Finnish (eight) and Indian (seven) parents. For instance, consider the following comments:

I2's mother: *It's up to the parents and the children to learn these things socially at home. No point in doing it once a year at school. But at home ... every day.*

I7's father: *I don't expect it from the teacher because she doesn't have time to discuss all the various cultures of the pupils. I would imagine there would be children from probably ten countries. They won't have time to teach if they have to discuss cultural backgrounds.*

F5's mother: *No, she's part of our family but the teacher doesn't need to know. She doesn't understand the difference anyway.*

F2's mother: *I think if they should know anything about Finland, it's the home's job; not the teachers.*

As evident in the above comments, the majority of parents believed that cultural discovery was an on-going learning experience, which was not only inappropriate but also not practicable to be achieved within the limited time available at school.

However, there were other parents who disagreed, believing that teachers should be aware of the children's cultural heritage. When asked, do teachers need to know about the children's cultural heritage? the following parents responded thus:

I4's mother: *They should encourage... let them feel proud of their culture. Not just putting it on on special days. Let other children know and let our children feel a little bit*

more proud of what they have; have pride in their cultural heritage.

S6's father: *It's their job and they know better than we do how to teach children.*

S8's mother: *It's not something I worry about but I think teachers should have a fair idea about all the children's backgrounds really. It can be useful in terms of explaining to the children and just letting your own child feel more comfortable. If the child is feeling different, it would be good to translate that difference into something positive than negative.*

Such comments essentially arose out of parental concern for the welfare of their children. These parents believed that the teacher's knowledge and understanding of the child's background would enhance child growth and development.

The uneasy, tenuous relationship between parents and teachers in this study was one of the main factors which stands out in my mind. From the point of view of the teachers, many found it difficult and uncomfortable to talk about what they knew about the child's family. Teachers were usually embarrassed to admit that their knowledge was often limited to naming an older/younger sibling at the same school or indicating whether the parents attended the annual parent-teacher meetings. Few teachers had some idea of parents' occupations (about six) and cultural background (about four). What was of more concern was that, in spite of their ignorance, some teachers were quick to make subjective value judgements based on what they had seen of the children and their family. For example, consider the following comments from a teacher of I1, an Indian boy: "... they obviously spend a lot of money on clothes and I think they are very well off". The teacher went on to imply that this child was spoilt and lazy and that was part of his difficulties in adapting to the classroom.

5.4 Conclusions

Much of the learning in the classroom is done in the presence of outsiders,

involving individuals who are not members of the child's immediate family. The child has to learn how to be patient, how to wait and take turns to get the teacher's attention, how not to be distracted by others, how to control personal desires, and how to be tolerant of unexpected interruptions and the foibles of others. As Goodnow et al (1985: 93) put it:

> *In many ways, children facing school activities remind us of people disappointed with a restaurant. They often find the 'bill of fare' rather narrow in its range ... and the price higher than expected in the sense of having to put up with aspects that are 'boring' or 'too hard'.*

In essence, these are all aspects of the 'hidden curriculum', matters which are not usually specified in the official curriculum, which is usually limited to the identification and description of subjects/courses of study and time schedule for routines. However it provides little or no information about how the children will experience the curriculum in the classroom. Simultaneous promotion of the ideals of cultural diversity, cohesion and unity is problematical. Bullivant (1981) for instance, has reiterated the inherent contradictions and practical problems of implementing multicultural education.

I could be criticised by those who believe that, during early childhood, children need and learn best by concrete experiences with which they can actively interact. By itself, as a basic principle of child growth and development, this is true. Yet, my observations indicated that the teachers who attempted to present multicultural programs

> *... frequently stressed information that was meaningful to adults but not necessary to children. Moreover, the emphasis on exotic differences often accentuated the 'we' and 'they' polarity* (Ramsey, 1982: 15).

Unfortunately, these same teachers also believed that children cannot distinguish cultural differences during early childhood. Yet, as discussed in chapter 4, research evidence on racial awareness clearly demonstrated that not only were toddlers as young as 2 years of age aware of ethnic differences (Derman-Sparks, 1991) but also children's understanding of ethnic identification is crystallised by about 8 years of age (Davey, 1983; Katz, 1976; Milner, 1983). Hence, it is fallacious to believe that

young children will not be ready or able to discuss issues about race and culture, especially if it is linked with their own ethnic background. In effect, the attitude of teachers such as those who taught I1 and I3 confirms Saracho's claim that "teachers usually have problems coping with the extra work that bilingual/bicultural children need. Teachers focus on concepts the children 'didn't even know' and interpret their differences in style and communication as an indication of being a slow learner" (1983: 98).

The majority of teachers also assumed that parent participation meant assisting the teacher by following her directions. Opportunity for parent initiation or decision making were usually confined to activities outside the classroom, such as canteen work, which was organised and managed by a voluntary parent committee with minimal or no input from the teachers. Although ACTSA's policies described parent participation as a partnership between parents and professionals, in reality, areas of authority and intervention for parents and teachers were implicitly defined and understood by all.

It must also be remembered that seventeen mothers were in paid employment and therefore often were unable to offer daily assistance. Of the five mothers at home who did not participate at school, three (two Finnish mothers and one Scottish mother) said that they found it difficult to arrange child care for their young infants, in order to be at the school for the older children. The other two, both Finnish mothers, did not have younger children but chose not to help out at school because both felt that they did not have the necessary skills to teach children at school. Reduced levels of parent participation in schools, can therefore be traced to changes in family structures and organisation.

As can be seen, the tensions resulting from differing parent and teacher perspectives are many and varied. To what extent the interplay between teachers and parents in the school setting influenced child ethnic identification will be explored in chapter 8.

Chapter 6
CHILD ETHNICITY WITHIN THE HOME

6.1 Introduction

The home, used synonymously with family, denotes the child's household and place of residence. Sociologists are more concerned about understanding the interactions within the home than describing its design features as a cabin, chalet or castle. The study of the history of family life in western industrialised societies reveals that major shifts have occurred in family formulation and family functioning (Shorter, 1976). Sociological critiques of 'the family' also differ ideologically, for example, between functionalists and feminists (see Burns et al, 1983). Few, however, would disagree with Edgar (1991: 3) who argues that "despite a supposed 'decline' in the importance of family life" as an agent of socialisation, "the family unit" continues to be "central to society because it is the place in which social behaviour is constructed, interpreted and transmitted from one generation to another". In this context, the examination of family characteristics in relation to child ethnicity (as defined in chapter 4) is both relevant and appropriate. This is the focus of this chapter.

In chapter 5, it was shown that ethnic identification, defined as a symbolic tie, may be seen as an integral aspect of the child's self concept. Differing family experiences can either enhance or hinder the growth process, and hence colour the child's awareness and perception about her/his sense of identification with the parents' cultural origins. However, "... the specific behaviour of parents is less important than their attitude conveying warmth, firmness, support, consistency, and encouragement of appropriate autonomy" (Samuels, 1977: 250). Thus, in understanding child ethnicity within the home, not only what parents do (behaviour) but also the way they do it (process) must be considered together.

Based on the data collected during the fieldwork carried out during 1984/5, the contents of this chapter will be divided into three main sections. They will deal with family structural characteristics, family ideology and ethnic community contact. Accordingly, my aim is to identify and describe a range of socio-cultural

characteristics of Scottish, Finnish and Indian families which affect the child's daily life in general, and the process of ethnic identification in particular.

6.2 Family Structural Characteristics

There is a vast body of sociological literature based on both Australian and international research which deals with family structural characteristics in relation to child socialisation.[1] Both theoretically and empirically, the concept of social structure is difficult to define (Sargent, 1983: 228). Here structure is used in the way Amato (1987) uses it (as discussed in chapter 3) as well as Goodnow et al (1980), as a family resource which influences child - parent relationships. Accordingly, in this chapter, four structural characteristics will be discussed as follows:

6.2.1 Residency status;
6.2.2 Family size and composition;
6.2.3 Parents' educational background; and
6.2.4 Parents' current occupation.

Similar demographic variables were found to be useful by those such as Khoo (1985) who analysed data on family formation and ethnicity, and Majoribanks (1980) who examined ethnic families and children's achievements. The application of each of the family structural characteristics in the present study will be described and discussed in turn.

6.2.1 Residency Status

In 1988, the FitzGerald Inquiry into Australia's immigration policies declared that the act of acquiring "citizenship should reflect" the immigrant's "commitment to Australia and its institutions and principles" (FitzGerald, 1988: xi). Thus, participating parents' residency status, either as permanent residents, with citizenship in another country or as Australian citizens, is assumed to be an indicator of ethnic identification.

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[1] See for example, the work of Edgar and his colleagues from the Australian Institute of Family Studies, as published in "Family Matters", over the last 10 years.

First, in order to understand the present context of family functioning, one needs to ascertain some of the logistic details concerning issues such as when did the child's parents arrive in Australia? Why did they migrate to Australia? Where were the children born, in Australia or overseas? and have the parents acquired Australian citizenship? The answers to these questions provide information about the families' arrival and settlement in Australia. As

> ... *in times of rapid social change parents find themselves in the position of immigrants, preparing their children for a culture that they only partially share* (Furstenberg, 1985: 286).

Accordingly, it is assumed that their motivation to migrate and obtain Australian citizenship may reflect their attitudes regarding their changing circumstances and help to clarify their role direction in ethnic identification.

Table 6.1:

Some features of residency in Australia

	SCOTS	FINNS	INDIANS
Period of residence (i) (in years)			
in Canberra	5 (4)	13 (14)	5 (3)
in Australia	5 (4)	16 (15)	7 (9)
Residency status (ii) (no. of families)			
Australian citizens	1	7	6
Permanent residents	8	2	3
Child's birthplace (no. of children)			
Australia	2	9	6
Scotland/Finland/India	7	-	3

Notes: i) Average number of years per group is given, with the group median given in brackets.
ii) When a child's parents had not migrated to Australia together at the same time, the father's time of arrival was used in the calculations.

One of the selection criteria for the sample for this study was that a child's parents must have been born overseas, either in Scotland, Finland or India (refer to chapter 1). The child's own country of birth on the other hand, did not necessarily have to be the same as the parents' country of birth. The data collected showed that there was a link between the family's period of residence in Australia and the child's

country of birth. As shown in table 6.1, the Finnish participants, have been in Australia the longest, with an average of just over sixteen years. The majority of these parents migrated as children with their own parents, met spouses and married in Australia. Hence, it is not surprising that all the Finnish children in this study were Australian born. In contrast, by 1985 none of the Scots and the majority of Indian participants had completed ten years of residence in Australia (see table 1.1). For the Scots, the average was five years and the Indians had an average of little over seven years. Unlike the Finns, all the other parents[2], married in their country of birth before migrating to Australia. As such, three of the Indian children and seven of the Scottish children were born in India and Scotland respectively (see table 1.1), prior to the family's migration to Australia.

This pattern can be further linked with reasons given for migrating to Australia. The majority of Indian parents (four couples) and two of the Scots parents stated that their main reason for coming to Australia was primarily child oriented, as indicated by comments such as "for the sake of the children's future" and "better opportunities for the children". Not surprisingly, none of the Finns mentioned their children in the same way, as the majority (six couples) had come to Australia when they were young children themselves, their parents leaving Finland primarily for economic reasons in search of better prospects. These differences in motivation to migrate reflect in part the historical trends discussed in chapter 2.

In acquiring Australian citizenship, the similarity between the Scots and Indians did not continue. The periods of residence in Australia ranged from three to eight years for the Scots and two to fourteen years for the Indians (see table 1.1). However, unlike the Indians who were enthusiastic about acquiring Australian citizenship[3], the Scots who have been here for a relatively longer period, were more

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[2] There were two exceptions, the fathers of Indian children I6 and I7, had come to Australia, originally as postgraduate students. They then went back to India to marry, and returned to settle down in Australia.

[3] One of the main reasons for this was that most Indians acknowledged that citizenship gave them the right to have equal access to Australian resources including the possibility that it may help with sponsoring other relatives to migrate to Australia.

hesitant. Several Scots (such as S4's parents), openly admitted that letting go of British citizenship was a difficult decision and few wanted to do it in a hurry. As S4's mother remarked "I'm not sure I'm ready for it yet".

Collectively, the Finnish parents did not have any strong feelings either way about retaining their Finnish citizenship or becoming Australian citizens. As can be seen from table 6.1, the majority, consisting of seven families, had by 1985 acquired Australian citizenship. Only two Finnish families (those of F3 and F4) have continued to live as permanent residents even though both have been in Australia for fifteen years. Their comments suggested that applying for citizenship has not been a major priority for them. As F4's mother said "we haven't needed it for work. So haven't bothered". The potential impact of such comments on the children will be examined in chapter 7.

6.2.2 Family size and composition

When considering the size and composition of the child's family, one needs to ask who are the members of the child's immediate family and extended family? The immediate family consists of the child's mother, father and any brothers and sisters or siblings. For the purpose of this study, the child's parents' (the grandparents), siblings (the uncles and aunts) and their children (the first cousins) will constitute the child's extended family. In addition, the children's grandparents' generation will be referred to as the first and the parents' generation as the second. This means that the children, who are the primary subjects of this study, will make up the third generation within the family network. Table 6.2 shows the average size of a Scottish, Finnish and Indian child's family included in this study. It also gives the size and composition of the child's parents' families according to their relationship to the child as per aunts, uncles and cousins.[4]

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[4] In calculating the family size, in all cases only the number of children were included. So that in the case of a family which consisted of the parents and two children, for instance, the family size was taken to be two.

Table 6.2

Average size and composition of the families

FAMILY MEMBERS	SCOTS	FINNS	INDIANS
Child's own family size	2.33 (2)	2.56 (2)	2.3 (2)
Mother's family size	4.11 (4)	5.22 (5)	4.57 (4)
Father's family size	3.11 (3)	4.9 (4)	6 (6)
No. of Aunts per child	2.44 (2)	3.8 (4)	3.78 (3)
No. of Uncles per child	2.78 (3)	4.3 (6)	4.9 (6)
No. of Cousins per child	7.22 (8)	14.78 (17)	12.78 (9)

Note: Medians are given in brackets.

Table 6.2 highlights a number of similarities and differences in terms of the size and composition of the Scottish, Finnish and Indian families under study. Of the twenty-seven children included in this study, sixteen (or 59 per cent of the total sample) came from nuclear families consisting of parents and two children. Of the remaining eleven children, two (F5 and F7) were only children, five (S9, F1, I3, I7 and I8) came from families with three children and four (S8, F4, F6 and F9) had a family size of four. From table 6.2, one of the first features which (became) is obvious at first glance was that the size of the family has decreased significantly from the second to the third generation for all three groups. Although in the second generation, irrespective of whether it was the mother's or father's family, on average there were more than two children per family and the median was four. Then, in the third generation, both the average and the median family size fell to two children per family in each case. This trend in decreasing family size from the parents' generation to the child's (or the present) was also observed by Khoo (1985: 2), whose respondents "all wanted small families" irrespective of their country of origin.

Taken separately, with an average of six children per family, the Indian

fathers have the largest families, followed by the Finnish mothers and Indian mothers both with averages of five children per family. More specifically, the majority of Indian children's parents came from large families. That is, six of the fathers and four of the mothers came from families which had more than five children each. Likewise, five of the Finnish mothers and four of the Finnish fathers also came from families which had five or more children. In contrast, only one Scottish father and two Scottish mothers came from a family of five or more children. The majority of the Scottish fathers and mothers have only three and four children per family respectively.

Although choosing families which were intact (that is, parents who were married for the first time) was deliberate[5], the size of the existing or planned family was not part of the selection criteria for the sample. Hence, it was not known whether the family size in the third generation has increased since the fieldwork was completed in 1985.[6] The age of parents was also closely linked with childbearing as well as childrearing. The average age range of the parents as given in table 6.3.

Table 6.3:

Number of mothers and fathers according to age

AGE RANGE	SCOTS		FINNS		INDIANS	
	M	F	M	F	M	F
26-35 yrs	4	5	7	6	6	4
36-45 yrs	5	4	2	3	3	4
46-55 yrs	-	-	-	-	-	1

Note: M = number of mothers; F = number of fathers

As can be seen from table 6.3, the majority of Finnish and Indian mothers were aged between 26 to 35 years. It is possible that at least these Indian and Finnish parents may choose to have more children in the next few years. Their

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5 Refer Chapter 1 for selection criteria.

6 For instance, at the end of fieldwork, I was informed that S6's mother was pregnant.

decisions to have (or not to have) children and how many to have, may be influenced by custom, tradition and religion. Current family size suggested that there may be a deliberate shift away from family tradition and custom for the Finnish mothers and Indian fathers who have come from families with more than five children. It was also worth noting here that there was a significant age difference between the Indian children's mothers and fathers. That is, one third of these mothers were younger (their ages ranged between 26 to 35 years) than their husbands, who were aged over 36 years. This difference may be traced back to traditional Hindu customs of arranged marriages. In fact, all the Indian children's parents' marriages had been deliberately planned and organised by their families in India. This practice stood in stark contrast to their Finnish and Scottish peers, whose marriages had begun with love and romance initiated by the two partners.

It was more important to consider whether these patterns of marriage in the second generation would continue into the third generation. It is not possible to obtain a definite picture about a future event such as a child's marriage, and at best the parents' answers are speculative, merely reflecting their current values and expectations. In particular, the Indian parents expressed strong views about their daughters' marriages. For instance, I9's parents stated that they have "very strong expectations" about their daughter's future. They were unequivocal that the ethnicity of the prospective son-in-law was of little consequence: "That hardly makes a difference to us. I would want her to only marry a professional; doesn't matter what race he is". This is consistent with the findings of Khoo (1985: 40-41) which indicated that South-East Asians believed that educational qualifications were an important attribute in choosing a (future) marital partner. Yet, in contrast, I7's father stated

> *It's up to her to choose. But certainly I believe that it will be better for her to marry another Indian because less cultural conflict and .... more, probably common aspirations and lifestyle.*

These two cases illustrated Indian parents' concern with marital incompatibility which was usually based on class and/or ethnicity. On the other hand, neither the Scots nor the Finns made any similar comments, evading the issue of their children's

marriage as being "too far away". When asked 'do you have any thoughts about who your child should marry?', S8's mother for instance replied "Not really. But I guess you'd probably think about that when you actually get to that point".

In general, both the Finns and the Scots indicated that ethnicity was not a criterion of marriage. At least three families (S7, F2 and F4) each referred to mixed marriages existing within the second generation. The two Finnish couples (the parents of F2 and F4) also indicated that during major family gatherings (such as Christmas) where the majority spoke Finnish, the non-Finnish relatives tend to get excluded from the conversation unless they could speak Finnish. They added that there was, however, never any overt animosity expressed for not being of Finnish descent. Having studied immigrants' marriage patterns in Australia, Price (1988: 127-128) claims that "the great majority of ethnic communities will be well mixed by the third generation, and that, even with the groups most likely to in-marry, at least half the third generation will be well mixed". To what extent this would apply to the Scottish, Finnish and Indian participants of this study, remains to be seen.

As indicated in table 6.2, large family sizes in the second generation also meant that the children of the third generation would have more aunts and uncles. Each of the children in the study had at least one aunt and one uncle. Overall, the nine Indian children between them had the most number of aunts (total = 34) and uncles (total = 44). They were followed by the Finns with similar numbers of aunts (total = 34) and uncles (total = 39). In contrast the Scottish children had considerably fewer aunts (total = 22) and uncles (total = 25). Interestingly, this pattern shifted somewhat in the third generation made up of the children of these aunts and uncles. These were the first cousins, the peers of the study children. Each child had at least one such cousin. One of the Indian children (I7) alone had 39 cousins, the largest number of cousins for any one child in the sample. Similarly, one of the Finnish children (F2) came a close second with 35 cousins.

Collectively, as shown on table 6.2, the Finnish children have more cousins (average per child = 14.78) than their Indian peers (average per child = 12.78) and

more than double the number of cousins available to their Scottish counterparts (average per child = 7.22). It was not possible to speculate about the family planning intentions of the extended family members. One could however say that the majority of the Indian families in this study were fairly traditional and saw marriage and children as a cultural given, an obligation to family and society. In this context, it was worth noting that unlike the Finns and the Scots, all but a few Indian children's uncles and aunts were not yet married. It was therefore possible to suggest that the number of cousins available to these Indian children may increase in the future.

The significance of the above numbers relating to grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins cannot be fully appreciated without looking at the place of residence of these relatives. The child's access to the family network was usually influenced by proximity. When and how often family members met each other depended to a large extent on factors such as whether one lived within walking distance, next to each other in the same road, or in the same/different city or state as well as whether they have access to transport, or live in another country and could afford to travel overseas. Other family aspects which refer to personal relations between the individuals may also influence the nature and amount of contact that was maintained, whatever the geographical distance. (Edgar, 1989 and Funder, 1989). Accordingly, the next section will focus on the family network available and accessed by the children, the third generation living in Canberra.

Table 6.4 shows the number of Scottish, Finnish and Indian children's extended family members who lived either in Canberra, interstate or overseas. All Scots, Indian and Finnish children have at least one grandparent and another close family relative living overseas. Although the majority of Finnish children have at least one set of grandparents living in Canberra, this applied only to two of the Scots and Indian children each. Two of the Finnish children (F2 and F7) also have grandparents who lived interstate in South Australia and New South Wales. However, neither the Scots nor the Indians have any relatives interstate.

Table 6.4:

Relatives and their place of residence

Relatives and their place of residence	SCOTS	FINNS	INDIANS
Grandparents (a)			
.living in Canberra	2	5	2
.living elsewhere in Australia	-	2	-
.living overseas (b)	9	5	9
.dead	7	5	4
Other relatives (c)			
.living in Canberra	3	8	-
.living elsewhere in Australia	-	6	-
.living overseas (b)	9	9	9

Notes: (a) Consist of both maternal and paternal grandparents.
(b) May include either Scotland, Finland or India which is the parent's country of birth or another country where the relatives were living at the time.
(c) Refer to the parents' brothers and sisters and their families.

These patterns of family residence relate to the family's migration history. The majority of Finnish families (six out of nine couples) migrated to Australia with their own parents. Thus, these children's grandparents were the first generation to settle in Australia. This explains the large number of Finnish grandparents living in Canberra. On the other hand, all of the Scots and Indian parents migrated as adults. In their case, the children's grandparents came to Australia much later. That is, the Indians, and to a lesser degree the Scots, have tended to sponsor the grandparents, either for a visit or for permanent residence, after living in Australia for about two years. Reasons for this difference in behaviour among these two categories included the need for child care assistance, especially at the time of birth of a child (as in the case of S6); and the obligation to look after grandparents in their old age, especially if the parent was the eldest or only son, as stressed by the Indian couples such as I8.

One needs also to examine to what extent grandparents were involved in children's day-to-day living arrangements. In the case of the two Indian children (I2 and I7) who had either their paternal or maternal grandparents in Australia,

everyone lived together in the same house. This was in sharp contrast to the Scots and Finns, where the grandparents who were permanent residents in Australia lived separately. The Indian grandparents therefore would have consistently more time and access to the child by being on the spot on a daily basis. For example, I7's mother explained how much she appreciated having her own mother (the child's grandmother) at home to look after the child after school: "grandma gives her milk. Then they go outside and skip ... sing songs ... in Malayalam.[7] I don't have to worry". The parents attributed I7's competence in their native language to the close relationship between the child and her grandmother. I2's parents also indicated that her son had little choice but to converse in Hindi with his live-in paternal grandmother who did not speak any English. But she was not actively involved in the child's daily upbringing. This was perhaps because of the nature of the in-law relationship between the two women[8].

To become proficient in the parents' mother tongue, it was however, not essential that the grandparents lived in the same house as the study children. The case of F1, the Finnish girl, illustrated this point well. Her paternal grandparents lived in Canberra, and was visited at least once or twice a month. The mother reported that F1 had learnt "quite a lot of Finnish folk songs" from her paternal grandmother and that the maternal grandmother living in Finland "sends lots of Finnish children's books". Again, F1 was a competent Finnish speaker and was also able to read and write at least a few words. As the mother explained, "she knows the (Finnish) alphabet". Thus, in this situation, irrespective of the tyranny of distance, the parents and grandparents worked together to promote child competence in the Finnish language.

There were other children who saw their grandparents and other extended

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[7] The grandmother was not fluent in English and always conversed with the child in Malayalam, the Indian dialect from their native state in India.

[8] I2's mother stressed that it was her job to see to the child's daily needs. Although no direct questions were asked, it appeared that the daughter and mother in-law relationship was not close. The in-laws lived in the back rooms of the house, though connected, they also had a separate entrance.

family living in Canberra on a regular basis. This included the Scottish children S3 and S9, and the Finnish children F1 and F2. Each of these four children had a younger sister, and in four cases, this was an infant less than two years old. According to the mothers, the infant was a major reason for the frequent visits from the grandparents, usually daily in the case of S3 and S9, as they lived in the neighbourhood, within walking distance. Moreover, since S3's mother also worked part-time, it was necessary for her to use her parents as babysitters. On the other hand, F2's mother said that she took her children to see

> ... *at least one family a week. I take him to see his cousins* (who live in Canberra). *We also get to see the one's in Brisbane, about once a year. They come here for christmas or we may go there in May (school) holidays.*

Thus, this mother actively sought and fostered the relationship between her children and their extended family.

6.2.3 Parents' educational background

The level of education achieved by the parents was another family structural characteristic which was often used by researchers such as Amato (1987), who studied family dynamics, and Connell et al (1983), who studied the effects of schooling on future life chances. It was assumed that parental education may also relate to the process of child ethnic identification. Table 6.5 identifies the highest level of education achieved by the study children's parents.

Table 6.5:

Highest Level of education achieved by parents

Level of education achieved	SCOTS		FINNS		INDIANS		TOTAL	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Postgraduate qual. *	-	-	-	-	-	4	-	4
Basic degree	-	2	-	1	4	3	4	6
Trade certificate	1	-	-	3	2	-	3	3
Completed secondary	2	-	3	1	2	1	7	2
Completed primary	6	7	6	4	1	1	13	12

Notes: * Includes graduate diplomas and masters.
M = mothers; F = fathers

It appears from table 6.5 that the parent sample consisted of more fathers who were better educated than the mothers. Only four of the Indian fathers have any higher degree qualifications. Although there were more fathers than mothers with a basic degree (fathers = 6; mothers = 4), an equal number of mothers and fathers have trade qualifications. Moreover, the Indian mothers and fathers were, together, much better educated than their Scottish or Finnish counterparts. This was demonstrated by the fact that of the fathers, only the Indian fathers have a postgraduate degree and of the mothers, only the four Indian mothers have any tertiary qualifications or a basic degree.

This trend was not a coincidence when one considered the context of Australian immigration policies in the 1980s. All of the Indian families in this study had migrated to Australia under either the business or the skilled migrant category, which meant that apart from the two businessmen, parents' level of education was a necessary prerequisite in gaining permanent residency status. This was also borne out by the fact that of all the Indian fathers, it was the two businessman (I1 and I2) who have attained the lowest level of schooling.

As indicated in table 6.5, out of the nine Finnish fathers only one (F1's father) had a basic degree and he obtained that at an Australian university. This father was held in high esteem by the Finnish community mainly because of this. He came to Australia with his family at the age of 15 years and said that he had not enjoyed his schooling and had to work hard to overcome prejudice and difficulties in learning English. By contrast, the two Scottish fathers (S4 and S8) with tertiary qualifications completed their studies in Scotland prior to migration in the 1980s. At the time, immigration policies favoured skilled immigrants (see chapter 2).

Table 6.5 also denotes that twenty-five mothers and father have not gone beyond primary school level. The majority of these were Scottish and Finnish parents. Some of the most common reasons given for this included: limited opportunities for education and employment, and dissatisfaction with the system of

education in their countries of origin or in Australia.[9] In particular, one third each of the Scottish and Finnish mothers have also done no further study since completing secondary schooling. Of these, although all the Scottish mothers and two of the Finnish mothers finished their schooling in their respective country of origin, the remaining mother of Finnish child F7 went to high school in Australia. She said that the main reason for her discontinuation with schooling was because of the "bad experiences" she had. She alluded that this was because of her Finnishness: her accent was stronger then and she found it difficult to learn English. Two others, the mothers of F2 and F6, also referred to their unhappy school experiences in Australia. As F2's mother said

> *I didn't like school because I couldn't understand the system. It seems strange.... I felt a stranger in every classroom. I wasn't feeling as I was home or anything (sic). I didn't belong to the place.*

Such comments were usually expressed with passion or intensity, indicating the depth or reality of the feelings experienced by these individuals.

It was worth noting that two fathers and one mother, who were all Indians, were also engaged in further (postgraduate) studies. The fathers were studying mainly to improve their career prospects. However, I9's mother said that she was "doing it mainly because everyone has been at me do to some studying. I kept putting if off. Now I've (finally) enrolled at the university....". These three parents all have the support of their spouses. As I3's father put it "I couldn't have done it without the sacrifices she (his wife) has made". Such comments reflect the interconnection between education, occupation and way of life, and the next section will focus on parental occupations.

6.2.4 Parents' current occupations

The term 'employment' will be used synonymously with 'jobs', 'work' and 'occupations' to refer to any paid work done outside the home. Research undertaken by those such as Glezer (1988), Ochiltree et al (1991) and Wolcott (1991) show that

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[9] The latter applies only in the case of the Finns since none of the Scots nor Indian parents have attended school in Australia.

parental employment was inextricably linked with all aspects of family functioning. Beginning by identifying the parents' current employment status, I will go on to discuss how their jobs affected issues such as the amount of time parents and children spent together.

Table 6.6:

Number of parents according to employment category

EMPLOYMENT CATEGORY	SCOTS		FINNS		INDIANS		TOTAL	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
.Professional (a)	1	2	-	1	1	7	2	10
.Business (b)	-	1	-	1	-	2	-	4
.Clerical (c)	3	3	1	1	1	-	5	4
.Trade (d)	3	3	3	6	2	-	8	9
.Not in paid work	2	-	5	-	5	-	12	-

Notes: (a) = engineers, a computer programmer and school teachers etc.
(b) = owner operators of small businesses such as a restaurant.
(c) = clerks, salesmen and a journalist etc.
(d) = carpenters, cleaners and data processing operators etc.
M = Mothers and F = Fathers

Table 6.6 provides an overview of the current employment status of the parents in 1984/5 when the fieldwork was completed. The type of jobs parents were involved in were divided into five broad categories on the basis of descriptions obtained primarily from parent interviews. These categories were used as a guide or tool, applicable for this study only, to organise and analyse available data in a useful manner. Consequently, there were inherent weaknesses in using such a scheme. For instance, table 6.6, at first glance, appears to indicate that the professionals were the highest ranking group and that those not in employment were the lowest. This was not valid because, among those twelve mothers who were unemployed at the time, three (all of who were of Indian origin) had a basic tertiary degree each. Hence, it would be incorrect to presume that being unemployed can be equated with lack of skills. Rather, all of these women had voluntarily chosen to remain at home with their children. A majority commented that they would not actively seek work

until the children were old enough[10] and settled into school life. The following comments by I9's mother reflected this view "I feel I must take care of them. I don't want to make a career because then I'll have a conflict between my house, children, husband and career. I don't want that". This mother did not rank or attach any priority of importance to her responsibilities relating to her various roles as mother, wife and paid employee. Yet, it was an important issue given that the last category of employment included more than half of the Finnish and Indian mothers as compared to only two Scottish mothers.

Deciding who should be included under each category of employment was problematical. Given the sample size of twenty-seven families however, there was little point in using a more sophisticated or refined occupational ranking scale such as the ANU 2 or the ABS occupational classification system. Since information about parental education was available, it was decided to link occupations with level of education attained. As a consequence, skilled tradesmen (such as a carpenter) and unskilled cleaners were placed on the same level because most of these parents had not gone beyond primary school. A total of seventeen parents fell into this category, and the majority of them were Finns. On the other hand, the professional category, which consisted of parents with a university degree, was dominated by the Indian fathers. This category consisted of twelve individuals, (two mothers and ten fathers) accounting for 22 per cent of all parents participating in this study. In contrast, the Scottish and Finnish parents were concentrated in clerical and trade categories. There were however no Indian fathers who could be identified within these two categories. This was significant given that twenty-six individuals, almost half of the parent participants, were represented within clerical and trade categories.

Hours of employment was directly related to the type of work parents did. More specifically, the amount of flexibility parents would have in varying their hours of work was an important consideration related to the amount of time parents would have available to interact with their children. Care must be taken in looking

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[10] The suggested ages ranged from 8 to 12 years.

at individual parents separately, as there could be big differences, especially in two income families, depending on where the mother and father worked. Parents were not asked to specify the exact hours they worked and therefore a detailed analysis of their time commitment was not possible.

However, it was possible to gauge how much flexibility parents have, based on the nature of their work. In so doing several broad patterns emerged. Firstly, the Finnish parents had the most flexible work arrangements. Six out of nine Finnish fathers were carpenters working as contract workers and their hours of work were largely variable. These fathers usually left home early (at about 6am) and returned home in the late afternoon (at about 4pm). Of the remaining two, one was an architect (F1's father) and the other, F6's father was the owner of a construction company. These two fathers also enjoyed flexible working hours. However, with all of them, there were times when the Finnish fathers had to work longer hours and on weekends to get a project/contract completed. Yet, a majority said that they enjoyed being able to come home early, usually before 5pm, so that they have time with the children before dinner. Their sentiments were echoed in F6's father's remarks: "I like to get home early. You know. Otherwise, I don't get to see the kids". This was important given that the majority of Finnish mothers, five out of nine, were unemployed. This meant that at least in five families, the mothers have more time with the children during the week than the average nine-to-five dual income family. Of the four mothers who were in paid employment, except for F8's mother who was a government clerical worker, the other three did either part-time or shift work which allowed them to be home when the children came home from school. As the following comments illustrate, all the Finnish mothers expressed a keen desire to be able to do this:

F3's mother: *It's good like this, only part-time. I stopped work when F3 was little.*

F4's mother: *M (the child's older sister) can look after him after that. I'm here when he comes home. My shift starts at 5(pm) usually.*

These comments also indicate that the presence of older siblings was considered to

be a bonus in helping the parents with child care arrangements while they were went to work.

In contrast to the Finnish parents, the Scots have the least flexible working arrangements. This was particularly the case with the fathers who were mostly in jobs which have regular hours. Some flexibility was enjoyed by S3 and S5's fathers both of who were salesmen and S2's father who was a milk vendor. However, sales work meant travelling and often staying away overnight for several days at a time. Likewise, child care arrangements had to be changed when S2's father's milk-runs were rescheduled. As the mother explained "when J (the father) has a big run, they (the children) have to go to after-school-care till I finish work". When they were together however, most of the fathers either watched television together, worked in the garden alone or helped with the children's home-work. It was more a matter of an adult being at home rather than spending that time playing or talking with the children.

A slightly different picture emerged for the Indian parents. Although seven of the Indian fathers were in employed as professionals (see table 1.1), the majority were in government service. This meant that although they worked flexi-hours, variation on a day to day was not usually possible. In contrast, the three fathers who were in private enterprise (the fathers of I1, I2 and I9) have greater flexibility and in fact did come home early to spend time with the children as much as possible. This was particularly important for I2's father who owned a restaurant, requiring him to work nights, and I1's father who was a self-employed businessman whose work often took him overseas and interstate.

Those mothers who chose to stay at home and those who were in paid employment were similar in their outlook. In particular, the Indian and Scottish mothers' working hours were not all that flexible. Like their husbands, all the Indian mothers worked in the public service and have similar flexi-hour working arrangements. On the other hand, the majority of Finnish mothers who were in paid employment did either shift-work or part-time work, fitting in with the children's

school hours as much as possible. All of the mothers, however, indicated that they would prefer to stay at home at least until the children were older. They were driven to seek employment in order to pay off the home mortgage and maintain their living standards.

Overall, more than half the couples in the study (that is, a total of 15 couples) consisted of dual working partnerships (see table 6.7). Questions about the possible influence of employment on family ideology and family life and warrants closer examination and will be explained further in the next section.

6.3 Family Ideology

In studying family functioning, its meaning and roles, one must consider "both material and ideological circumstances" (Mitchell in Bottomley, 1983: 22). The term "family ideology" refers to the cumulative body of knowledge consisting of attitudes, beliefs and values about life and living as a member of a family. Such knowledge is unique to a family, based on the individual's own experiences and perceptions of family life. Knowledge and skills are acquired and adjusted throughout the individual's life-time, often incorporating customs and practices of family members of previous generations (such as grandparents) as well as myths and traditions of the ethnic community at large. Taken together, family ideology underpins the day-to-day organisation of routines and practices of a family. In this study, the following characteristics of the Scottish, Finnish and Indian families pertaining to their way of life will be presented:

6.3.1 Division of house-work;
6.3.2 Diet;
6.3.3 Religious affiliation and practice; and
6.3.4 Home language usage

One's understanding of family ideology plays a key role in maintaining family functioning, particularly in relation to the upbringing of children. It is hoped that a discussion of the above four areas will also shed some light of parents' perspectives on ethnic identification.

6.3.1 Division of house-work

Whilst visiting the families at home, the way families carried out family maintenance tasks such as cooking, cleaning and child care, were observed at first-hand. Two major trends emerged on the basis of parental employment or family income status. That is, the way family life was organised differed according to whether only one or both parents were in paid employment as shown in table 6.7.

Table 6.7:
Distribution of single and dual income families

Income status	SCOTTISH	FINNISH	INDIAN	TOTAL
Number of families with a:				
.**Dual** income	7	4	4	15
.**Single** income (i)	2	5	5	12

Notes: (i) = In all cases, only the fathers were in paid employment.

As can be seen from table 6.7, fifteen, or the majority, of families consisted of families where both parents were in paid employment. Parent's employment schedules as well as demands at work[11] have a significant impact on family life in all areas (Wolcott, 1991). This includes the way a family's daily routines were organised (for example, whether a family sits down together for breakfast; how often the clothes get washed) and how the household chores (for example, cooking and cleaning) and responsibilities (such as child minding and paying the bills) were organised. I got to know the single income families a lot better than the dual income families mainly because the mothers who were at home were more able and willing to spend more time with me than those who were in paid employment.

A separate and systematic quantitative analysis (using a check-list or questionnaire) to see how each family's average day was arranged, was not done. However, observations made during the home visits and parent interviews have enabled me to suggest that there were certain practices shared between the Scottish, Finnish and Indian families. It appears that irrespective of their cultural background and their outside work responsibilities, the mothers did the bulk of the household

[11] This refers to the type of occupation (as per full-time, contract or shift work) and amount of responsibility which came with the job.

chores including cooking, cleaning and transportation of children to and from school. This was partly because some of the mothers felt very strongly that such tasks were part of their maternal responsibilities, especially while the children were young. Again, to quote the Indian child's (I9) mother who was not in paid employment:

> *I want to do something, but feel I must leave home after they leave and I must be home before they come back. So I'm there to receive them. So I'd like a part-time job. Something mindless to keep me busy. I'm not interested in a career.*

She and her husband said that since the father's income was sufficient to a maintain a relatively high standard of living there was no economic necessity for the mother to get a job, let alone a high income.

Likewise, another Indian father's views showed a different perspective on maternal employment, which reflected deeply ingrained cultural values about motherhood. I3's father said "I have a philosophical belief that from conception, what the mother eats and drinks affects the child". He went on to add

> *Women should never be in paid work. They do so much which can never be paid for in money. My mother looked after a large family all her life and didn't get paid for it. I don't want my wife to work. But, ... we need it, you know, for the house. I help with the dishes, get the clothes in ... that sort of thing.*

His views reflect the desire to retain traditional perceptions of women's role as mother and home-maker. Such comments were however, not confined to the Indians. For instance, consider the comments by the mothers of Scottish children, S3 and S9:

S3's mother: *Back home, once you have a family, you're not supposed to work. You see, if we were still in Scotland, I won't be working even though we'd be scraping... scraping to try and manage the money.*

S9's mother: *It was never even a consideration that I would go to work because it just wasn't accepted. It was something you didn't do.*

Not only were thy referring to the norms and values of motherhood in Scottish society, their comments also implied community pressure to conform. Yet, it was possible to change. In this instance, both women had young infants less than two years old, and although S3's mother had a job, albeit part-time, S9's mother chose to remain at home. However, their decisions were based more on pragmatism (to pay a mortgage) than on theoretical considerations.

Another old Scottish tradition was highlighted in terms of who paid the bills and managed the family finances. Almost all of the Scots said that the wives looked after the family finances and budget. This basically involved paying the bills and collecting money for holidays. The Scottish husbands usually gave their wages/salaries to their wives, who in turn allocated a certain amount to the husbands for their personal use. This was a practice that many Scottish parents have been accustomed to during their childhood in Scotland and one that had not altered following marriage and migration to Australia, as illustrated by the following comments:

S7's mother: *I'm the manager of the money. It hasn't changed from my father's generation. My mother did the same thing.*

S9's mother: *It's nothing unusual for J (the father) to hand over his pay packet to me, because that's what his mum did back home.*

Though a similar ritual was not observed with the Finns, one of the Finnish mothers (F3's) did say that unless she "did the money (sic), he (the father) wouldn't really know what to do with it. Honest. He doesn't even know how to get money out of a banking machine!".

Apart from this, in almost all of the families participating in the study, men's and women's roles were defined in terms of husband as breadwinner and wife as home-maker. There were clear demarcations of household chores between fathers and mothers. As explained by F9's mother, the fathers were described as "the boss of the money", responsible for earning an income and the mother's job was "to look after the children". Although this couple has lived in Australia for fifteen years and

have acquired Australian citizenship, they have retained some of the fundamental elements of traditional Finnish attitudes towards parenting.

At least two Scottish and one Finnish father occasionally helped with the cooking (S1, S3 and F5). When asked whether they did any cooking, most fathers tended to dismiss the issue by saying either that they did not know how to cook or that their wives were better at cooking than them. Although none of the Indian fathers did any cooking, at least three (those of children I3, I5 and I7) were observed preparing and packing children's lunches during the evenings. Moreover, only some of the Indian and Scottish fathers were identified as helping the mothers with the cleaning jobs, such as washing clothes and doing the dishes. However, it was not clear how often they helped with these chores. Finnish fathers mainly did the out-door chores such as mowing the lawn and doing any repairing and building that was needed. F3's mother however, said that she preferred to mow the lawn herself as the father was "not neat" and she could do "a better job" than him.

Variations within and between Scots, Finns and Indians, were also demonstrated in the way parental authority and discipline was handled. The data collected showed that in the majority of cases, the children's mothers have the primary responsibility, even though the fathers usually had more authority over the children. As S1's mother said "I'm the one who screams and smacks. But they usually listen to dad more than they listen to me". In the case of three children, all of who were Indians (I5, I6 and I8), the father's role in discipline was emphasised, and the women and children accepted that he had the final say in the decision making. Two of the families (F9 and I3) also indicated that older siblings sometimes became involved in handling a dispute concerning younger brothers and sisters. For example, in one Indian family, the father explained that the eldest son (who was 16 years old at the time) would "intervene and have a talk to the younger brother and explain things to him. So we (the parents) don't have to always come down hard on him (I3)". In all cases, the extent to which such practices were culturally specific or linked just to a family tradition was difficult to assess. Only a few parents, such I3's father who having been the eldest of eight children, indicated

that he used to protect his younger brothers in the same way.

6.3.2 Diet

Food, or diet, may be regarded as an integral aspect of an individual's cultural identity. Usually, the type of food one eats can provide a clue to one's knowledge, attitudes, beliefs and values regarding one's own cultural background. Some traditional society's have rituals pertaining to food preparation, which cannot be easily copied or learnt from recipe-books. For example, in India, the caste system specifies who can/cannot prepare food or eat together, and most orthodox Hindus follow a strict vegetarian diet. Such practices were generally handed down from generation to generation and learnt through observation and practice within the home context. When people migrate, it may not always be possible to faithfully reproduce the diet or the rituals practised in the country of birth. One may be restricted for instance, in terms of the availability of certain ingredients in the new country.[12] Thus, the question was, have the dietary practices of the Scots, Finns and Indians in this study changed following their migration to Australia?

Most of the Scots found it difficult to answer this question because they felt that the average Anglo-Celtic Australian's diet did not differ greatly from that of the average Scot in Scotland. The major change mentioned by the majority of Scots was that since coming to Australia they ate a lot more meat than fish. To quote, S2's mother : "Diet... no it hasn't changed. I mean, it's the same sort isn't it? But I guess, we a eat a lot more meat here. There we couldn't afford it every day. We ate more fish then". Others mentioned that they also experimented a lot more with other cultural dishes such as curry (S1's parents) and Chinese style stir-fry vegetables (S3's parents) because supplies of fresh food was plentiful and affordable. Special Scottish food (such as shortbread) was prepared mainly during Christmas and New Year celebrations.

By contrast, both Finnish and Indian families have to a large extent retained

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[12] For example, salted herrings, a favourite among the Finns, was not easily available for sale in Canberra.

their own cultural flavours in their family meals. The daily diet of about seven Finnish families and six Indian families consisted of traditional foods (such as rye bread and chapattis) from their respective ethnic backgrounds. The distinctions were particularly noticeable in the Indian households. Since all the Indian families in the study were Hindus, the majority of the parents (all except I9's parents) were vegetarians. However, all the Indian children were allowed to eat meat or fish, whilst the parents did not. As the mother of I3, said "he will have to decide for himself what he wants to eat. He is an Australian, and I won't stop him". In effect, this boy usually ate sausage rolls and pies at school and chapattis and curry at home.

This dilemma between food eaten at home and school was experienced by the majority of Finnish and Indian parents. This issue was resolved by confining the ethnic diet to the home. The difference was that for the Indian mothers the decision was one based usually on practicalities. As I4's mother said " ... making chapattis is too much work for me".

In contrast, most of the Finnish mothers referred to their own childhood experiences attending school in Australia. F7's mother for instance, described at length that as a child she had been given rye bread and cream cheese for school lunch. She recalled how she always got rid of it enroute to school and instead shared her best friend's white bread and jam sandwiches. She explained that "I don't want him (her son, F7) to feel or look different from his friends" at school. Thus, for these Finnish mothers their decision not to provide Finnish food for the children to eat at school was based on ideological beliefs founded on past experience.

6.3.2 Religion

Although the Scots had access to the largest number of religious institutions (or churches) to practice their faith, only one family regularly went to church. This family (S9's), belonged to the Jehovah's Witnesses. The rest of the Scottish children were either Catholics (S3, S4 and S7) or Protestants (S1, S2, S5, S6 and

S8) as indicated in table 1.1. For these families, the practice of religion was not an important aspect of their daily life. As S2's mother remarked: "we had a church wedding to please my parents; haven't been to church since ... not even at Christmas".

On the other hand, the Finnish families could be easily divided according to those who attended church regularly and those who did not. The former were the Finnish Pentecostals, the modern church which broke away from the latter, the Finnish Lutheran church, described as "the High Church of Finland", to which everyone born in Finland automatically belonged at birth. It was however, considered to be too restrictive, especially by the younger parents. Unlike the Lutherans (the families of the F3, F4, F7 and F8), the Pentecostal believers (F1, F2, F5, F6 and F9) were all actively involved with their church-based activities, and the children attended Sunday school regularly. Since both mothers and fathers took part in these activities, the church played a major role in their lives. For instance, F2's and F6's fathers (both of who were Pentecostals) took a greater interest in spending time with their children, and going to church together was one such activity.

All the Indians in this study were Hindus. At that time there was no temple or resident priest who was available to conduct regular services for these families. Some families, however, were connected with an informal network of other Hindus in Canberra who organised regular prayer meetings about once a month in someone's home. I was invited to attend one of these sessions organised by the mother of I3. About ten families took part in the proceedings, which was primarily adult oriented. As the father explained, "children get bored because they don't know the prayers or understand them". At the end of the session children were encouraged to ask questions, but it was difficult to know how much this was influenced by my presence. Nevertheless, the majority of the Indian households have a private shrine, usually in the corner of the living room, which holds pictures or figurines of various Hindu gods. It was difficult to say how much these shrines were used by each family. I3's father, for instance, said that everyone in the family was required to say their prayers on Sunday morning, but these prayers were the

individual's responsibility and no one was forced. Two mothers (I1 and I2), who have separate prayer rooms, used these to meditate alone, usually during the day or evening. They remarked that their children were aware of the religious rituals involved but did not participate regularly and were considered too young (in this case, aged 6 and 7 years) to fully understand the religious significance of the rituals.

6.3.4 Home language usage

Aspects of the child's home language usage and sources of mother-tongue learning and maintenance (including the role played by grandparents and the mass media) will be discussed in this section. This discussion will centre around spoken language as it was difficult to assess how much a child could read and write in either Finnish or an Indian language, as I was not fluent in either. The mother-tongue of both Finns and Indians was very different from that of the English language spoken in Australia. The same did not apply to the children of Scots descent. In Gaelic, the Scots too have a distinctly separate language, yet, this was an ancient language not in daily use among any of the Scottish families participating in this study. The closest I came to locating a Gaelic speaking child was S1, a girl who had a wall-chart in her bedroom with a few Gaelic words. It was a gift from her grandparents but neither the child nor her parents could verify the correct pronunciation of these words. The mother added that "the two of us (the parents) don't know any Gaelic at all. S1 could probably teach us!"

Although the Scots could be generally described as English speakers, many were concerned about their accents, more so than the Indians or the Finns. Upon closer examination, it was seen that parents with a very strong Scottish accent had children with a more pronounced Scots accent. This was so at least in the case of one third of the Scottish children (S3, S4 and S7). It was perhaps more important to note that these children were fully aware of their speech difference. As the youngest of the sample, S3, the girl aged 5 years put it, "Sometimes people don't understand me because I talk different. I come from Scotland". It was thus not uncommon for these children to immediately relate their different accent to their parents' country of origin.

Within the Indian homes, three of the children (I1, I3, I4 and I9) spoke mainly English, another three (I5, I7 and I8) spoke an Indian **language** and the remaining two (I2 and I6) used a mixture of English and Hindi. However, in all cases the Indian parents spoke to each other primarily in their mother-tongue. Unlike the Finnish families, none of these Indian parents actively pushed their children to use their mother-tongue at home. Much of the Indian children in fact have learnt their parents' mother-tongue informally, and without attending any formal language classes. Where there were grandparents present in the households (at least in the two cases of I2 and I7), the use of the mother-tongue intensified. The same applied even when a grandparent was visiting for a short-period. As I3's father put it,

> *... we didn't teach him (I3) anything...he doesn't really speak Hindi... (though) he can understand what we say. He learnt more when her (wife's) parents were visiting. They didn't speak in English at all.*

Of the three groups, active teaching and maintenance of the mother-tongue was most pronounced among the Finns. English was spoke predominantly only in F5's family and a mixture of English and Finnish was used in F7's family. In all the other households, Finnish was the primary, and often the only, language spoken between parents and children. In two of these households (namely, the homes of children F1 and F2) there was a strict policy of speaking only Finnish at home. In one child's case, the family was preparing to go to Finland for at least twelve months and the mother was anxious that the child was very fluent in Finnish so that he could attend school.[13] The other mother felt it was important that her children do not forget their heritage and were also be able to speak with their grandparents. Both of these children (F1 and F2) were also read Finnish stories and were encouraged to try writing in Finnish when ever possible, such as writing to grandparents or cousins who lived in Finland, sometimes just to say 'thank you' for a gift. Thus, it could be said that as with the Indian families, Finnish grandparents

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[13] They later wrote to me from Finland saying that F2 was not accepted to school because his Finnish was not good enough! At any rate at 6 years of age he was also too young to start school in Finland.

also played a significant role, albeit indirectly, in the teaching and maintenance of the parents' mother-tongue.

No formal testing of the children's English language competency levels were undertaken for this study. However, informal personal observations (combined with the teachers' perceptions) indicated that about one third of the Finnish (F1, F5 and F8) and four of the Indian (I3, I4, I7 and I9) children have an excellent command of the English language. Yet, though only one Indian child (I5) and two Finnish children (F6 and F9, who were cousins) had showed signs of difficulty in reading and understanding English at school, all the Finnish and Indian children have been placed in English as a Second Language (ESL) classes at some stage of their school life. Parent responses to this practice of withdrawing children was mixed and was discussed in chapter 5, as this related more to the child's life within the school setting.

6.4 Ethnic community contact

It was important also to consider how actively families maintained their contact and links with other people from their countries of origin, following immigration to Australia. In other words, in addition to the child's interactions with the immediate family, what were some of the other ways available to a child to increase her/his awareness and a knowledge of the family's cultural heritage? In answering this question, three main areas will be examined as follows:

6.4.1 Visits to the parents' country of origin;
6.4.2 Ethnic community organisations; and
6.4.3 Ethnic media including newspapers, books and television.

Each of these represent an external mode of cultural transmission as it brings the child into contact with people and places usually outside the home environment.

6.4.1 Visits to the parents' country of origin

It is commonly known that most immigrants make a return journey to their country of origin at some stage in their lives. Referring to Indians in Melbourne,

for instance, Bilimoria et al (1988 :128) wrote

> *One way of maintaining identity is by keeping close links with members of the same community; another is by visiting the homeland, which many Indian immigrants do and as often as they can afford to.*

Accordingly, each birthplace category which was included in this study will be considered separately.

Firstly, all the Indian children have been to India at least once (see table 7.4(c)). With one exception, all the Indian parents reported that their children had enjoyed the trips to India. In the case of I8, her mother said that her daughter "didn't like to travel by bus; it's so different there. She wants to go in a taxi or car all the time". However, it is necessary to consider the broader circumstances of this particular trip. Firstly, the child had been genuinely distressed about missing school, which she enjoyed attending. However, since the main purpose of the visit was to attend the mother's brother's wedding, the date could not be changed and the mother felt compelled to go. Monsoon rains in India had made internal travel difficult, but that too was beyond their control. It was their first return journey to India but the father did not go as they could not afford the fare. Having never embarked on such a venture alone, the mother had been rather anxious about the journey. It was therefore not surprising that from the child's point of view also, the trip was fraught with anxiety and discomfort from the beginning. This case highlights the dangers of generalising and inferring meaning without looking at the particular circumstances of each individual.

It was also difficult to know whether the degree of enjoyment depended on the number of times the child returned to the same place. For example, at least three of the Indian children (I2, I6 and I9) have been back to India thrice. I6's mother commented that her daughter enjoyed the second trip more because she was older. For example, she had been able to understand the historical significance of places the family had visited. Her mother said "when we take them for a holiday, we take a trip to historical places and show them the temples or the palaces... that's important". In contrast, I2's mother, who goes to India at least once a year to visit

her family, said that the "children don't want to go any more. They want to go to Disneyland instead". This raises the issue of the significance of the purpose of the visit: whether there was compatibility between the parent's needs/interests and that of the child's. It appears that, from the children's perspective, their sense of curiosity about discovering a new country and unknown family members may diminish after the first visit, unless their needs are taken into consideration by the parents. I6's parents certainly did this and the outcome had been more positive, as discussed above.

Five of the nine Finnish children (F1, F2, F5, F7 and F8) have been to Finland for a holiday (see table 7.4(b)). The four remaining children[14] have not been able to go, mainly because of economic reasons. Two children (F4 and F9) came from the two largest families in the study. In both cases, the parents indicated a desire to "go home to Finland" but that they would not like to go without taking the whole family, something they had not been able to afford financially. Keeping in mind that none of these children was born in Finland, their visits would be the first time these children would be setting foot in their parents' country of birth. On the whole, those who were fortunate enough to be able to afford the trip said that such trips to Finland were enjoyed by their children.

Similarly, of the nine Scottish children, only five (namely, S1, S2, S4, S5 and S9) have been to Scotland for a holiday (see table 7.4(a)). Of these, only S4, S5 and S9 were born in Scotland, so for these children such trips were in effect a return to their own country of birth. In the case of one girl (S2) who was born in Australia, the parents paid for their daughter to travel to Scotland with her godparents as they could not afford to pay for the whole family to go together. The period of residence in Australia for the Scottish families has been relatively short (see table 1.1) and several parents indicated that visiting 'home' has not been necessarily a priority. They said that they wanted to first buy a house and settle down. However, the mothers of S6 and S7 said that they have been "very home-

[14] One of the children (F6) was taken to Finland after the field-work was finalised.

sick" as they missed their families in Scotland. Lengthy telephone conversations between these mothers and their families in Scotland were common, with the mothers trying to persuade their own parents and siblings to emigrate to Australia, or at least come for a holiday.

These patterns of residence raised several questions such as: how much, if anything do these children remember about their country of birth? What effect have their holidays in either Scotland, Finland or India had on their own sense of ethnic identification? Was there a difference in identification and attachment to Scotland/Finland/India respectively, depending on whether the child was born there or in Australia? Does the acquisition of Australian citizenship also influence child ethnicity? These questions will be answered in chapter 7, when the children's own views will be presented.

6.4.1 Ethnic community organisations

Ethnic community organisations (such as social and sporting clubs) have been described in a variety of ways because they serve both symbolic and/or practical needs of immigrants. Such institutions are a rallying point, an organisational devise which serves to bring together people from a particular country of birth. Their objectives may vary from providing practical assistance (to safeguard the welfare of newly arrived settlers, for instance) to raising ethnic community's political consciousness about issues in Australia and in the homeland. Accordingly, ethnic community organisations can play a crucial role as a bridge between the past and the present lives of immigrant families (Koivukangas, 1986).

Both the Finnish and Scottish communities have large permanent buildings designated as social clubs for their respective ethnic populations. However, existence alone does not indicate community usage. None of the Scots in this study for instance, was a member of the Burns Club. The major reasons for non-involvement included, firstly, the isolation of the club from where these families

lived.[15] This meant that many would have had to travel a long distance to get to the Burns Club. It was more convenient to go to another social club (such as the Royals Football Club mentioned by three families living in the Weston Creek area) which was not only close by, but also welcomed young children. However, S5's father mentioned that the Burns Club was doing a membership drive offering reduced rates for families in an attempt to encourage more people to use the facilities. Both the Burns Club and the Finnish-Australia Club were primarily patronised by adults and access for children was restricted. For example, at the Finnish Club children were not allowed after 8pm. Thus, the lack of a family atmosphere in both these clubs was seen as a major disincentive by many parents in this study. F8's parents, who had been going to the Finnish Club ever since they arrived in Canberra remarked that

> *... it's not like the big family we used to go to 18 years ago. Now you don't know half of them.... Then whole families came... now.. children are not welcome. Times have changed. And I don't enjoy going there as much. He (the father) goes alone, to drink with his mates.*

Another important reason for not going to the Burns Club was that some parents (S4 and S8) felt that the way that Scottish culture was recreated and portrayed within the Club itself was somewhat unrealistic, artificial and out of step with the times. As S4's father said "all that tartan carpet and kilts and bagpipes.... who has these things? Just romantic nonsense..". Another, S3's father also remarked: "wish they served some plain Scottish food like black bun and square sausages", which were not easy to buy in Canberra. Such comments confirm that by and large "Scottish ethnicity was sentimentalised .... by such events as Burns nights, Highland games and dancing competitions, and by such institutions as the Caledonian societies" (Jupp, 1985: 11).

Unlike the Scots, however, all of the Finnish families lived close to their ethnic community club. This may be a partial explanation why at least four of the

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[15] The Burns Club was located in an older inner-city suburb. All of the Scots in the study lived in the outer suburbs. In the late 1980s the Club was moved to the Tuggernong Valley.

Finnish families in this study (F3, F4, F7 and F8) held membership and often used their ethnic club facilities. It is also worth noting that these four families were all Lutherans. In contrast, the remaining five families who were non-members belonged to the Pentecostal Church, whose members tend to adhere to a strict a non-alcohol policy. As F5's mother, a Pentecostal devotee said

> *I don't like to go to the Finnish Club because they (the men) just drink there. People say that Finns drink and they swear; and it's true. I'm not proud of being Finnish then.*

The Indian community on the other hand did not have a club house. However, their social club (the India-Australia Association of Canberra) had a thriving membership. This was evident in that at least seven of the Indian families in this study held membership. When asked, "how did you get to know other Indians in Canberra?", I7's father replied:

> *We joined the Association. It was helpful because there was a bit of social activity without staying inside the four walls of our house. We got a chance to go out and meet people of own country and there was always something common between us to talk, something to discuss, politics or social or what ever. That was good.*

Others too joined the Association mainly for social and cultural contact. Some of the Indian parents commented that the lack of a permanent building was not seen as a major drawback because "Indians are not into drinking and playing poker-machines and things..." (I7's father). On the other hand, I1's mother's comment that "if we had a building we could do a lot more cultural things for the children, like classical dancing, music and language teaching" echoed the sentiments of other Indian parents.

Overall, the above institutions provided their respective communities with an informal point of contact to meet with other members of their ethnic community. Members also received regular newsletters giving information about forthcoming club activities, news from the homeland, and achievements of different individuals from their respective countries. The community clubs also played a key role in organising celebrations on important cultural events such as:

.St Andrews Day and New Year's Eve gatherings (for the Scots)

.Independence Day celebrations and Easter Games (for the Finns) and

.Independence Day and Devali festival activities (for the Indians).

The majority of families in this study did not attend many of these functions. The mere existence of a community organisation was not a sufficient guide to community participation. Of the Scots, only two families have ever been to the Burns Club's New Year's Eve celebrations. They did not take the children with them on these occasions as such events were not organised with children's participation in mind. They were merely social events for the adults. Of the four Finnish families who were members, all had participated in at least one of the Easter Games carnivals when it was held in Canberra. Although none of the Finnish families has been to their Independence Day celebrations, about six of the Indian families have attended at least one Independence Day celebration. All of the Indian families have however, been involved with the Devali festivities at one time or another.

In addition to the cultural activities organised through the social clubs discussed above, there were separate bodies located in Canberra which provided other related services. These included the Scottish Highland Dancing Group, the Pipe Band, the Finnish Soccer Club and the Finnish band. With the Indians, such activities were available on a relatively small scale, usually in someone's home. Examples include Barathanatyam dancing classes and Sitar music lessons. None of the Scottish children in the study participated in similar cultural activities. Of the Finns, two of the boys (F4 and F7) were in the junior soccer club and another (F9) played for the Finnish band. Likewise, two of the Indian girls (I6 and I7) attended the dancing classes mentioned above whenever possible.[16]

6.4.2 Ethnic media

The ethnic media provided another channel for immigrants to liaise and retain

[16] The classes were usually held after school. Since the teacher lived on the other side of the city, and because both parents worked, transport was often a problem. Unless a lift could be arranged, the girls did not attend.

their connections with their old country whilst living in Australia. The data collected revealed that the children in this study were exposed to a wide variety of media influences combining both the print media (including newspapers, magazines and children's books) and the audio-visual medium (including music, television and videos) as will be discussed below.

Firstly, concerning the newspapers, each of the groups had their own ethnic newspaper, which was not necessarily published in Canberra. In fact only the Finnish *"Good News"* was published in Canberra, whilst the Gaelic newspaper and *"The Indian Down Under"* were both produced outside the Territory. Circulation of these newspapers among families varied, for while most of the Indians subscribed to *The Indian Down Under*, none of the Scots bought the *Australasian Highlander*, "the only general magazine for those interested in Scottish, cultural-group activities in Australia" (Bain, 1988: 789). The Finns, however had a choice of two newspapers produced in Australia. The data collected indicated that whilst the *"Good News"* paper was bought mainly by the Pentecostal Church followers, the Lutherans tended to prefer the bigger, monthly newspaper called *"Suomi"*, which was produced in Melbourne. Established in 1926, this is one of the oldest ethnic presses in Australia.

Secondly, regarding other reading materials, I was mainly interested in children's books written in either English, Finnish or an Indian language based on the history and cultural characteristics of the countries. Although many of the Scottish households have either pictures, posters or calenders depicting the countryside scenery, only one family (S8) had any Scottish children's story books. The children in this family knew of these books but the parents did not actively recommend or read these books to the children. Another Scottish father (S4) said that he sometimes retold his children historical tales about the "brave deeds of the Scots against the English".

The availability of children's books in the Finnish households was also limited. However, what was different here was that at least three of the children

(F1, F2 and F9) have parents who were actively interested and regularly read to the children in Finnish. Two of these families got their relatives living in Finland to send the children story books. In addition, Finnish books could be borrowed from the Church. As one mother reported about her son (F2) "sometimes from Sunday school they give some Finnish books. He (the child) makes me read them to him. He can't really read any Finnish, except a few words".

In the Indian households, most parents stated that they have at least one or two children's storybooks from or about India "somewhere around the house". The majority said that if the children showed an interest, one of the parents would read or tell the story but there was no pressure put on the children to read these stories. At any rate, since none of the children was a fluent reader in her/his mother-tongue, this would have been difficult task for the child to do. However, a marked difference was observed in one Indian household where the mother read to her daughter, I4

> *... stories from the Mahabaratha and Ramayana - but they are written in English. I think that's OK because she (the daughter) can't really understand any Indian languages; but she should know something about her cultural history.*

This illustrated that fluency with the mother-tongue was not necessary to raise a child's awareness and interest in one's culture, history and traditions.

Thirdly, concerning music, the majority of families said that from time to time they played either traditional Finnish or Indian music as the case may be. One Finnish mother, for instance, also mentioned how she has become aware of her son (F2) humming some of the lullabies which she sings to her youngest child, a three month old infant. Likewise, although it is difficult to ascertain the musical interests of the Scottish families, at least in two of these families, the parents of S4 and S8, were avid listeners of comedian Billy Connolly. Again, however, Connolly's humour was not appropriate for young children.

Finally, concerning television, the news coverage of events from Scotland,

Finland and India, was monitored at random throughout 1985 whilst doing my field work. My objective was to assess (albeit crudely) to what extent matters in these three countries gained public prominence or public attention through the Australian media. Although a systematic record of the television reports was not kept, it would be fair to say that during that period, political events in India (such as the Sikh uprising) gained more coverage than events in Scotland or Finland (such as the melting snow in Lapland).

All the parents also mentioned watching at least some of the films produced in their countries of origin, which were shown on the Special Broadcasting Service (SBS). It was obvious that many of these families valued the SBS television channel not only for the film coverage but also for the international sports coverage such as World Cup soccer. All the Indian families also mentioned television viewing in relation to Test cricket, especially when the visiting Indian national team was playing against Australia.

The Indian children were also exposed to the ethnic media through another means. Within the Indian community there were a number of families who owned video recordings of popular Indian movies. These tapes were circulated informally from one family to the next through friendship networks. Watching these videos was a popular/regular past time of the majority of Indian mothers accounting for about 67 per cent of those who participated in this study. It was however, difficult to say how many children watched these adult movies. The children were aware of their mother's interests in Hindi movies. As I2 (a 7 year old boy) remarked: "she watches these movies all the time". However, when asked whether he watched them too, he was quick to reply "No way!" I only knew of two cases where the girls (I7 and I6) actually sat with their mothers to watch the films. This practice of viewing videos from one's homeland was not observed or reported by either the Scots or the Finns, although two of the Finnish mothers mentioned an old Finnish "classic movie" shown on the Special Broadcasting Service on the television. Since it was shown after 9pm, none of the children had seen it.

6.5 Conclusion

The preceding discussion demonstrated that the child's parents' country of origin and culture can provide at least "some abstract sense of collective identity that supports the identification of significant others. The individual can be insulated in this way from alternative definitions of reality" (Bottomley, 1976: 119). In general, the birthplace of an individual alone does not render her/him to be identified as an Australian, Scot, Finn or Indian as the case may be "unless other social characteristics are taken into account within a historical framework" (Jupp, 1985: 23). For instance, it is quite possible that an Indian child may not become fully aware of the difference between her/his parents' cultural background in relation to the wider Anglo-Celtic Australian community until s/he starts schooling. Taking the teacher's perspective, such issues were discussed in part in chapters 5 and will be addressed from the child's perspective, in chapter 7.

Arriving with their young families, the Scots and Indians settled into Australia on their own with little support from family. On the other hand, the majority of Finns' mode of migration characterised chain migration. Zubrzycki (1966: 62) argued that "The force of kinship, reinforced by local ties, gives rise to chain migration and this in turn produces strong regional concentrations". This was evident among the Finns, who have a large proportion of their extended family living in and around the ACT. It appears that if one were to place the three groups along a continuum of high to low participation in organised community activities, the Finns and Indians could be placed at the high end and the Scots at the low end. The reasons are varied, ranging from lack of personal interest, time and money as well as religious and circumstantial factors, such as geographical distance and transport problems.

The size and composition of the child's family have implications for the nature and amount of child - parent interaction that takes place on a day to day basis. Following a review of available research, Amato (1987: 159) concluded that there were "more positive outcomes for children in smaller families when compared with children in larger families". Factors such as the age, sex and birth order have

mediating effects on family dynamics. Contact with extended family were based not only on size and composition of the family and proximity, but also parental needs and desire to maintain contact, particularly for the benefit of the children. However, the children's mother's role as intermediaries between generations may have significant implications for child - grandparent relationships in general (Funder, 1989: 48). Although the findings of this study suggest that grandmothers in particular play a pivotal role in maintaining ethnic identification, the long term consequences are difficult to predict. There is also a growing body of literature on father involvement in home and school setting.[17] Yet, so far no work has been undertaken to examine the contribution fathers make in preserving or suppressing ethnic identification during early childhood. Not only the quantity (amount of time) but also the quality of interactions (the nature of their involvement with the child) need to be considered when evaluating the impact of both fathers and grandparents on child ethnic identifications.

Overall, two distinctive practices with regard to teaching and learning Finnish and Indian mother-tongues emerged. Firstly, within the Finnish households, there was a strong feeling that passing down ethnic languages was essentially a parental responsibility. The Indian parents, however, did not subscribe to this notion with the same fervour. At least one third of these parents mentioned the need to have language classes organised through their ethnic community organisation, suggesting that the preservation of the Indian cultural heritage was a community responsibility. Of course, the dilemma here was, given the diversity of Indian languages spoken within families living in Canberra,[18] how does one choose the language(s) to be taught by a single, community funded organisation? At that time, neither the Indians nor the Finnish communities had an ethnic school or language classes based in Canberra. The closest thing to formal language lessons these children encountered would have been the Finnish church services (both Lutheran and Pentecostal faiths)

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[17] For a review of research literature see Swick and Manning (1983).

[18] Within the nine families who participated in this study, in addition to Hindi spoken by all parents, there were seven other languages including Telgu, Punjabi and Marathi.

or the Hindu religious gatherings, where the religious service was conducted in either Finnish or Hindi respectively.

The initial interest for maintaining ethnic community contact may be generated from within the family. In doing this however, the children were introduced to a whole host of external forces, through the media for example, and whose influence may be largely beyond the control of the parents. It was also shown that the role of ethnic media in imparting knowledge about the cultural heritage was largely incidental. Only in a few cases (I4, F1, F2 and I9 for example) did the parents actively use the media to teach children about their culture. The extent to which the children were culturally stimulated through the media was difficult to assess, given that only about twelve months were spent with the families. Thus, children's perceptions of their ethnic identification being influenced by the media, remains an issue which requires further examination.

As those such as Koivukangas (1986) and Bilimoria et al (1988) found in their studies of Finns and Indians in Australia, by and large, the families in this study have also retained the traditional aspects of family life irrespective of their residency status or length of stay in Australia. In essence, all the mothers who were in paid employment worked out of economic necessity (say, to help pay off the house) rather than by personal, individual choice. For many families, the conflict between past and present values was heightened by the need to make compromises in the face of pragmatic issues of survival in the adopted country.

Chapter 7
TAKING THE CHILD'S PERSPECTIVE

7.1 Introduction

So far it has been argued that the process of ethnic identification is culturally patterned, socially modified and contextually defined. However, given that the concept of ethnicity itself is difficult to quantify and measure, the nature of ethnic identification as a process must be deduced from resultant behaviour. Based on an extensive literature search on children's social relationships, Chafel (1985:39) concluded that independent of their divergent theoretical orientations scholars who follow symbolic interactionism, phenomenology, social comparison theory and Piagetian theory, were all united in their belief that the young child "actively constructs knowledge of self through interactions with others". This belief is reinforced by the children in this study, as it will be shown that they were actively engaged in trying to make sense of the significance of their cultural heritage for themselves. Thus, studying ethnic identification as seen through the eyes of children, is central to this chapter and the thesis as a whole.

Over the years, various writers have presented us with a variety of theoretical frameworks to promote our understanding of self identification in relation to others. Upon reviewing available literature it becomes clear that most of our knowledge about children's social relations is based on experimental research done primarily by social-psychologists since the 1950s. However, it was also shown in chapter 4 that researchers who have followed the interactionist tradition based on the works of Cooley (1902) and Mead (1934), also provide theoretical insights into understanding how self awareness develops during childhood from a sociological perspective. Moreover, related work dealing specifically with children's perceptions of race and ethnicity were discussed in chapter 5. In Australia, we lack adequate knowledge of concepts pertaining to ethnic identification young children are capable of learning and it has received limited attention by sociologists. It is hoped that this study will aid further discussion by providing empirical evidence applicable within Australia.

For this purpose, my analysis will rely on evidence collected during my

interviews with the children and observation records made during my visits to their homes and classrooms. This chapter will focus essentially on the children's commentary alone. It was considered important to let the children 'speak for themselves', to put their point of view as they saw it, with minimal interference from adults (their parents and school teachers). This was necessary in order to see to what extent children's understanding of ethnic identification was consistent with the adults' accounts as discussed in chapters 5 and 6.

The emphasis here is on self identification as it relates to migrant children within the Australian social context. Can young migrant children or children of immigrant parents extricate themselves from the cultural identity defined by their familial home settings and develop an independent self identity based on her/his interactions with members of the host country? What are the consequences of this quest for liberation and individuality within a context of cultural conflict and confusion? Their response to the immediate realities of the home and school environments have implications for their parents, teachers and the whole community.

The content of this chapter will be divided into three sections. Firstly, I will look at the relationship between ethnicity and cognitive development by discussing ethnic identification as a developmental process, part of early childhood growth and development. It will be shown that there is evidence to support the claims made by scholars over nearly five decades that young children are aware of race and ethnicity during early childhood (Clark and Clark, 1939; Davey, 1983; Derman-Sparks, 1991; Goodman, 1973 and Katz, 1976 and others). Secondly, I will discuss how child ethnicity (as discussed in chapter 3) manifests itself in peer relations at school. Thirdly, I will examine how child ethnicity operationalises at the individual level, with a view to seeing the link between ethnicity and self concept. Here the discussion will be based on children's perceptions of ethnic identification in terms of the country of birth, their own or their parents', which may or may not be the same. Finally, I will attempt to analyse similarities and differences between Scots, Finns and Indians on the basis of children's own perceptions of ethnic identification.

7.2 Ethnicity and cognitive development

The distribution of the children according to age (that is, at the time when fieldwork was undertaken), is given in table 7.1.

Table 7.1:

Distribution of children according to age

Children's Ages	Scots	Finns	Indians	Total
5 years	2	2	1	5 (19%)
6 years	4	2	3	9 (33%)
7 years	2	4	3	9 (33%)
8 years	1	1	2	4 (15%)

Table 7.1 shows that although 6 and 7 year olds accounted for one third each of the total sample, 5 and 8 year olds were less well represented in this study. It can also be seen that there was at least one child from each age level, representing each of the three birthplace categories included in this study. This makes it possible to make comparisons between the three cultural backgrounds on the basis of the children's ages. Consequently, one can comment about their developmental process by linking ethnic identification with cognitive growth.

It was shown in chapter 4 that researchers such as Goodman (1973) and Katz (1976) have attempted to construct stage based theories to explain how children develop an awareness about their own and others ethnic origins. I have not set out to establish a similar framework as this would have required a larger sample, more clinical and rigorous testing of the children over several years using a cognitive developmental approach. Instead, I have chosen to capture a snap-shot view of development in-progress at a particular time for a small group of children. This has proved to be a useful method, because despite the absence of data based on any formal testing (such as IQ tests or simulation of cross-cultural play situations using dolls) I found evidence to support the notion of a developmental process in operation. For instance, consider the following excerpt from a conversation with S3, a five year old Scottish girl.

S3: *Are you born in Scotland? (sic)*
MW: *What do you think?*

S3: *I think you are.*
MW: *How do you know?*
S3: *Because you're dark.*
MW: *So, if I'm dark, I must be from Scotland?*
S3: *I don't know. Some people in Scotland are dark. I think. Some of them are.*
MW: *Do you know anyone from Scotland who is dark?*
S3: *One day my granny was dark. But then she didn't go in the sun and she was light again.*

From this conversation, it was clear that as yet, S3 did not fully understand that skin colour or pigmentation was permanent. She related skin colour (being 'dark') to both the impact of being in the sun as well as ethnicity, in a taken for granted, matter-of-fact way. That is, she assumed that there was a link between skin colour and country of birth. Based on their comments, similar inferences can also be drawn about the other four 5 year old children who participated in this study. There was plenty of evidence to support the claim that, like S3 above, these children were all acutely aware of skin colour differences between themselves and others, irrespective of their ethnic background. For example, F9 said his best-friend "Peter's hair is a bit the same as me (sic) but it's really brown"; and I4, describing the Indian cricketers on tour in Australia at the time, said "... they're blacker than me!" This confirms the findings of those such as Davey and Mullin (1982: 83) who also "provided good evidence that racial and ethnic distinctions were extensively employed by primary school children in their attempts to make sense of the world".

However, it was not possible to say whether S3 or any of the 5 year olds fully understood the meaning of the word 'country' to mean a nation such as Scotland. This was doubly difficult to assess if the child was born in Australia and had not travelled overseas. Both these criteria applied in the case of the 5 year old Finnish boy, F9. In his case, although he had never been to Finland, his parents' birthplace, my observations suggested that he was being brought up in essentially a Finnish household. Yet, although he knew that "you have to go on a plane" to get to Finland, it was difficult to say whether or not he understood the existence of countries other than Finland and Australia. Piaget and Weil (1951: 569) stated that children's "ideas about other countries have developed in exactly the same way as those concerning their

own....".

A similar situation arose when assessing the cognitive capacity of the 6 year old children; but there was a slight variation. Five of the nine 6 year olds (S6, S8, S9, I1 and I5) have each lived in Australia for four years or less (see table 1.1). Yet, apart from one Finnish child (F6)[1], all of the 6 year old children have been to visit their extended families in either Scotland, Finland or India. It was therefore possible to suggest that these experiences may have strengthened these children's ability to understand 'what is a country'. According to Piaget et al (1951: 564) children below 7 or 8 years of age, for instance, "do not understand either geographically or logically, that Geneva is in Switzerland". These findings are reinforced by my observations of the 5 and 6 year olds in this study. However, since the level of cognitive development was not formally tested, it was difficult to verify the child's cognitive capacity for learning about any country.

It is worth noting here that some of the children were also exposed to information about other countries at school. This was particularly important in the case of at least three children (F1, I2 and I8) whose classroom teachers I had observed using either the globe or the world map to refer to different countries where children came from or were going for a holiday. One class teacher (namely, I8's) encouraged children who went overseas for a holiday to send post-cards to classmates and also to keep a personal diary. This was a Grade 2/3 class and included several children whose parents went overseas once or twice a year.

In addition, when I asked the children to recall what they saw and did on their visits to their countries of origin, most were able to name cities and towns they had visited and people they had seen. For example, going to the Edinburgh zoo, visiting grandma in Turku, Finland or going to an uncle's wedding on an elephant in Hydrabhad, India. Almost all of these children also mentioned differences in weather conditions between Australia and Scotland, Finland or India as the case may be.

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1 After I had completed my field work, I found out that F6 too had been taken to Finland for a short holiday.

Although both Scottish and Finnish children mentioned snow and remembered feeling 'very cold', the Indian children in contrast repeated that it was 'hot' and 'dirty' in India. It was interesting to note that some of the Indian children who said that India was dirty usually followed this with a more positive comment, almost as an apology or a way of masking their own implied criticism about their ethnic heritage. This could be illustrated by I6's comments as follows: "It's not very clean but when you go to the temples they are nice places. Very nice". Such comments are also indicative of the child's growing capacity for independent thought. Piaget et al (1951: 566) describes this as the beginnings of "affective decentration" or children's ability "to group collective realities outside their narrow individual" contexts. Instead, there is an "integration of logical relationships and effective values" which are based on family loyalties and traditions. However, since the above comments were made following I6's second visit to India and one which she had thoroughly enjoyed, it is difficult to say to what extent the experience itself (rather than cognitive development per se) also contributed to the child's efforts or motives in making a value judgement.

On the whole, except in the case of two Indian children (I1 and I8) all the children reported that they enjoyed their visits to either Scotland, Finland or India respectively. Children's comments suggested that this was primarily because of the contact made with extended family members, grandparents in particular. For example, one Indian boy said "It's good fun there, I had lots of cousins to play with" (I2, age 7 years). Similarly, S9, a six year old Scottish boy said that he liked Scotland "because you get better cars (or toys) there". Overall, given that all of these children were under 10 years of age when these trips were undertaken, it was not surprising that they would have been openly welcomed by their families living overseas. Collectively, this illustrates that the affective importance of the experience cannot be ignored.

This developmental progression was reinforced by the eight year olds who displayed a better understanding about countries. For instance, I observed both I3 and S4 preparing school projects on the basis of various countries of the world. Note that although these two children were both in Grade 3/4, the classes were located in two separate schools.

Overall, at the crudest level of analysis, from the early stages of the fieldwork it soon became apparent that the children's conceptual understanding of ethnic identification differed according to their chronological age. It was important to keep in mind that the relative merits and demerits or the significance of other factors (particularly their experience and exposure to race relations) cannot be ignored. Perhaps more importantly, it was also not possible either to verify or document evidence to rank or prioritise the source of learning in terms of its significance for the child. Ethnic identification is a long-term individual issue which, as argued, is subject to change with time and place. The following comments from four Indian children aged 5,6,7 and 8 years respectively, will help to illustrate this point.

MW: *Do you think Indians are different from Australians? (Nods 'yes' and when asked 'How?' she replies,)*
I4: *Because Australians are white and Indians are brown. But I'm Australian and I'm... my colour is brown because my mum and dad are brown. That's why.*

(I4 was 5 years old.)

I5: *I'm getting all white .... white here (shows arm).*
MW: *Aren't you brown any more then?*
I5: *No, I'm turning white now.*
MW: *Do you like that (Nods 'yes' and when asked 'why is that? he replies as follows).*
I5: *I don't want to be black.*
MW: *Can you tell me why that is?*
RG: *Because it's horrible to be black. I don't like it very much.*

(I5, was 6 years old.)

MW: *If someone asked you whether you were Australian or Indian, what would you say?*
I7: *I'm Indian because I've got black hair. Australians don't have black hair. My mum has black hair but she's got white skin and she's still an Indian. We wear pottus (marks on forehead) and Australians don't. Australians don't wear kamis and we do. And I've got brown skin and Australians don't.*

(I8, was 7 years old.)

MW: *Who said that they don't like you?*
I6: *Lots of people.*
MW: *What did they exactly say?*
I6: *They think that I've got a disease.*
MW: *A disease?*
I6: *Mmmm... because of my skin colour.*
MW: *What do you mean?*
I6: *People say 'don't touch that ground. I7 (she says her first name) was there. Otherwise you'll catch the disease'.*

(I7, was 8 years old.)

The above comments support the notion of a developmental process which is age related. As can be seen, although I4 (the 5 year old) identified ethnic differences in terms of skin colour, she got into difficulty in trying to apply her reasoning to herself. It must be noted that though I4 herself recognised this difficulty, I was not able to pursue this conversation any further with her as she was agitated by this stage and wanted to move on. On the other hand, I5 (aged 6 years) who was also anxious to be identified as an Australian, was convinced that his skin colour was changing. Although those such as Goodman (1973), Katz (1976) and Ramsey (1986) have suggested that by 6 years of age children should be able to understand the permanence of skin colour, the above comments made by I5 questions the validity of a fixed age linking the developmental stages in ethnic identity formation during early childhood.

As shown in chapter 4, there was, however, little agreement between researchers regarding the ages and stages of acquisition of ethnic awareness. For instance, Semaj (1980) said that racial (or ethnic) constancy appears between 6 to 9 years and Katz (1976) said that race (and gender) permanence was reached at 4 years of age. In this study, it was perhaps more important to note that, although I5 had not yet fully grasped the notion of racial constancy, he had already started to evaluate the connotations of such classifications. This has implications for both teaching and learning during early childhood. As Derman-Sparks (1991: 35) reiterates, "not talking about racial or ethnic labels with young children ... does not work because children have already begun to ask questions about the meanings of such labels."

7.3 Ethnicity and Self concept

As has been stated before, the process of ethnic identification is inextricably linked with the child's growing sense of the self as a separate entity. It was also shown in chapter 4 that ethnicity is only one aspect of a child's self concept which is multifaceted. The extent to which ethnicity becomes relevant or important for the child is largely a matter of personal choice and/or circumstance. At times, for the same individual it may be more difficult to match or mask public perceptions with personal preferences. I will demonstrate this in terms of two specific cultural markers. That is, skin colour and spoken expression including both language type and accent. These two aspects of ethnicity were chosen for discussion because the evidence collected showed that skin colour and accent/language were the two main cultural markers that the majority of children referred to in their discussions with me on ethnic identification. In other words, it was the children themselves who set the parameters for discussion. These results thus confirm the findings of those such as Derman-Sparks (1991: 34) who has stated that "children of colour, more often than White children, may verbalise not liking the colour, texture of shape of their skin, hair or eyes" because it is these features which usually draw attention to them in social interactions (see also, Davey, 1983; and Ramsey, 1987).

It was also generally assumed that one's skin colour and accent can signify an individual's ethnic origins. We also know that oversimplification or overgeneralisation about such cultural markers can lead to stereotyping and misunderstanding about the significance of ethnicity for the individual. (For instance, refer to my conversations with I3 and with I2). However, one cannot ignore that the recognition of various colours and sounds, and being able to discriminate and classify inanimate (such as paints and building blocks) and animate objects (such as people and animals), are basic skills taught to children from an early age. Hence it should not come as a surprise that young children would use the same classification systems based on colour and sound to make sense of people's physical differences and similarities.

7.3.1 Skin colour

Findings of this study suggest that there were particular patterns in the way

young children utilised basic colour and sound classifications applied in the context of ethnic identification. Firstly, although all the Indian children referred to skin colour in a variety of ways, only one Scottish girl (S3) and one Finnish girl (F3) mentioned skin colour. I have already highlighted the Scottish girl's dilemma with skin colour and her situation can be explained in terms of her cognitive immaturity. That is, as discussed earlier, S3 had not reached a developmental stage where she was cognitively or logically able to understand the permanence of skin colour. On the other hand, F3's case illustrated another aspect of how skin colour can be interpreted by a child. To understand this one needs to look at F3's words more closely:

MW: *Are Finnish people then different to Australians?*
F3: *Yes. A lot. Most of them have blond hair and are white. And they sort of ... act different.*
MW: *How? In what way?*
F3: *They act different ... sort of ... the accent; real deep voice. Like, they look ... they act different.*

These comments suggest that this child at the age of 6 years was already alert to stereotyping applicable to people from Finland living in Australia. It is also indicative of the parallel growth of logical and affective abilities, utilised by the child, in making sense of the realities of ethnic diversity within the community where s/he lives. Both F3 and S3 were alike in that both accepted skin colour differences (between theirs and those of the majority or mainstream society) without fear or concern about the possibility of negative repercussions. This suggests that perhaps the application of positive/negative value judgements commenced after 6 years of age, but this is subject to confirmation with a larger, more variable, sample.

For instance, a contrasting situation was true of the Indian children's perceptions about their own skin colour, described usually as either "black", "brown" or "dark". The majority of these children (I3, I4, I6, I7, I8 and I9) have come to accept that their skin colour immediately classified them as an "Indian" and that there was little or no point trying to deny it. This was captured in the following comments taken from an interview with I3:

I3: *They (classmates) say 'you're Indian' because I look brown.*
MW: *How do you feel about that?*

I3: *Not very good. Not too good. Some people KNOW that I'm Australian. That's my friends. Some people don't know.*
MW: *Who do you think should tell them?*
I3: *The teacher. But she thinks I'm Indian.*

This boy, at 8 years of age, had already experienced name calling because of his skin colour. He explained that he did not wish to get into a fight over it and tried not to let it bother him. However, the above comments still signal his discomfort and helplessness, especially since he could not even defer to an adult authority figure, such as the class teacher for support and understanding. I9's story at age 7 was very similar. Both these children were born in Australia and have been encouraged to speak primarily English at home. Hence, although their home situation promoted the identification with Australia, at school their participation within the wider Anglo-Celtic community was inhibited because of prevailing prejudice based on cultural stereotypes. It seems that at this stage, both these children had given up or succumbed to their circumstances. Both have more or less decided to 'go with the flow' instead of taking a stand either to defend or explain/clarify their position in relation to their ethnic heritage.

In contrast, another Indian boy, I2 who was aged 7 years, was more openly critical of his treatment by his peers and teachers at school:

I2: *Well my family was born in India. But I don't like them being called Indians.*
MW: *So what do you tell them?* (his classmates)
I2: *Nothing.*
MW: *Should you tell them something?*
I2: *They'll start bugging me even more.*
MW: *Oh. What about H* (another boy in same class) *What do they call him?*
I2: *Indian. Except he was born in Singapore! They think we're both Indians!*

These comments illustrate further the problems of stereotyping and the impact of community ignorance (or prejudice) on the individual concerned. I2's frustration was real and understandable. He goes on to add that his classmates' teasing on the basis of his "Indianness" has reduced recently "because they're used to me now. Because they know me and before (that) they didn't." This child lived close to the school, the parents were well known to the teachers and this may be in part due to the generous donations

given by the parents to school functions. It appears that his parents were actively involved in enhancing their child's social relations at school. For instance, the teachers were also invited to attend the child's birthday party attended by at least half of I2's classmates. The presence of the teachers was unusual as none of the other children who had birthday parties had even contemplated inviting the teachers. Given the support I2 has had from his parents, it appears that this boy may have been in a better position to deal with the misconceptions about his ethnic heritage. One cynical way of looking at his situation is to ask the question whether a child or, more precisely, the parents, can buy their way into gaining social acceptance? But this is essentially an untested proposition and raises many more issues than that can be answered through this study. Suffice to say that I9, another child who claimed that "no one plays with me", had, according to her parents, also insisted on inviting the whole class to her birthday party that year. This alerted the mother to the fact that her daughter did not have friends at school.

7.3.2 Accent or language

The other cultural marker that seems to hold a lot of significance for many of these children was spoken language. There is general consensus among scholars that language is a central aspect of ethnic identification (see for instance, Harris, 1980 and Horvath, 1980). Firstly, it must be clarified that the majority of the children in this study (sixteen out of twenty-seven or 59 per cent of the sample) were fluent in a second language. These children were of either Finnish or Indian descent. All Finns, except F5 and F7, used Finnish at home on a daily basis. Notwithstanding, both F5 and F7 were also able to speak Finnish but neither were keen to use it, especially on a day-to-day basis. In F7's case, his parents told me that his interest in speaking in Finnish had waned after being teased at school because of his accent. F5's family had lived in Finland for a year when he was about 4 years old. On returning to Australia he had found the transition difficult, especially when speaking in English. Both these children were Australian born and said that they used Finnish generally only when speaking with grandparents or other non-English speaking relatives. Their parents tended to accept their child's position without penalising or reprimanding them.

A similar pattern emerged with the Indian children too. That is, those who spoke a second language (usually a State language from India such as Telegu or Malayalam), said that they used it mainly when speaking with grandparents. One of the children, I7, added that she spoke "Malayalam with all the family except my brothers because they only know English and they say 'I hate speaking Malayalam; speak English'. They get very angry if I don't". This girl was the youngest and the only girl in the family. There was a 5 year age difference between her and her older brothers. This case illustrated that within one family, it was possible that there may be differences between siblings irrespective of the parents' approach to ethnic identification, an issue which requires further investigation based on research specifically directed towards the study of ethnicity and sibling relationships. On the other hand, in at least three of the Indian households (in the homes of I1, I3, and I9) English was spoken exclusively between parents and children. As discussed in chapter 6, their parents' comments confirmed that this was a deliberate policy on their part to ensure that their children learnt better English faster. These parents generally believed that this would make it easier for their child to adapt to Australia and be more accepted in the community.

In the case of the Scottish children, none was fluent in a second language, including S9 who was placed at a school which offered French language classes from kindergarten upwards.[2] The majority (seven of the nine children), however, commented about the distinct accent of Scottish speakers. Most of these children stated that this was a general characteristic applicable to all Scots. This was apparent in S8's comments: "because they speak different and have different words". Another girl, S1 went as far as to say that her parents have told her "that when you go over there, (to Scotland) you have to say things that they know". This may indicate that, in her case, it may be her parents who have directed the child's attention to the Scottish accent. This was particularly pertinent considering that only two of the Finnish girls (F3 and F5) and none of the Indian children raised accent or a second language as an issue for them personally.

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2 Note that none of the other Scots children were at schools which offered bilingual teaching, as a part of ACTSA's community language development program.

On the other hand, other Scottish children were more personal as they commented on their own accents and how it affected their interactions with their peers. For instance, consider S9's comments below:

S9: *I talk different. A little bit different.*
MW: *Does that bother you?*
S9: *Mmmm... yes.*

Reluctantly he admitted later that his classmates have been teasing him because of his "funny" accent. His mother had already confided in me that she did not want the accent to become an issue. The eldest son, who was 11 years old, had been involved with fights in the school playground. His mother was concerned that S9, his brother may also stand out among his peers because of his accent. That is, she wanted her children to fit in with their classmates without drawing attention to themselves one way or another.

Informal conversations between parents and children also indicated that some of the Finnish (such as F1, F2, F3 and F8) and Indian children (such as I2, I4, I6 and I7) used familial diminutives molded on their mother-tongue when addressing each other. On the other hand, some of Scottish children have picked up Gaelic words, either from a parent (for example, S4's father) or a grandparent (as in the case of S1, S3 and S7). These comments were generally volunteered by the children with great pride, even if they were not always sure that they were able to pronounce the words correctly! Corroborative evidence was provided by parents in the form of either wall-charts (sent by relatives living in Scotland) which depicted Gaelic words or books about Scotland or Scottish stories, which were read to the children by their parents.

7.4 Ethnicity and peer relations

So far in this thesis, the importance of peer relations in the development of ethnic identification[3] has been hinted at, but not yet fully explored. Although children's interactions with peers were not systematically observed or tested, there was evidence to show that the response of peers was of importance to the study children.

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3 For a review of literature on peer socialisation, see Campbell (1964) and Hartup (1989).

This is in keeping with the interactionists' claim that self identification is molded through social relations. More specifically, the appraisals of significant others, such as peers, are strategic to a child's ability to become a social being, accepted as a member of the society in which s/he lives. Mead (1934) described this as the child's ability to 'take the role of the other' or to be able to view oneself as s/he imagines others do. How this process worked in the school context in relation to ethnic identification is discussed below.

Firstly, children were asked to verify whether they thought their classmates would describe them as either Australian or Scottish/ Finnish/ Indian. Table 7 presents the results of the children's responses.

Table 7.2:

Children's perception of their peers' views on their ethnicity

Country of origin	Peers' perception		
	DON'T KNOW	AS AUSTRALIAN	SCOT/FINN/INDIAN
SCOTLAND	2	4	3 (each as a Scot)
FINLAND	1	4	4 (each as a Finn)
INDIANS	-	-	9 (each as an Indian)
Sub-totals:	3	8	16

Only three boys (S5, S9 and F2), were unsure or did not know how their classmates would define their (the study children's) ethnic origins. The eight children who indicated that their peers would pass or describe them as an Australian explained this in terms of their English language skills, as illustrated by the following comments:

F5: *They think I'm Australian because I know how to talk English well.*
S3: *Australian ... because they talk Australian to me;*
S8: *Australian because I sound like a Australian person.*

F5 and S8 were alike in that they both felt that it was what they did, their actions, irrespective of whether direct and intentional or subconscious and indirect (as in S8's case), which influenced their peers' perceptions of them. On the other hand, S3's remarks suggested that the appraisal was based on action initiated by peers. Either way, both situations imply conformity under peer pressure. The majority, consisting

of sixteen children, were however identified on the basis of their parents' country of origin by their peers. All of the Indian children felt that their skin colour was the main contributory factor as has been already illustrated in this chapter. The Finnish and Scottish children's explanations however differed on the basis of who told the peers about their ethnic origins. Some children, such as S1, S6, F1 and F4, said that it was they who told their friends. F7 and F9 qualified such explanations thus:

F7: *They know I'm Finnish because they've been to my house several times and I tell them* (that his parents came from Finland).

F9: *The ones who know ... well, I've known them for a long time.*

The development of children's friendships was also dependent on the composition of the school population and with whom the children played during recess and lunch time (see for example, Davey and Mullin, 1982; and Woods and Grugeon, 1990). My observations revealed that the study children's "friendships were for the most part gender specific and multi-racial" (Woods et al, 1990: 318). All of the children were aware of the presence (or absence) of other children from their own ethnic background at their school. Yet, only two of the Indian children, I2 and I7, were observed playing together. Although almost all of the Finnish children knew of other Finnish children at their school, they were unanimous in saying that they would not speak to those children in Finnish at school or seek them specifically to play at recess or lunch. By and large, interactions with peers from the same ethnic backgrounds took place outside school hours, and usually when instigated by parents. The exception to this was F4, who played soccer with a junior team linked with the Finnish Club. Thus, he met with the other players, who were mainly of Finnish descent, to practise their sport after school.

Name calling, or the use of derogatory words referring to perceived ethnic identification by peers at school, was another symbolic marker of others' appraisals of an individual in general, and the marginalisation of children from social interactions, in particular. All the Indian boys and two of the girls (I6 and I9) and two of the Scots (S3 and S9) described experiences of name calling. The worst case, involving I6, the

8 year old Indian girl who was excluded because of her skin colour which signified "a disease", has already been mentioned in this chapter. None of the Finnish children reported similar situations although F1's mother's involvement in the classroom was also discussed in chapter 5. Some, such as I6 and I9, both girls, who had both spoken to their parents about their experiences of name calling, told me that they had been advised by their fathers either to "take no notice" or "ignore it". The Indian boys, on the other hand, have not told their parents but had come to the same conclusion, to leave the matter alone, as illustrated by I3's comments as follows: "I take no notice because I don't want to get into a fight." I2, on the other hand, was convinced that it was a temporary set back as shown in the following excerpt:

I2: *They don't tell me much rude things to me now.*
MW: *Why do you think they have stopped?*
I2: *Because they are used to me now. Because now they know me and before, they didn't.*
MW: *So is it important that they get to know you?*
I2: *Yes. I think so. You can't lose them. We're in the same class.*

Accordingly, this boy believed that not only could he change the situation, but that it was just a matter of time. In other words, the child was aware that the meaning and salience of ethnic identification is subject to change over time.

7.5 Preferred Country of Residence

Autonomy and independence are integral aspects of child growth and development during early childhood. So far, the discussion has focussed attention mainly on the effects of others' perceptions of children's ethnic identification. In this section, I will address one of the two areas which demonstrated the choices made directly by the children, about where they wanted to live and their view of their parents' preferred country of residence.

Although all of the parents in this study were born overseas, either in Scotland, Finland or India, the same was not true of their children. As can be seen from table 1.1 the majority of child participants (sixteen out of the total of twenty-seven), were born in Australia. When asked to nominate which country they preferred to live in, only one Indian child (I7) was not sure whether or not she preferred India or Australia.

All the other children had definite ideas about where each one would prefer to live (see tables/graphs 7.3(a) to (c).

Whatever their reasoning, nineteen out of the twenty-seven children (a substantial majority consisting of 70 per cent of the total child sample) said that they would prefer to live in Australia rather than in their parent's country of origin. This was particularly true of the Finnish children as eight out of the nine said that they wanted to live in Australia. These children stated that the main reason for this choice was their dislike of the cold weather. This was interesting because Canberra, where they lived, is the coldest main city in Australia. I hasten to add that parents may not have had a personal choice in the matter of deciding where to live in Australia, as was discussed in chapter 6. However, from the children's perspective, though many said that they liked playing in the snow when they visited Finland, most indicated that they were reluctant to overstay their holidays. As F8 put it, "I'd like to live there for a short while (only)".

Tables 7.3 (a) - (c): Preferred country of residence: comparison of child and parent preferences

Table 7.3(a): SCOTTISH children's perceptions

CHILD CODE	Perceived preference		
	CHILD'S	MOTHER'S	FATHER'S
S1	Scotland	Scotland	**Australia**
S2	Scotland	Scotland	Scotland
S3	**Australia**	**Australia**	**Australia**
S4	**Australia**	**Australia**	Scotland
S5	**Australia**	Don't know	**Australia**
S6	Scotland	Scotland	**Australia**
S7	**Australia**	Scotland	**Australia**
S8	**Australia**	**Australia**	**Australia**
S9	Scotland	Scotland	**Australia**

Table 7.3(b): FINNISH children's perceptions

CHILD CODE	Perceived preference		
	CHILD'S	MOTHER'S	FATHER'S
F1	**Australia**	Finland	Finland
F2	**Australia**	Finland	Finland
F3	Finland	Finland	Finland
F4	**Australia**	Don't know	**Australia**
F5	**Australia**	**Australia**	**Australia**
F6	**Australia**	**Australia**	Don't know
F7	**Australia**	**Australia**	**Australia**
F8	**Australia**	Finland	Don't know
F9	**Australia**	Finland	**Australia**

Table 7.3(c): INDIAN children's perceptions

CHILD CODE	Perceived preference		
	CHILD'S	MOTHER'S	FATHER'S
I1	**Australia**	Don't Know	**Australia**
I2	**Australia**	Don't Know	**Australia**
I3	**Australia**	Don't Know	**Australia**
I4	**Australia**	**Australia**	**Australia**
I5	India	India	**Australia**
I6	India	India	**Australia**
I7	Don't Know	India	**Australia**
I8	**Australia**	India	**Australia**
I9	**Australia**	**Australia**	**Australia**

FIGURES 7.3(a) - (c): **Preferred country of residence: comparison of child and parent preferences**

Figure 7.3 (a): SCOTTISH children's perceptions

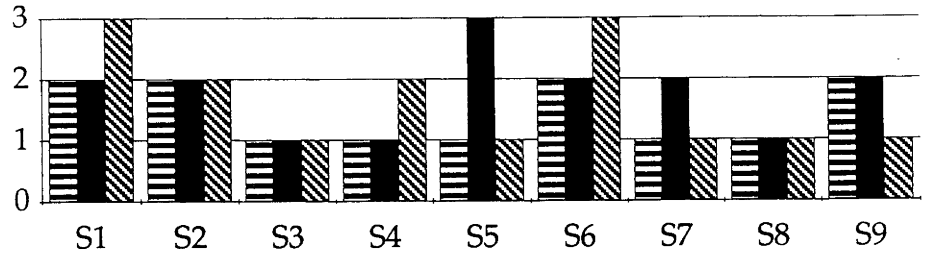


Figure 7.3 (b): FINNISH children's perceptions

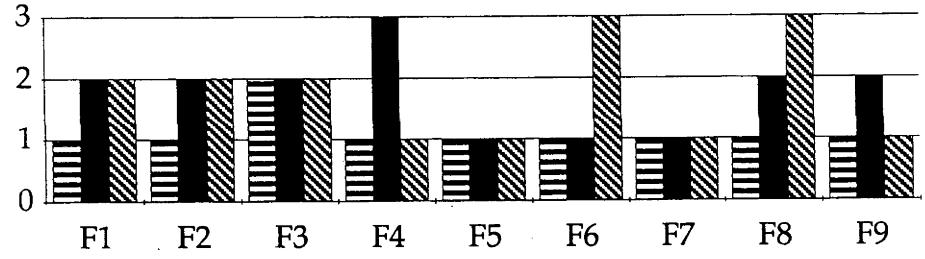
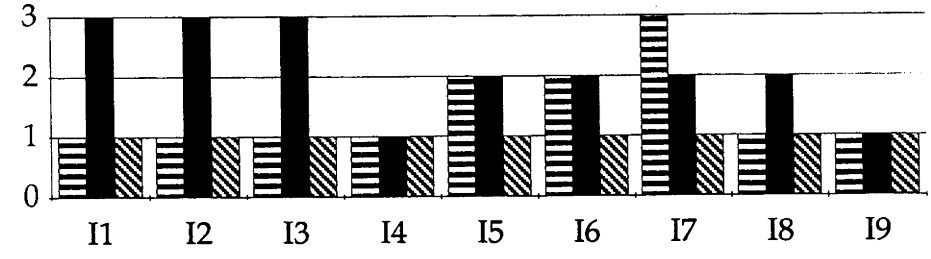


Figure 7.3 (c): INDIAN children's perceptions



Notes: 1 = AUSTRALIA; 2 = SCOTLAND/ FINLAND/ INDIA
3 = DON'T KNOW or NOT SURE

CHILD MOTHER FATHER

On the other hand, only one of the five Scottish children (S8) who wanted to live in Australia, said that she did not want to stay in Scotland because of the snow and the colder climate. The other four (S3, S4, S5 and S7) each had very different explanations for choosing Australia as their preferred country to live. In response to my question, "where would you prefer to live: in Australia or in Scotland?", their responses included:

S3: *Because I don't want to go in the aeroplane.*
S4: *Probably because I like the house here and I'll miss it.*
S7: *Because it's better here.*

Although the above explanations were relatively easy to understand, S5's explanations required fuller documentation as follows:

MW: *Where would you prefer to live: in Australia or in Scotland?*
S5: *Australia; because there are no attacks here.*
MW: *How do you mean?*
S5: *Sometimes you get attacked by the Germans.*
MW: *Have you been attacked by Germans?*
S5: *We weren't. We just heard it on the radio when we were there. So we just left. Mum told us."*

This story was unfortunately not discussed with the parents. It was possible that the parents may have experienced German war planes during their childhood in Great Britain in the 1940s. They migrated to Australia in 1982, when S5 was only 1 year old. According to S5, his father was also a enthusiastic duck/pig shooter. He was very aware of the weapons his father used and indicated his desire to go shooting with his father. However, the father did not spend much time with his son, as S5 told me "dad doesn't talk to me or Kate (his sister). He talks to mum alot; and Uncle Ron" (the father's friend with whom he went pig/duck shooting). Although S5 yearned to spend more time with his father, the father saw him as a "little boy". In trying to make sense of the information about guns, shooting, Germans and wartime Britain, it appears that S5 mixed up past and present events. He was 6 years of age and had no first-hand experiences of either pig/duck shooting or a war. It was a complex situation, relatively difficult for a 6 year old to unscramble by himself. Hence, it was difficult to explain any further how these experiences would have influenced his interest in Scotland and Australia, or Germany for that matter.

Tables/Figures 7.3 (a) to (c) also show that like the Finns, the majority of Indian children (six out of nine) also preferred to live in Australia rather then in India. Three of the 7 year olds (I8 and I9, both girls and I2, a boy) said that they simply liked living in Australia. In response to my question, "Why do you like living in Australia?" they replied:

I2: *... because it's better.*
I9: *It's nice here.*
I8: *... because I like this school. I like it here. I would like to go to India just to visit.*

I4, a 5 year old and the youngest of the children of Indian descent was less direct. However, her comments also implied that she preferred Australia to India: "I don't like the rubbish there ... papers on the street and it smelt bad." The other two Indian children had more varied explanations and I1's explanation, in particular, denotes the individuality of the children's thinking and reasoning. The following is an excerpt of a conversation I had with him following a recent visit to India. Our discussion moves along with I1 telling me quite passionately

I1: *I love Australia.*
MW: *Don't you like going to India then?*
I1: *No, because my Aunties pinch me all the time.*
MW: *Pinch you?*
I1: *Yes; all the time. On my cheeks.*

This scenario revealed how easy it was for adults to dominate and control interactions with young children without much regard as to how the child may see or feel from his/her perspective. In this case, I1 used this experience as a way of rationalising his desire not to live in his parents' country of birth. Given that I1 was only 5 years old, it may be easy to dismiss his rationale as a childish explanation. However, it was real for him and one cannot help but wonder about the long term implications of such experiences for his growing sense of ethnic identification. For, unlike the Scots and the Finns, all of the Indian children had been to India for a holiday. The comments made by those children who had visited their country of origin, indicated that their decisions about where they preferred to live (in particular, those who choose Australia) had been directly influenced by these visits, in one way or another.

I3, the oldest of the Indian children, also had a rather personal reason for not

wanting to live in India. He explained: "the main reason is because India is too crowded and they all speak in Indian". It was personal because he was one of the few Indian children who was brought up in a household where English was the main family language. As the youngest of three sons, and the only one to have been born in Australia, I3 was also regarded as an "Aussie" by the rest of the family. My discussions with the parents indicated that they were quite happy not to force I3 to learn Hindi and that they conversed freely in English at home. This pattern flowed through to I3's explanations on ethnic identification, as will be shown later.

There were, however, two other Indian children who said that they would prefer to live in India rather then in Australia. They were I5, a boy, and I6, a girl. Again, their rationale was based on recent experiences. I5 said that he preferred India because the visiting Indian cricket team had been victorious over Australia! Although this may seem as a transitory explanation and therefore of little value, caution was necessary, for at least two other parents had raised the issue of divided loyalties when watching televised cricket matches between India and Australia.

I6 (the Indian girl who said that she wanted to live in India) made these comments following an enjoyable visit there, where she had attended an Uncle's marriage celebrations. It was obvious that she had enjoyed herself at a time when she was having a rather unhappy time at school, because no one wanted to play with her. It is also possible that she was copying her mother's desire to return to India. That is, her mother had earlier explained to me that she missed her family 'back home' and had no relatives in Australia.

The similar familial explanation can also be applied in the case of S6. This girl wanted to go back to Scotland where she was born, mainly because "all my cousins are up there and I miss them". During my visits to her home, I noticed that there were numerous photographs of the family in Scotland displayed around the house. Also, long distance telephone calls to family in Scotland were not uncommon as S1 told me "mummy talks to her (S6's grandmother) at lot". In both these cases, the two girls, S6 and I6, were close to their mothers and spent more time with their mothers than with

their fathers. I6's father was doing his PhD at the time and spent most of his free time at the University. S6's mother did shift-work as a nurse and she chose the late night shifts deliberately in order to be there with the children when they got home from school. The children's comments also confirmed this closeness between the mothers and their daughters.

In contrast, of the Finnish children, only one girl (F3) openly said that she would prefer to live in Finland. Her direct comments suggest that she had not only thought about it but that there had also been discussion about this issue with other members of her family.

F3: *Well, I haven't seen much of my cousins for a while and I miss the snow. So I prefer Finland.*
MW: *But you can go to see the snow here.*
F3: *Oh, it takes a real long while. But in Finland you can just put your clothes and step outside and you're in the snow.*
MW: *So would you like to live there for ever then?*
F3: *Oh no. I'd like to live there of about 4 years and the I'll come back here for four years and then I'll go back and like that.*
She goes on to add the following: *They (her parents) like to go like me because we discussed it. And Mum said that when I get older we might do that.*

This was the only case where I found evidence of any parent - child discussion about this issue. However, from my conversations with both children and parents, it was clear that the majority of children had a good idea about what their parents preferred in terms of where they, ie the adults, wanted to live. The following excerpt from an interview with S4 supports this point more clearly:

S4: *I think mum would like to just go back for a holiday. But dad wants to stay. I wouldn't and K (his older sister) wouldn't.*
MW: *Why is that?*
S4: *Because they might just decide to stay!*

It is also important to keep in mind that tables/graphs 7.3 (a) to (c) indicate parents' preferences as seen through the children's eyes. I did not, however, ask all the parents to indicate their own preferences directly. The children were also not asked to give separate or additional explanations for their parents as it was felt that this would

be unrealistic, especially in the case of the 5 and 6 years olds.[4] Hence, in reading these results, it is important to keep in mind that there was a distinction between the children's views and the mothers' and fathers' views. That is, whilst the former were children's own views, the adults' preferences were obtained second-hand, from the children.

The results also showed that the children's views did not necessarily always match with their perceived views of their parents. Only eight children (accounting for 30 per cent of the sample) enjoyed total compatibility with both their parents on the issue of where they wanted to live. Except in the cases of S2 and F3, the families of the other six children agreed that they preferred to live in Australia. There were more children who agreed with their father's (eight children) choice than with their mother's (six children) choice about where they preferred to live. Those who shared similar views with their mothers (and not their fathers) were four Scots (S1, S4, S6 and S9), one Finnish child (F6) and two Indians (I5 and I6). In contrast, equal numbers of Scottish and Finnish children and four of the Indian children agreed with their fathers (S7, S5, F4, F9 and I1, I2, I3 and I8). What is perhaps significant is that although according to the children, all the fathers wanted to live in Australia, the majority of mothers (five of the eight) wanted to return to their country of origin.

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4 Note that those such as S4, an 8 year old, were however, able to provide (spontaneous) explanations about their parents' desire to live in one country or the other.

TABLES 7.4(a) - (c): **Comparison of the child's country of birth, self identification and visits to parent's homeland**

Table 7.4 (a): SCOTTISH CHILDREN

Child's Code	Country of Birth	Country of Identification	Visits to Scotland
S1	**Australia**	**Australia**	Yes
S2	**Australia**	**Australia**	Yes
S3	Scotland	Scotland	No
S4	Scotland	Both	Yes
S5	Scotland	Both	Yes
S6	Scotland	Scotland	No
S7	Scotland	Scotland	No
S8	Scotland	Scotland	No
S9	Scotland	Scotland	Yes

Table 7.4 (b): FINNISH CHILDREN

Child's Code	Country of Birth	Country of Identification	Visits to Finland
F1	**Australia**	Both	Yes
F2	**Australia**	Both	Yes
F3	**Australia**	Finland	No
F4	**Australia**	Both	No
F5	**Australia**	**Australia**	Yes
F6	**Australia**	Undecided	No
F7	**Australia**	Both	Yes
F8	**Australia**	**Australia**	Yes
F9	**Australia**	**Australia**	No

Table 7.4 (c): INDIAN CHILDREN

Child's Code	Country of Birth	Country of Identification	Visits to India
I1	India	Undecided	Yes
I2	**Australia**	**Australia**	Yes
I3	**Australia**	Undecided	Yes
I4	**Australia**	**Australia**	Yes
I5	India	India	Yes
I6	**Australia**	Both	Yes
I7	**Australia**	India	Yes
I8	India	India	Yes
I9	India	India	Yes

Figures 7.4 (a) - (c):

Comparison of the child's country of birth and country of identification

Figure 7.4 (a): SCOTTISH children

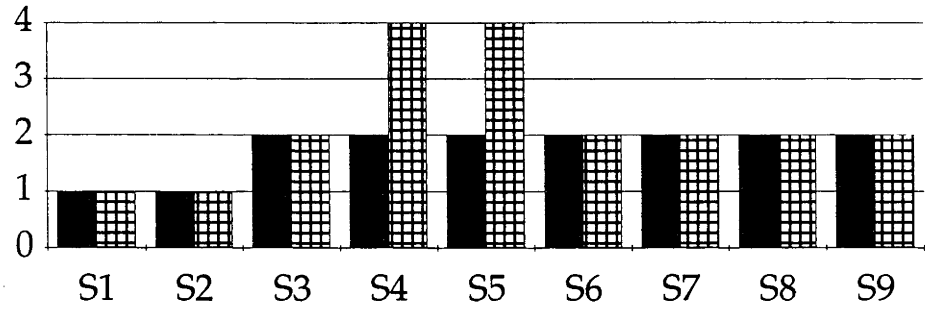


Figure 7.4 (b): FINNISH children

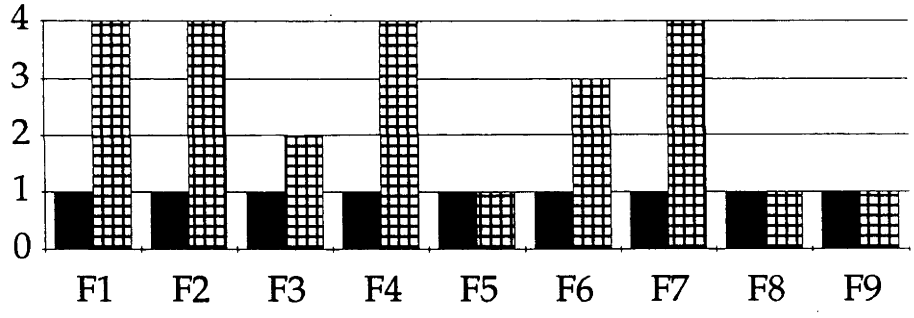
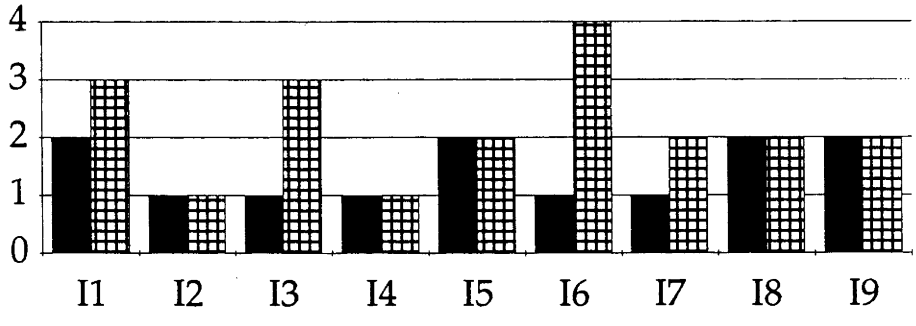


Figure 7.4 (c): INDIAN children



Notes: 1 = AUSTRALIA 2 = SCOTLAND/ FINLAND/ INDIA
3 = UNDECIDED 4 = BOTH

■ Country of BIRTH ▦ Country of IDENTIFICATION

However, four children (F1, F2, F8 and I7) were however unable to resolve their differences with their parents as their views did not match with either the mother or the father's views on where they would prefer to live. Of these, in F2's case his parents wanted to go back to live in Finland. This may reflect the family's plans at that time to go to Finland for an extended stay. Except for I7, the other three children (all Finns) preferred Australia to Finland. This view must be examined within the context of the fact that they were all born in Australia. That is, the child's country of birth may be seen as a strong indicator of where a child may prefer to live.

7.6 Country of Identification

In my attempt to see whether there was also a link between a child's country of birth and her/his ethnic identification, I invited the children to indicate their own preferences. That is, each child was asked directly "If someone asked you whether you were Australian or Scottish/Finnish/Indian, (as the case may be), what would you say"? The results were collated and graphed as shown in tables/figures 7.4 (a) to (c).

The data presented in tables/graphs 7.4 (a) to (c) show that from the children's perspective, they were divided between whether or not their country of birth and country of identification were compatible. As can be seen, in the majority of cases (fifteen children or 59 percent of the participants) birthplace and self identification were matched. Of these, only seven children saw themselves as being 'Australians'. They consisted of two Scots (S1 and S2), three Finns (F5, F8 and F9) and two Indians (I2 and I4). On the other hand, there were more children (nine out of the total sample of twenty-seven) who aligned themselves with their parents' countries of origin. They were five Scottish-born children (S3, S6, S7, S8 and S9), one Australian-born Finnish child (F3), one Australian born Indian child (I7) and three Indian-born children (I5, I8 and I9).

One could say that, given that about half of the participants were born in Australia (fifteen children representing 59 percent of the sample), that it would not be surprising that these children would all identify with Australia, rather then their parents' country of birth. Yet, this may not be as simple and straightforward as it seems. For

instance, firstly, not all the Australian-born children automatically linked their identification to their country of birth.

This can be illustrated using the explanations children gave when indicating their identification with either Australia or Scotland/Finland/India respectively. Overall, The children's explanations could be classified into four categories as shown in table 7.5.

Table 7.5:

Distribution of children according to their own perceptions of ethnic identification

Category I **BICULTURAL** S4, S5 F1, F2, F4, F7 I6 --- Sub-total = 7	Category IV **OTHER ORIENTED** F3 I7 --- Sub-total = 2
Category II **UNDECIDED** F6 I1, I3 --- Sub-total = 3	Category III **BIRTH ORIENTED** a) Australian born: S1, S2, F5, F8, F9, I2 and I4; b) Scots born: S3, S6, S7, S8 and S9; c) Indian-born: I5, I8 and I9. --- Sub-total = 15

As can be seen from table 7.5, they may be categorised as "birth oriented", as they based their identification on their own country of birth, irrespective of where their parents were born. Secondly, about half as many children (7) felt that they were both "Australian and Scottish" or "Australian and Finnish" or "Australian and Indian", at the same time. These children may be classified as bicultural as they chose to identify with two cultures (or countries). In contrast, three others, one Finn (F6) and two Indians (I1 and I3), could not decide which country to identify with. On the other hand, two children, F3 and I7, both indicated the desire to identify with their parents' country of birth. However, both of these children were however born in Australia. Since their identification did not match their own country of birth, they may be classified as 'Other

Oriented'. Each of these four categories will now be examined in more detail to clarify further how the children explained their views on ethnic identification.

7.6.1 Category I: Bicultural children

Of the seven children in this category, the majority were Australian born. Namely, F1, F2, F4, F7 and I6. The other two, S4 and S5 were both born in Scotland. Firstly, those who were Australian-born and saw themselves as being bicultural, usually resolved the dilemma by indicating that although they were born in Australia, they were both 'Australian and Finnish' (F1, F2, F4 and F7) or 'Australian and Indian' (I6), at the same time. Although both F1 and F4 were emphatic about their choice, neither gave any detailed comments.

However, my conversation with F2 on the other hand showed a slightly different version, as stated below:

MW: *Do you think you are Australian or Finnish?*
F2: *(hesitates and then says...) Australian.*
MW: *You don't seem too sure.*
F2: *My mum says I'm Aussie.*
MW: *Do you think you are an Aussie then?*
F2: *I don't know.*
MW: *Do you think you are Finnish perhaps?*
F2: *I think both.*

This was the same child who was not overly enthusiastic about his impending trip to Finland. Once again, the immediacy of this situation may have coloured his conversation with me, which took place a few weeks prior to the family's departure to Finland. This was to be F2's second visit to Finland. According to the parents, the child was not keen on going this time because the family was planning to stay in Finland for about a year or more, depending on the father's employment situation there. For F2 this meant going to school in Finland, for which his parents were trying to prepare him. Although the family generally spoke mainly Finnish at home, F2 was lately resistant by saying that he was going to reverse the situation by speaking only Australian when he gets to Finland! At 6 years of age, his behaviour is normative and understandable as he told me that he was going to miss his friends.

I6's comments were also similar in that her explanation also reflected her personal circumstances in relating to her peers at school. In answering my question 'Are you an Australian or an Indian' she replied: "Half and half. Because I was born in Australia and I'm brown and I like India". She went on to add that her peers think that she was an "Indian and they tease me". On the one hand, I6 seemed to be content with her Indian origins because at that time she was experiencing difficulties in gaining acceptance and recognition about her cultural heritage from her peers. Her comments to me indicated the struggle she was undergoing in seeking acceptance from both cultural perspectives. My conversations with her over the year had suggested that her unhappiness in not being able to find anyone to play, with time. It was not possible again to predict to what extent this child's future ethnic identification would be influenced through these experiences during childhood.

In contrast, S4's situation revealed a more optimistic picture. At the beginning of one conversation I had with him, he made the following comments:

> S4: *I don't think that I speak like a Scottish person. I've been here longer than I've been there. I've been here for six years and I was there for one year. So I'm Australian.*
> (Later that day, when I did the 'formal' interview with him and asked him about his identification with either Scotland or Australia, he said the following)
> *Scottish... yes.. because I come from there. But I'm mostly Australian really. So I could say I'm a 'squassie'!*

Whilst we both laughed at his suggestion together, it was easy to see that this boy was taking a rather imaginative, sanguine approach to his sense of identification with either Australia or Scotland. It presented an optimistic picture for the future, and indicated that children were capable of finding such solutions for themselves.

7.6.2 Category II: Undecided

The three children who were classified under Category II were all boys, and not one could make up his mind one way or the other about which country he wished to identify with. Two were of Indian descent (I1, and I3) and the other was of Finnish descent (F6). Also, two of these children (F6 and I3) were both Australian-born. I3's

comments below illustrated the situation of the "undecided" children well:

MW: *If someone asked you whether you were Australian or Indian, what would you say?*
I3: *Indian, I suppose... because my mum and dad are.*
MW: *Do you mean if, if your parents are Indian, that makes you an Indian too?*
I3: *Oh, well... I was really born in Australia. I'm a citizen of Australia. So I suppose you could say that I'm an Aussie. Yes, I would say that.*
MW: *You don't sound too sure.*
I3: *Only ... some people think ... say, I'm Indian. I don't know.*

He added that other people's assessments (meaning his peers) about his identity were based on his skin colour. This case again denotes how external forces, including comments of significant others (such as peers) and/or situational circumstances, can influence the direction of ethnic identification for a young child. However, although I3, who was 8 years old, was able to verbalise his dilemma, neither I1 (who was born in India, but did not wish to live there as shown earlier) nor F6 (who at the time had not visited Finland) were prepared to discuss their situation further. At 6 years of age, both were relatively younger then I3 and could not be drawn into further discussion over this. Suffice it to say that both these children were uncomfortable with the question in the first place.

7.6.3 Category III: Birth oriented

Depending on their country of birth, these children identified with one of four countries. Of the fifteen children who were classified under this category, S1, S2, F5, F8, F9, I2 and I4 were all Australian born; S3, S6, S7, S8 and S9 were Scottish born; and I5, I8 and I9 were Indian born. As can be seen, the majority of the children who participated in this study (or fifteen, accounting for just over half the sample) chose to identify with their respective country of birth depending on whether it was Australia (7 children), Scotland (5 children), or India (3 children). Since none of the Finnish children were born in Finland, none could be classified within this category.

Generally these children used words to the effect that "because I was born there"

in explaining their choice. However, some of these children felt that they needed to qualify their statements in answering the question: "If someone asked you whether you were Australian or Scottish/Finnish/Indian what would you say?". Their responses included:

S1: *Australian, because I was born in Australia. I'm a Australian person.*

S6: *Scottish, because I come from Scotland.*

I8: *Indian, because that's the truth.*

Other children drew attention to their family members in clarifying their own position. For example, S7 who regarded himself as being Scottish because of his birthright, insisted that his Australian-born sister "is Aussie" (sic) and not a Scot. Similarly, others such as S2, F5 and I4 compared themselves to their parents to highlight the difference:

F5: *I'll say I was born in Australia. (She goes on to say later) .... Mum and Dad are Finnish.*

I4: *Australian, because I'm just... I'm Australian. (when asked about her parents identification, she says...) They're Indian because they're born in India. I'm born in Melbourne. (sic)*

S2: *I'm Australian because I was born in Australia.*
MW: *Your parents were born in Scotland. Are they Australian or Scottish?*
S2: *They are Scottish, but I'm not.*

Such statements indicate that these children were developmentally not only capable of independent thought but that they were also able to make comparisons about themselves in relation to significant others such as parents, siblings and peers. While some were confident in standing alone in making a statement about themselves in relation to their familial cultural backgrounds, others were more content in accepting the status quo. The extent to which parents and class teachers influenced these decisions will be explored in chapter 8.

7.6.4 Category III: Other oriented

There were only two children who could be classified under this category (F3 and I7). Both were born in Australia, yet were quite firm in their desire to be identified with their parents' country of birth. As discussed previously, I7 went to great lengths to explain her situation by referring to various differences between Indians and Australians in terms of skin colour, hair colour and dress. She explained that because of these visible physical features, her peers saw her as an Indian. At the time of the interview she was content with this assessment, as her teacher and peers were accepting of her ethnic background. She spoke to the teacher often about her experiences in India and the teacher explained that I7 was well liked by her peers.

Likewise, during her conversations with me, F3 also described Finland in detail, identifying places she had been to and relatives she had met. She drew me a picture of her 'favourite things from Finland' which included a polar bear, fir tree, Santa Claus in Lapland and her grandmother. From these conversations I was convinced that this child had visited Finland. This claim was later denied by her mother! However, she was not surprised about the child's claims because, as she explained, "my daughter is very talkative, and her imagination ...., well, she gets carried away".

F3's mother went on to add however, that the child's desire to identify with Finland was genuine because "she loves Finland, and wants to live there", even though the parents felt that it was unlikely this would happen in the near future. Moreover, although the mother herself did not wish to live there because of the cold weather, the father, according to his wife "would love to go back". Both parents talked to the children (F3 and her older brother) about Finland and, hence, it was possible that F3's perceptions of self identification with Finland, her parents' country of birth, was influenced by these conversations. Moreover, she had also convinced the class teacher of her "trip to Finland" and she was known as the "little Finnish girl, F3" in her school. Not only was she popular and well liked by her peers, but also other teachers in the staff room knew immediately who I referred to when I mentioned my work at F3's school. The staff also referred to her as "the little Finnish girl".

Both of these children had thus created an identity for themselves based on their interactions and experiences with significant others at home and at school. Their situation signify the importance of positive social interactions which, in these two cases, gave the children a sense of pride in identifying with their parents' country of origin.

In sum, this chapter reinforces the interactive nature of ethnic identification, which is dependent on the setting and the people involved. It confirmed the findings of those such as Davey et al (1982), Denscombe, Szule, Patrick and Wood (1986) and Woods et al (1990) that friendships in primary schools reflected a high degree of ethnic integration; that children did not necessarily seek the company of others from their own ethnic background. Davey et al (1982: 89) on the other hand argued that children's friendships were more dependent on the size and composition of the ethnic population within the school. They concluded that "when the white children are in the majority in a particular school, there is a tendency for them to be less ethnocentric, but when either of the minority groups is highly represented in a school they tend to be more ethnocentric". (Davey et al, 1982: 89). Its relevance to the current study is difficult to assess because the ethnic composition of the nineteen schools included in this study was not carefully scrutinised.

Nevertheless, the results of this study are consistent with the view that ethnic identification may be continuously challenged and reconstructed through interactions with those such as parents, teachers and peers. To a certain degree the children were able to assert themselves or control the direction of self identification in relation to their ethnic background. Accordingly, the children who participated in this study were classified into four categories. By using these four categories in the next chapter, I will examine the interconnections between parents', teachers' and children's views of ethnic identification.

Chapter 8
COMPARING PARENTS' AND TEACHERS' ROLES

8.1 Introduction

"For the sociologist, to be human is to be socialised. To be socialised is to acquire roles" (MacKay, 1973: 28). In this study, it is the children who are acquiring roles from the already socialised adults. Yet, one cannot presume that the process of ethnic socialisation during early childhood is unidirectional. This proposition will be tested further in this chapter, by comparing parents' and teachers' roles in the way they relate knowledge about ethnic heritage to 5 to 8 year olds. This is the central theme of this thesis.

It has been proposed in this thesis that both parents and teachers may adopt roles which either promote or suppress the development of a young child's ethnic identification. That is, it was suggested in chapter 4 that the parent and teacher participants of this study can be categorised into four ideal types for the purpose of analysis, based on the roles they play in ethnic identification during early childhood (see figure 4.1). The findings of the home and school settings, presented in chapters 5 and 6, will now be expanded further and analysed using that typology. As discussed in those two chapters, parents' and teachers' roles in child ethnic identification was assessed by using a range of family and classroom variables. Again, it is important to keep in mind that, in describing the four ideal types of parents and teachers, their role perceptions were essentially based on an overview of their subjective, personal assessments as presented during their discussions with me.

The purpose of this chapter is threefold. Firstly, the views of the parents and the teachers each will be considered separately. This discussion will focus on the characteristics of parents and teachers according to the way they either promote or suppress child ethnic identification. Secondly, role perceptions of parents and teachers will be considered together to see the extent to which they are compatible. Finally, I will identify several major themes which persist and underpin parents' and teachers' approaches to ethnic identification.

8.2 Parents' Role Perceptions

During the past two decades, the demographic, social and economic environment within which children are reared in Australia has altered rapidly. Decreasing fertility rates[1] have meant smaller families, and increased labour force participation of mothers[2] has meant that the demand for child care outside the family has increased. Thus, one of the critical issues confronting contemporary parents is how to balance their family (unpaid) and work (paid) responsibilities. As Wolcott (1991: 12) writes

> *Levels of conflict and stress caused by combining work and family responsibilities have been linked to the attitudes, expectations and priorities of both partners (Wethington and Kessler 1989, Verbrugge 1986), and to the level of perceived and actual support in carrying out preferred roles (Potuchek 1988). Where there is minimum discrepancy between choice and necessity, women's stress is reduced.*

In assessing an individual child's particular circumstances, one needs therefore to take account of the wider social context, for this can influence the nature of child - parent relationships of those living in that society. The Scottish, Finnish and Indian families who participated in this study also live within the same, rapidly changing environment of contemporary Australian families. However, their situation is more complex, not only because of the changing character of their adopted country but also because of possible differences in lifestyle between living in Australia and in their country of origin. Thus, one needs to take account of this larger picture when considering the specific circumstances of migrant child - parent relationships relevant to child ethnicity.

For the purposes of analysis, it is assumed that characteristics of family structure and way of life (including diet and religious practices), use of the mother-tongue, social participation (such as contact with extended family and ethnic community organisations) and visits to the parents' country of origin, are all

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[1] For example, the fertility rate was 2.86 in 1970 compared with 1.85 in 1989 (Castles, 1991: 131).

[2] In 56 per cent of two parent families with dependent children, both parents are in the paid workforce, or put another way, about 45 per cent of married women with children aged 4 years or less are in the paid workforce (ABS Labour Force, 1990).

a child's ethnic identification. Table 8.1 presents the findings of how the children were classified according to their parents' approach to child ethnic identification.

Table 8.1:

Distribution of children according to parental ideal types

Type I **ACTIVE - SUPPRESS**	Type IV **ACTIVE - PROMOTE**
S1 = 1 F5 = 1 I9 = 1 --- Sub-total = 3	S6, S9 = 2 F1, F2, F8 = 3 I2, I4, I6 = 3 --- Sub-total = 8
Type II **PASSIVE - SUPPRESS**	Type III **PASSIVE - PROMOTE**
S2, S3, S5 = 3 F7 = 1 I1, I3 = 2 --- Sub-total = 6	S4, S7, S8 = 3 F3, F4, F6, F9 = 4 I5, I7, I8 = 3 --- Sub-total = 10

On the basis of the findings presented in table 8.1, the nature of parents' role in ethnic identification will now be discussed. The differences and similarities between Scottish, Finnish and Indian families will be examined more closely by taking each of the four categories of parents separately.

8.2.1 Type I Parents: ACTIVE - SUPPRESS

Type I parents were those who have little or no contact with other people from their country of origin. In other words, they chose to ignore old cultural customs and traditions regarding diet, dress and religion. They did not teach their children their mother-tongue and used English exclusively as the home language. They also did not consider it necessary to take their children to visit the parents' country of origin as a way of acquainting them with that country's culture and heritage.

It was rather difficult to identify and isolate parents who could be classified

easily under the Type I parent category as described above. It was possible that they, the parent participants, may have felt uncomfortable about taking a strong public stance which indicated that they have chosen to abandon their ethnic heritage by deliberately not passing on cultural knowledge and traditions to their children. This was illustrated in the following extract taken from a conversation with the mother of Scottish girl, S1:

MW: *Do you talk to the children about Scotland?*
Mother: *Oh yes, lots of things. (sic)*
MW: *What sort of things though?*
Mother: *Well, actually ... I'm a bit naughty because I've told them that Australia is much better than Scotland.*

Like this mother, though there may have been other parents who were somewhat embarrassed about their views on preferring Australia, Type I parents did however, speak frankly about their role in acting to prevent their children from identifying with the parents' own country of origin. Accordingly, there were three sets of Type I parents, consisting of one couple from each country of origin. Namely, the parents of the three 7 year old girls (S1, of Scottish descent; F5, of Finnish descent and I9, of Indian descent). As will be demonstrated, these parents were categorised as Type I because there was evidence to suggest that they actively suppressed their child's link with the parents' country of origin.

Firstly, in the case of the Finnish child F5, who was an only child, both her parents renounced their allegiance to Finland thus:

Father: *I'm not ashamed that my background is Finnish; but I'm not a Finn.*

Mother: *When Keki Roseburg won the Grand Prix it was great. But if it's the Olympics, I'd be cheering the Aussie team not the Finns. I'm funny like that.*

These two parents were quite clear in their belief that since their daughter was born in Australia, they considered her to be an Australian child and not a Finn. These parents also said that English was their main home language and when speaking with

the child in particular, the parents always spoke English. Although F5 understood and could speak a bit of Finnish, her mother explained that "I'm not strict about her speaking Finnish. We don't push her. We're glad that she can speak English and a bit of French[3] AND (her emphasis) Finnish". This child was taught the Finnish language primarily by her maternal grandparents who did not speak much English. However, contact between F5 and her grandparents was limited usually to Christmas or school holidays, as they lived in the Snowy Mountains, the journey by car taking almost three hours.

Similarly, the Indian child's (I9) parents also spoke to their daughter only in English. Their situation was slightly complicated because neither parent could use each other's own mother-tongue[4] with each other and the mother explained that she and her husband

> *... have only English in common. She (I9) has suffered. She hasn't learnt an Indian language. I say suffered because her grandparents, both sets, feel very strongly that she should know at least one Indian language; but we haven't taught her anything.*

However, since I9's grandparents all lived overseas, their ability to teach their granddaughter an Indian language on a regular basis was further curtailed. However, her parents like F5's parents, did not seem to be overly concerned about their child's inability to speak a native language spoken in the parents' country of origin. Contrary to popular belief that language acquisition was easier during early childhood, neither couple expressed any sense of urgency to teach their children a native language.

Similarly, as discussed in chapter 6, none of the Scots children spoke Gaelic. S1 the Scottish child's mother stated that their daughter had learnt "a few words like one to ten and cat, dog and man" from a tea-towel hanging in her bedroom. The mother also explained that the tea towel had been given by the child's grandmother

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[3] French was the community language taught at F5's Primary school.

[4] Born in two different regions in India, although the mother could speak Marathi and Hindi, the father spoke only Tamil.

when she visited Australia and "she (the grandmother) probably did" teach S1. This case again demonstrated the role played by grandparents. Even though the visit was short (six weeks), the grandmother's impact on the child persisted, an issue which was raised independently by both the child and the parents during their discussion with me.

There were two other variations between the two children F5 and I9. To begin with, whilst the Finnish child F5 was born in Australia, I9 was born in India and had also been back to India several times. However, the latter's parents emphasised that the sole purpose of such visits to India was merely to meet members of their immediate family who lived in various countries[5] and came to visit ageing grandparents living in India. The parents explained that

Father: *We go to India at a time when everyone is there; so we can all get together as a family.*

Mother: *Australia is not home and neither is India. I have nobody really in India. My parents are there, sure... but they are so old and they'll die soon. I have lots of cousins and relatives as such but I have just distanced myself from them because of the years we've been away*[6].

Again, the pull towards the parents' country of origin was created by familial connections, irrespective of a desire to acquaint the child with their ethnic heritage. It must also be noted that I9's family was relatively wealthy (in comparison to F5's or S1's parents) and could afford to go overseas at least once a year.

The parents of children F5 and I9 were also similar in that both their mothers were not in the paid workforce. Both women also did not cook traditional Finnish or Indian food on a daily basis (saying that it took up too much time) and both

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[5] The husband's parents for instance, lived in the USA.

[6] This family had also lived in Sweden and Norway and indicated that they would prefer to live in Europe to living in Australia.

considered their roles as mothers a priority. Both women also indicated that although their husbands may read or play with the children when they came home from work, child upbringing was largely left to the wives. As discussed in chapter 6, these women had voluntarily chosen to remain at home and were happy with their role as mother and home-maker. To quote I9's mother again,

> *I feel I must take care of them. I don't want to make a career because then I'll have a conflict between my house, children, husband and career. I don't want that.*

In contrast, both of S1's parents (the Scottish couple) were in full-time employment and the mother and father shared the household chores, like cooking, as much as possible. This couple was also slightly different from their Finnish and Indian counterparts in that their views about Scotland had changed markedly following their last visit to their country of birth. Most importantly, it had affirmed their desire to live in Australia rather than in Scotland. As S1's mother said

> *Until we went... I had no idea how bad things were. When you see what 'Maggie' has done to the country ... you know, she's crippling the country.*[7] *I thought, no, I don't want to live there (in Scotland) anymore.*

As can be seen, these parents' rejection of Scotland may be directly linked with an anti-British bias. Such comments also illustrate that, over time, it was possible even for adults to change their perceptions about their own ethnic identification and hence their approach to child socialisation. Moreover, it was evident that visits to the homeland and maintenance of contact with one's ethnic community have the potential to alter one's views and attitudes towards one's own ethnic background. This pattern was also evident in the children's comments following their visits overseas, as discussed in chapter 7.

8.2.2 Type II Parents: PASSIVE - SUPPRESS

Type II parents maintained some limited contact with other people from their country of origin but they did not actively seek such contact. Neither were they

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[7] She was referring to Margaret Thatcher, then the Prime Minister of Britain. The mother blamed Thatcher's policies for the economic downfall of Scotland.

interested in teaching their children traditional customs, for example, in terms of religious practices or in food preparation. Use of the parents' mother-tongue at home was usually confined to conversations with elders who did not speak English.

Accordingly, as shown in table 8.1, there were six couples, consisting of three Scots, two Indian and one of Finnish descent who could be classified as Type II parents. Like the Type I parents, these parents were also not keen to encourage their children to develop a strong sense of ethnic identification with their parents' country of origin. However, their approach may be described as less overt or more indirect than that of the Type I parents.

With the two Indian boys I1 and I3, there was a degree of incongruity between each child's father's and mother's views regarding the development of child ethnic identification. In both families, authority rested with the father, who the mother and children saw as the 'head of the family'. Thus, the father's view usually prevailed in family decision making and was therefore used for classification purposes in this study. Hence, where the mother's and father's views differed, it was the father's role perceptions regarding their child's ethnic identification which were used to classify these parents as Type II, the passive-suppress category.

The data collected showed that the mothers of both I1 and I3 had a close affinity with Hindu customs and religious faith. Both homes had Hindu shrines, which were largely used by the mothers, and their comments suggested that these women believed that their children need to be aware and learn these traditions which were part of their heritage. Moreover, such religious teaching was considered to be part of the mother's role. As I1's mother, who has a separate prayer-room in their home, said

> *They (the children) know what to do; you know, to bow their head with the prayers (sic). They see me doing it. Sometimes I get them to join. But, he (I1) ... can't sit for too long.*

I3's interest in religious education was similar, as discussed in chapter 6. Having attended a religious ceremony or a 'puja' organised by I3's mother at their home I

had observed that I3 had to be coaxed to attend this ceremony. From his behaviour it was obvious that he had little knowledge or interest in participating in the religious activities.

Both I1's and I3's fathers, in contrast to their wives, felt that there was little or no point in making the children follow 'old' customs or traditions. As I3's father put it: "Home is Australia. All other places I've lived in, is history. It's not necessary to say anything. It's the past; it's history". One of these children (I3) was born in Australia, and thus his father regarded this child as an Australian, affectionately referring to his son as "our Aussie".[8] Since these children's mothers expressed their views freely, the children (I1 and I3) were aware of the difference in opinion between their parents, reflected in their perceptions of the parents' preferred country of residence (see table/graphs 7.3).

Type II Scots parents' approach to ethnic identification also indicated similar sentiments. This can be shown by S2's mother's comments:

> *We're Scottish, but she (S2) is not. She's really Australian. She was born here and I don't think that she will ever really go back there to live. No, I don't think that will ever happen.*

These comments mirrored the parents' own perceptions about their self identification. For instance, S3's parents stated that "We see Australia as our home. At no time did we say that we wanted to go back". S5's family on the other hand did go back to Scotland, taking the children for a holiday. However, they returned rather disappointed about the state of the Scottish economy, feeling that they were "lucky to live in Australia".

Moreover, like these parents, the Finnish couple (F5's parents) also differentiated between their own sense of ethnic identification and that of their child. That is, although the Type II parents were happy to describe themselves as either Scottish, Finnish or Indian, this did not mean that they automatically believed that

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[8] They have two older sons, one born in India and the other in Zambia, where the family had lived prior to migrating to Australia.

their children were or could be the same. The data collected suggest that as far as these parent participants were concerned, parents and children within the same family could have different and separate ethnic identities. My basic aim however was to collect data on parental perceptions about their approach to child ethnicity and not necessarily about parents' personal views about their own sense of ethnic identification.

The Finnish couple, on the other hand, had migrated to Australia during their childhood and their only child (F7) was born in Australia. It became obvious that his mother's own negative experiences at an Australian school, discussed at length in chapter 6, have to a large extent influenced these parents' approach to ethnic identification, which was categorised as a Type II parent. She explained that she did not want her son to feel and look different from his school friends. She also added that, like the Type II Indian mothers described earlier, she too rarely cooked Finnish food for her family partly because she did not consider herself to be a 'good cook' able to prepare a traditional Finnish cuisine.

Overall, Type II parents were generally reluctant to reject outright their identification with their country of birth. As I3's father stated, "I know some Indians speak badly of India, but I don't want to". They compromised by stating that their child will ultimately have to make a decision about her/his own ethnic identification. As shown, the findings also suggest that for these parents, it was the child's and not the parents' country of birth which was more important to the parents as a means of determining (or at least explaining) their approach to child ethnic identification.

8.2.3 Type III Parents: PASSIVE - PROMOTE

Making the distinction between Type III parents and those of Type II was rather difficult. Both categories of parents were somewhat ambivalent about their roles in choosing either to suppress or promote their children's sense of identification with the parents' country of birth. The most important criterion which helped to separate the two was that all Type II parents disclosed that they preferred

to live in Australia as they were dissatisfied with the living conditions in their own country of birth. Type III parents were more evasive on that issue. Instead, they said that they were more interested (and quietly reassured) about the importance of passing their culture onto the next generation. They were happy to answer children's queries about their heritage but usually waited for the initiative to come from the children. Altogether, as shown in table 8.1, the majority of parents who participated in this study (that is, ten out of the twenty-seven couples), could be classified as Type III parents.

It appears that Type III parents were a lot more relaxed in allowing their children to speak either English or the parents' mother-tongue at home and neither was emphasised or pushed aside for the other. One possible explanation for this strategy was linked with the child's birth position in the family, that is, the majority of these children (consisting of S4, S8, F3, F6, I5, I7 and I8) were either the second-born or born subsequently. Accordingly, some parents explained that, over time with subsequent children, they had changed their parental behaviour and attitudes towards various aspects of child rearing including their approach to child ethnic identification. For example, F3's mother said that

> *With M, my eldest, I refused to speak to him unless he spoke Finnish. But with this one (F3) ... I don't force her. It's funny but the two of them (F3 and her brother) talk to each other in Finnish.*

However, although F6, the other second-born Finnish child, also usually spoke Finnish at home, his conversations with his two brothers were mainly in English. Likewise, all the Indian children who have Type III parents also usually spoke English with their siblings. Likewise, the following extract from a conversation with the Scottish child, S8's mother, also illustrated the role played by siblings in helping to promote young children's sense of ethnic identification:

MW: *Do you talk to the children about Scotland?*

Mother: *Oh yes. Actually ... it's mainly brought up by the older two, K and J, because they seem to remember a lot more: where we used to live, our dog, going for walks along the canal when it was frozen*

> *over... I think, they... it's really things which develop some idea of geography, because it's usually about where such-and-such a place was and what we did there.*

Such comments about children's ability to recall places they had visited were not unusual or uncommon (see Piaget et al, 1951). As discussed in chapter 7, even when the children were interviewed on their own, often their knowledge and awareness about their parents' country of origin were limited to being able to identify (and sometimes describe in detail) people and places that they had visited. This highlights the relevance of concrete experiences as well as the importance of shared memories when teaching children, especially about far away places and people from different countries and cultures (Derman-Sparks, 1991; Ramsey, 1987). Type III parents of Indian and Finnish descent did, however, usually speak to each other (that is, conversations between mother and father) in their native language. This was in part, either "out-of-habit" as I5's father said, or out of necessity. As F3's mother said "my English is not very good".

Type III parents all agreed that it was important for their children to learn about the parents' country of birth. The majority of the children who had Type III parents were also born in either Scotland or India (that is, S4, S7, S8, I5 and I8) and were similar to their respective parents. These parents felt that, by having a direct link or a tangible shared symbol such as birthplace, it made it easier for them to align child ethnic identification with their own country of birth. In this sense, these parents were doing the same as Type II parents as discussed earlier. They differ only because the birthplace of the majority of Type III parents and their children was compatible where, by contrast, for Type II parents it differed.

Type II parents were also keen to discuss their own interests in their heritage and they seemed to use this as a launching pad to teach the children about ethnic identification. As the Scottish boy, S4's father put it:

> *We (mother and father) both enjoy reading Burns' poetry and we often listen to Billy Connolly. But I don't want to push Scottish history or culture or whatever, too early on him (their son, S4 who was 8 years*

old at the time). Perhaps when he is a bit older, I'd like to tell him a lot more (about Scotland).

As can be seen, Type III parents, like Type II parents discussed earlier, were reluctant role players who pursued ethnic identification with their country of origin as a gradual process, which evolved over time.

8.2.4 Type IV Parents: ACTIVE - PROMOTE

Type IV parents were those who vigorously followed a policy of teaching their children whatever possible about their ethnic heritage. They initiated discussion, planned visits to take the children to the parents' country of origin, read stories and encouraged children to write to grandparents in the parents' mother-tongue. As discussed in chapter 6, some of the Finnish families in particular, insisted that the children spoke only Finnish at home. These parents believed that, by actively providing children with knowledge about their cultural background, it would help to stimulate and bolster the children's interest in the family's ethnic heritage. Accordingly, as indicated in table 8.1, there were eight couples who were categorised as Type IV parents.

The majority of Type IV parents clearly stated that they wanted their children not only to learn about their parents' country of birth but also have a sense of pride in their ethnic heritage. This is clearly illustrated in the following extracts taken from my interviews with these parents:

I4's mother: *I don't want them to feel that ... they're coming from one land and must follow those rules (sic). They must know about India... so that they can take pride, that's their roots. They must know it, but they are more Australian than we can think about them.*

S9's mother: *I tell them about their Scottishness. I'm proud of being a Scot. Well, a lot of people say to me why don't you change and speak like Australians. But, I'm tied to my heritage and why should I change?*

F1's mother: *I know my children are going to be Australian. I don't try to bring them up as Finns because I know they were born here and are going to live here. But, I would be very happy if my children like to know anything about their Finnish inheritance. I'm proud to be Finnish. So we're pretty keen to tell them about Finland. M's (the husband) parents*[9] *also talk about Finland quite a lot with them and they (the children) understand it*[10].

It was necessary to quote these mothers in full, in order to be able to capture the meaning and sentiments as expressed by the participants themselves. Their comments indicate that, although all Type IV parents pursued a policy of actively promoting child ethnic identification with the parents' country of birth, they were also pragmatic. That is, they were aware that their children's loyalties may be shaped not only by parents, but also by wider social circumstances in Australia. So for instance, regarding the parents of I4, the Indian child, although the parents spoke mostly Hindi to each other, the children, according to the father, spoke Hindi "more as showing off to strangers". Yet these parents were different from the other three categories of parents because of their strong personal desire and commitment to acquaint their children with their ethnic heritage.

Taken at face value, one could commend the efforts of Type IV parents in fostering understanding and pride in the children's ethnic heritage. However, one must also examine if there were any negative consequences resulting from the parents' active approach. That is, ethnic identification is a two-way interactive process, and can in turn affect the nature of parent - child relationships within a family. This was well illustrated in the following conversation I had with the

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[9] These are F1's paternal grandparents who lived close by in Canberra. The children visited them at least twice a month or on the weekends when possible.

[10] The mother went onto explain that these grandparents spoke in Finnish to the children, which the children spoke fluently.

mother of the Scottish girl, S6:

Mother: *I want to go back because I've been so home-sick. It comes and goes. I'm ok now but ... two or three weeks ago, I was really down. So we've decided to go back home.*

MW: *How do the children feel about this?*

Mother: *I suppose it's probably wrong because I've brain-washed them ... S6. I mean, she just agrees with me and says that she wants to go back to Scotland. You see, we've got these photos of her cousins. I show these to her and she says 'mum, we haven't got any cousins here'. P, (S6's older brother) is not the same. He doesn't want to go. He says he's going to run away.*

MW: *Yes, S6 did tell me that he didn't want to go.*

Mother: *I think I'm being selfish because I think it's better over here for the kids. Sometimes I think I wouldn't care if we didn't have any money as long as I was home (in Scotland).*

MW: *What about K (her husband)?*

Mother: *No, he doesn't really want to go. We've been here for four years now and I ... don't miss the place, but it's my family. We're very close. I miss them.*

As can be seen from this lengthy excerpt, for S6's mother, having migrated to Australia, deciding to return permanently to Scotland was not easy. The decision affected the whole family. It appears that whilst the women (the mother and S6, the daughter) wanted to return, the men (the husband and the son) were reluctant to go. Feelings of guilt (in putting her personal needs before those of her children and husband) compounded the mother's emotional trauma. This mother too was aware, like F1's mother quoted earlier, of the potential for conflict between parents and children in attempting to impose an identity which the children were not prepared or

willing to accept. In this case, whether S6's family remained in Australia or not was perhaps less important when one considers the struggle the family has endured in reaching a decision to return to Scotland. The complexity of the situation, makes it nearly impossible to predict the long term effects on S6's sense of ethnic identification with either Scotland or Australia.[11]

It can also be shown that for Type IV parents, maintaining a link with the extended family (irrespective of whether they lived in Australia or overseas) was integral to promoting child ethnic identification. Taking their children to visit their parents' homelands[12] was an important means of raising children's awareness and interest in their family background and culture. So much so that F2's parents, one of the Type IV parents, had decided to go and live in Finland at least for a year. They explained their decision thus:

Father: *We went there two years ago and since then we've been thinking about going back to live there. It's my home.*[13]

Mother: *A lot depends on ... if R (her husband) can get a job. We'll try for a year. It'll be good for F2 to go to school in Finland. It'll be different .... .*

Having migrated to Australia as teenagers, F2's mother and father were both excited about returning to Finland to live in Europe again. They also believed that going back to their homeland would benefit their two children in getting to know Finland better. They were also pragmatic in that, if the resettlement did not work out (for example, if the husband could not find employment), they would return to Australia and, in this sense, Australia remained their base.

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[11] At our last meeting, I was informed that they were delaying their plans to return to Scotland as the mother was pregnant and they wanted the child to be born in Australia. The children's maternal grandmother was coming to Australia to be there during the confinement.

[12] As shown in table 1.1 of the eight children who have Type IV parents, only S6 and S9 were not born in Australia.

[13] Note that one of the father's brothers has recently resettled in Finland successfully and one of the mother's sister's family was also making plans to return to Finland to live.

In another family, I2's mother stated: "We try to go to India at least every year so the children meet the family, get to know them. There's more feelings between the relations. It's important and we're lucky we can afford to do it". The issue of travel costs was however an important consideration raised by several other parents (including those of S9 and I6), who said that they would make more trips to their country of birth if they could afford it. Many of the Type IV parents (such as F1's parents) also stated that it is important to ensure that children have "happy memories" about their country of origin, which they all referred to as "home". S9's mother's comments reinforce this point thus: "I still call Scotland home. I went HOME (her emphasis) for a holiday. I mean, when you're born in a place, it's always home, and home is where your heart is".

Extensive or regular use of the mother-tongue at home was another method adopted by Type IV parents to promote their children's ethnic identification with the parents' country of origin. In this regard, the families of the Finnish children F1, F2 and F8 were unique in that Finnish was used exclusively in all of these homes. Their parents also encouraged the children to read and write in Finnish by reading traditional children's stories to them and getting them to write notes or cards to grandparents who lived overseas. Consequently, these three children were proficient Finnish speakers familiar with the Finnish alphabet and able to read and write at least a few words.

As discussed in chapter 6, there was evidence to suggest that both parents and grandparents of the Finnish children, F1 and F2, worked closely together to stimulate each child's interest and understanding of Finnish culture. The same close relationship between the three generations to promote child ethnicity was not observed in any of the other families. The parents of S9 and I2 did however refer to the importance of children's relationships with their grandparents in at least kindling the children's interest in their parents' country of origin.

Type IV parents were also unique to some extent in that in these families the Finnish and Indian mothers said that they happily prepared traditional food from

their country of origin on a daily basis. Note that two of these women, the mothers of F8 and I6, were both in full-time paid employment. Yet, as one of them, I6's mother, said

> *We eat mainly vegetarian. The way we live here ... it's almost the same because we haven't changed that much. Just little things ... we don't sit on the floor ... eating and sharing food. They (the children) accept these when we go there (to India). They have no choice but they enjoy it.*

Hence, it could be said that these children may not get an opportunity to practise certain cultural practices regularly in Australia, primarily due to the absence of communal pressure usually present when one lives within one's own ethnic community. It was nevertheless considered important to raise the children's awareness of such practices so that they understood and were better prepared to practise them on their visits to their parents' homeland.

There was also a different atmosphere in the homes of the Type IV parents. These homes contained more than the odd piece or artefact from Scotland, Finland or India. For instance, the homes of the three Finnish children, F1, F2 and F8, each had an outdoor (but enclosed) sauna and polished wooden floors. These parents informed me that such features were a characteristic of the houses in Finland, another reminder of their homeland. Similarly, there were Indian rugs and a Hindu shrine in each of the homes of the three Indian children, I2, I4 and I6. The parents were almost always found wearing traditional Indian clothes[14] around the house. The mothers of I2 and I4 also mentioned that their children wore the traditional dress to Indians' weddings. Likewise, S6's mother said that her daughter enjoyed wearing the tartan skirts when going out to visit friends and that these had been sent by the child's grandmother. The collection of family photographs hanging on the walls in the two Scots children's homes were also evident of Scot's belief in maintaining close family ties. Thus, the setting or the design of the home environment may be seen as another way of effectively promoting child ethnic identification, a strategy frequently adopted by the Type IV parents in this study.

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[14] The mothers wore 'salwa kamis' and the fathers wore kurtha pyjamas.

8.3 Teachers' Role Perceptions

Locating an ethnically homogeneous classroom in a capital city in Australia would be a near impossible task today. Immigrant children, or children of immigrant settlers, would bring to the classroom a wealth of knowledge that is unique to their ethnic background. Such knowledge would include "... concepts of family, morality, rules, sex roles, dress and safety, all of which play a part in school adjustment and success, and vary from culture to culture" (DiMartino, 1989: 217). What role teachers adopt in utilising this knowledge base, either to promote or suppress a child's ethnic identification with her/his parents' country of origin, is the main focus of this next section.

In chapter 5, characteristics applicable to both the private and public dimensions of teachers' work (Connell, 1983) were explored with the teacher participants of this study. It was argued in chapter 5 that the individual teacher's own attitudes and values about cultural diversity and multiculturalism influenced her approach to child ethnicity. As foreshadowed in chapter 4, using the teachers' perceptions of their approach to ethnic identification, the teacher participants of this study were categorised into four ideal types. The results are presented in table 8.2.

Table 8.2:

Distribution of the children according to TEACHER ideal types

Type I **ACTIVE - SUPPRESS**		Type IV **ACTIVE - PROMOTE**	
S2, S5	= 2*	S4	= 1
F4, F8	= 2	F1	= 1
I3	= 1	I2, I8	= 2
Sub-total	= 5	Sub-total	= 4
Type II **PASSIVE - SUPPRESS**		Type III **PASSIVE - PROMOTE**	
S8, S9	= 2	S1, S3, S6, S7	= 4*
F5, F7	= 2	F2, F3, F6, F9	= 4
I1, I9	= 2	I4, I5, I6, I7	= 4
Sub-total	= 6	Sub-total	= 12

Note: The ' * ' indicates that one teacher taught two children each, in the following cases: S2 and S5 and S3 and S6.

Table 8.2 shows that the majority of teachers who participated in this study were reticent about either promoting or suppressing child ethnic identification actively. These eighteen teachers (accounting for 72 per cent of all the teachers) were reserved and adopted a passive approach to their role. In contrast, the balance, who worked with a total of nine of the study children, (and accounting for one third of the child sample) saw their role as being more active and direct. Characteristics of the four categories of teachers as identified in table 8.2 will be discussed separately to show how they differed in their role perceptions regarding child ethnicity.

8.3.1 Type I Teachers: ACTIVE - SUPPRESS

Type I teachers were those who have had limited teaching experience with immigrant children. They also have had little or no training in multicultural education practices. They maintained limited contact with parents and demonstrated that they were either unaware or misinformed about the children's cultural backgrounds. They claimed that knowing a child's ethnicity was not relevant to their teaching or interactions with a child.

There were four teachers who could be classified as Type I. Namely, the teacher who taught S2 and S4, the two Scottish children,[15] and three teachers who taught each of the Finnish children F4 and F8, and the Indian boy I3. Our first meeting usually gave me my first clue about the teacher's approach to child ethnic identification. These four teachers, who were categorised as Type I, stated that they had not been aware of the study children's ethnic background prior to being introduced to me. For example, when asked "How did you find out about F8's link with Finland?", her teacher replied "Probably the first time would have been when I first met you". Two of the Type I teachers were more specific in that they both emphasised the physically observable features of a child's potential ethnic identity. As the teacher, of F8, the Finnish child, said "I'm not aware of ... any cultural features, except for the physical characteristics" which she had earlier described as

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[15] These two children were taught by one teacher as they were in the same classroom, at the same school.

"I imagine that they're (the Finns) very, very fair skinned and fair haired". Similarly, to quote I3's teacher again,

> *I don't know his link with India. I wouldn't know whether he is a Pakistani or Indian or what ever .... I mean, his appearance tells me he's not, you know, European.*

As can be seen, these teachers' descriptions of the children's ethnicity were closely aligned with popular stereotypical images of Finns and Indians respectively. Perhaps more importantly, Type I teachers were not interested at any rate to find out more about children's home backgrounds. As one of them, I3's teacher explained "I mean, I don't care where they come from and I don't want to know what their nationality is".

This teacher was not alone in making such comments. She and other Type I teachers justified their stance in a number of ways. Firstly, three of the Type I teachers (namely, those who taught the children F4, F8 and I3) said that the children themselves were not interested in talking about their ethnicity and therefore it should not be raised by the teachers. The following comments by I3, the Indian boy's teacher, illustrated this view:

> *He's not cultural. He's very interested in cricket and chess. If he was a slow learner, I wouldn't do anything on culture because he doesn't mention it. I'd do it on cricket or chess. I mean, he doesn't go for that.... sort of cultural things. He just doesn't talk about it.*

These comments also reflected another reason why Type I teachers were not keen to discuss child ethnicity in the classroom. These four teachers assumed that unless ethnicity was linked with 'problem children' it should not be raised. For instance, the teacher of the Scottish children S2 and S5 asserted that child ethnicity was not relevant for her "... not unless it comes up. I mean there is this Japanese girl... she's very clever and has no problems at all". Such explanations, in part, reflect teacher prejudice built on ethnic stereotypes and, in part, indicative of the assimilationists' belief that the migrant child was a problem (see chapter 5). It therefore reinforced the deficit theory, that 'something was wrong with the child' not the system, which in this case was the school. As discussed in chapter 5, F8, the Finnish girl's teacher's view on cultural diversity indicated an elaboration or an

expansion of this view; she freely admitted that her previous experience with migrant children made her feel "prejudiced against Turkish boys" and that the Asians were her "favourites" because the latter were more compliant and academically more ambitious. In this case, compatibility with the teacher's values ensured a positive response towards children from Asian backgrounds.

Collectively, Type I teachers also have little faith in multicultural education policies and practices. Three of the four (that is, all except I3's teacher) worked in schools which did not have a policy on multiculturalism and staff were under no pressure to incorporate multiculturalism into classroom activities. These teachers' personal views were also coloured by misconceptions and misgivings about the value or workability of multiculturalism, as can be seen from the following comments:

I3's teacher: *Multiculturalism isn't working. There are too many negative things. Not everyone is trying to assimilate; so all these little communities are set up. I mean because you have a suburb full of this nationality and a suburb full of that...it's too factional.*

F8's teacher: *These kids are not aware of other cultures because they don't live in a very active mix... culturally diverse communities like Sydney or Melbourne.*

Their comments may seem contradictory because having either too many or too few ethnically diverse children could be problematical. In effect their views represent two shades of the same misconception: that multicultural education applies to some and not to others. On the one hand, these teachers defended their anti-multicultural stance by stating (albeit incorrectly) that the community in which these children lived was not culturally diverse (refer chapter 1). On the other hand, Type I teachers also assumed that unless there were large numbers of children in the same classroom who were visibly different, teacher attention to ethnic diversity was not justified. It is however, a misconception to presume that ethnicity is a characteristic attributable to those who were visibly different (refer chapter 5). As discussed earlier, nearly one quarter of the ACT's population was born overseas. The

ACTSA, the central body which determined policies for the ACT government schools advocated a holistic approach, based on the belief that multiculturalism must pervade across all aspects of the school. Yet, Type I teachers' comments not only indicated their reluctance to adhere to government policy but also their ignorance about the demographic characteristics of the community in which they lived.

The majority of Type I teachers (that is, those who taught the children S2, S5, F8 and I3) added that they were constrained also by time and curriculum restrictions imposed by the school timetable. As one of them, the Finnish child, F8's teacher said "No, there really hasn't been any opportunity to do anything partly because of the composition of the class and partly because of the prescribed curriculum". ACTSA's policies on school governance explicitly stated that parent involvement was central to decision making within school. Yet Type I teachers saw parent participation in the classroom as more of a hindrance than a help. Contact with the study children's parents were limited to the annual teacher - parent meetings. Of these, there had been no contact at all between the teacher and S2's and F4's parents. The cumulative effect of the above factors meant that ethnic identification was suppressed in Type I teachers' classrooms.

8.3.2 Type II Teachers: PASSIVE - SUPPRESS

Type II teachers were those who have some awareness about the multicultural nature of Australian society. However, they were unwilling actively to seek information or acknowledge cultural diversity in their classrooms. They were unable to extend (at least) the children's spontaneous comments about their own ethnic backgrounds. Nor did they do anything (such as, attend in-services on multicultural education) to increase their own awareness and knowledge about diverse cultures.

The majority of the Type II teachers had some awareness about the children's link with their parents' country of birth prior to my first visit. In the case of the children S8, S9, F7, I1 and I9, their teachers stated that during informal conversations, either the child or the parents had referred to their ethnicity when

speaking with the teacher. Some teachers added that my project had made them more aware of certain characteristics which they had hitherto either not noticed or ignored. In this regards, three teachers mentioned Scottish and Finnish children's accents. For example, the teacher of S9, the Scottish boy, said "I didn't realise how broad his accent was ... not until you came".

At least three of the Type II teachers also intimated that, at the age of 7 years, children were developmentally too young to understand cultural diversity. For example, F5, the Finnish boy's teacher said that "... for this class, extending other cultures wouldn't have been relevant unless the children were interested. You know, at the early age of 7, they're not into that" (sic). Yet, as discussed in chapter 4, there is extensive research evidence to show that this was a misconception. More importantly, it is of concern that trained teachers, are either unaware or had not updated their understanding of child development theory and research.

Some Type II teachers were prepared to go further in openly acknowledging their ignorance. As S9's teacher said

> *... if you hadn't come to me about S9, I wouldn't have known about Scotland, or anything like that. I think privately, this is a terrible misconception on my part. I tend to think of Scotland ... well that's just like England, which is like Australia. It's one of those things.*

Perhaps more important, unlike the Type I teachers, these teachers were usually prepared at least to acknowledge the existence of cultural diversity within their classrooms and within the community at large. However, they too were not keen to pursue ethnic identification any further. There was also a general perception among Type II teachers that "some parents don't want you to highlight the fact that their children come from another country" (S9's teacher).

Such a view was partially based on the teachers' previous experiences with particular immigrant families. The two teachers who taught the children S9 and F7, for instance, referred to past experiences where they had clashed with parents over attracting attention to a child's cultural background. Consequently, they felt, as explained by S9's teacher that ethnic identification was "... best left alone. You

have to be so careful. I can see that if I focus on his culture (referring to a child from Lebanon) too much, it could have negative repercussions".

This scenario also serves to illustrate the importance of parent - teacher contact and co-operation in determining the direction of a teacher's approach to child ethnicity. As discussed in chapter 5, it appears that Type II teachers believed that the passage of culture from one generation to the next was more of a parent responsibility. For example, to quote S9's teacher again, she said

> *I certainly wouldn't have the understanding of the child's background that parents have and could make it all very distorted. Parents have a much better understanding about what it's all about.*

Such statements again raised the issue of the adult's role (both teachers and parents) in controlling the exchange of information. Type II teachers (like the majority of Type I teachers) were also located in traditional schools and their teaching styles could be described as traditional. As discussed in chapter 5, the main focus of the curriculum in such classrooms was the pursuit of literacy and numeracy, and the teacher essentially dominated classroom interactions. In setting the curriculum, Type II teachers therefore determined what was and was not important for child ethnicity.

8.3.3 Type III Teachers: PASSIVE - PROMOTE

The difference between these teachers and those of Type II, was marginal. These teachers, unlike those above were interested in upholding cultural diversity in the classroom. However, they too waited for the children to raise the issues. Type III teachers thus did little to initiate discussion about ethnicity or provide planned opportunities which would extend children's awareness and understanding about various cultures, theirs and others.

Type III teachers rationalised their relatively inactive role on the grounds that ethnicity was not important unless it affected the child's development and welfare, as illustrated by the Scottish child's (S1) teacher's comments:

> *She's not alone, in being ... non-Australian if you like. I mean, I see her as an Australian because she's as Australian as I would classify*

> *myself*[16] *... but, it doesn't play an important role, a big role for me. If it affects the child's learning or their socialisation or if they're unhappy or something, it's probably more appropriate to look at it... If it's not affecting how I relate to the children, then it's not relevant.*

Another Type III teacher explained her position in a similar way by relating a situation regarding F9, who had difficulty with reading:

> *There's been a huge difference in his reading. I don't know when it was but I saw his mother and explained that I felt if he was able to read more, if he could read to someone at home, it might help.*

This teacher went on to say that the child started taking home library books more regularly and the parents sent comments back to indicate that they had either read or listened to the child reading these books. The child had started to enjoy reading and his teacher added that "You could see it's written all over his face: 'I love reading'. Yes, I think it made a big difference. They took notice of what I asked them to do".

The above scenario helps to illustrate a general belief among Type III teachers: that is, when problems arose, they were prepared to work with the child's parents to resolve these issues. Yet, as discussed in chapter 5, these teachers were reticent about approaching parents for any general assistance in the classroom as they felt that it was an encroachment on the families, because in most families both parents were in paid employment. As explained by I6's teacher: "It's the times; it's very hard. Most families can't manage without two incomes to pay off the mortgage". In reality, however, this applied only to six of the study children taught by the Type III teachers. Namely, the children S1, S3, S6, I4, I5 and I6, whose parents (both mother and father in each case) were in paid employment. In the remaining cases, although I4's mother was actively involved in the activities of her daughter's classroom, the other mothers who were unemployed were unwilling or unable to participate, primarily because of the presence of a younger child. This again illustrates teachers ignorance about children's family contexts. The extent to

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[16] Note that whilst this child, S1 was born in Scotland, this teacher was born in Australia. She also told me that she had "some Scottish blood somewhere down the line".

which class size and academic demands of their roles imposed restrictions on getting to know the child within the family context is difficult to verify.

As discussed in chapter 5, the majority of the Type III teachers also believed that discussions about ethnic identification between teachers and children ought to be initiated by the children themselves (and not the teacher), one way or another. There was one exception among these teachers. The following comments made by the Scottish children's (S6 and S3) teacher suggest that unless the teacher presented the opportunity, the children would be reluctant to discuss cultural diversity:

> *I found last year ... that a lot more of that sort of thing (about ethnic background) came out when we were discussing particular countries of origin. The children were much more willing to say 'oh yes, there's this and that' and 'we do this and that'. But just in the general classroom situation, they don't seem to do it at all.*

These comments show the importance of making the information relevant to the children and appropriate to their developmental level. Type III teachers were, nevertheless, at least prepared to learn from previous experience. In addition, at least three teachers (namely, the teachers of children F6, S7 and I5) who had all trained at a teacher's college about twelve years ago, said that they have had no training at all on multicultural education and that the ACTSA consultants should come to the schools to provide adequate in-service. As one of them (the Finnish child, F6's teacher) said

> *I'd like to learn. Perhaps I don't use what those children have got enough. The pressure on those kids to be Australian is so much ... I guess ... we don't ... we don't give them enough opportunity for them to express or talk about their own culture.*

In making this statement, this teacher was also pointing out the role played by the child's peers in either promoting or suppressing ethnic identification.

Other teachers (such as those who taught the children I7, I6, and F3) also emphasised the importance of peers but they all failed to clarify the role of the teacher in intervening to relieve feelings of discomfort arising through peer pressure. Type III teachers' lack of action could be interpreted as promoting conformity to the mainstream culture, at least indirectly. Their experience in the field made them

more aware of child-to-child interactions, particularly in being able to empathise with the drawbacks of peer pressure on immigrant children, who felt compelled to conform in order to gain friends and/or acceptance at school. Yet, their training has not adequately prepared them to be able to teach children "to resist stereotyping and discriminatory behaviour" (Derman-Sparks, 1991: 69). Type III teachers did not actively plan, stimulate, and lead positive discussions about cultural diversity with young children.

8.3.4 Type IV Teachers: ACTIVE - PROMOTE

Type IV teachers were relatively more experienced, and have had some training on multicultural education. They provided planned learning opportunities to discuss ethnic diversity, facilitated parent participation in the classroom and encouraged children to share information about their own ethnic backgrounds with their peers.

Type IV teachers all displayed a strong commitment to promoting multicultural education. As discussed in chapter 5, these were the teachers whose classrooms reflected their interest and commitment to multiculturalism. One case stands out in my mind. In I8's classroom, there were signs written in Spanish (the community language offered at the school) with simple instructions and labels on items of furniture. The class teacher attended the Spanish classes, remarking jokingly "so I know what goes on there!" She also added more seriously "I get to practise my Spanish too. Then we can talk in Spanish back here". Thus, her attendance at the Spanish classes, held twice a week, and taken by a bilingual teacher, served a dual purpose from the teacher's point of view. This was very unusual as most regular class teachers used this time as a free period. It was also unusual that the class teacher should converse with the children in Spanish during regular classroom activities. However, in this case, though neither the teacher nor the children were proficient Spanish speakers, it was a practice enjoyed by both. The fact that there were no native Spanish speakers in this classroom was also irrelevant.

Type IV teachers also made use of incidental or spontaneous opportunities to enhance children's awareness of cultural diversity. During 'newstime' for instance, children brought numerous artefacts from home to 'show-and-tell'. In the case of F1 for instance, such items included a birthday card received from grandma in Finland which contained Finnish writing. This generated much interest, and it was used by the teacher to extend children's awareness of other cultures. The teacher got F1 to write 'happy birthday' in Finnish on the blackboard and the other children who spoke a second language were asked to add to the list.

Such behaviour typical of Type IV teachers could be explained in terms of their past experience and training. Three of the Type IV teachers had taught in multi-ethnic schools in England and the other (the teacher of the Finnish child, F1) had lived and worked in Canada for two years. Consequently, these teachers explained that they were well disposed to recognising individual children's ethnic differences and utilising this knowledge in their classroom planning. These four teachers were also actively involved in school based activities which promoted multicultural education, such as the development of school based multicultural policy documents (teachers of S4, F1, and I8) and preparation of submissions to attract MEAC funding (see chapter 5) for the school (teachers of I8 and I2).

Unlike the other three categories of teachers in the study, Type IV teachers were able to specify the cultural backgrounds of the majority of children in their classrooms with relative ease. Moreover, they were able to indicate children's specific needs and interests by linking it with their family backgrounds. For example, I2, the Indian boy's teacher said

> *We touch on cultural background because it's interesting. H, told us quite a lot about Singapore when he first came.. Of course I2 told us various things about India... E, the little Greek girl goes to Greek school and I encourage that. Because I think that it's really important that children do keep an interest in their cultural background (sic).*

Unlike the other three types of teachers, Type IV teachers were able therefore to cater to individual differences in a positive way. As discussed in chapter 5, this was a deliberate strategy to involve the children as active participants in classroom

discussions.

8.4 Putting parents and teachers together

The primary aim of this thesis is to understand to the extent to which there was congruity between parents' and teachers' role behaviour regarding child ethnic identification. It is possible that a child's parents and teachers, the two agents responsible for inducting her/him into society, may either agree or disagree with each other's approach to socialisation in general, and ethnic identification in particular. The analysis of this relationship is critical in understanding the direction of ethnic identification during early childhood. For this purpose, the data presented in tables 8.1 and 8.2 were combined. The outcomes of this exercise are presented first as tables and figures 8.3 (a) to 8.3 (c).

These three sets of tables and figures, help to identify differences and similarities between parents and teachers according to individual children's ethnic origins as Scots, Finns and Indians. The graphs (figures 8.3 (a) to (c)) make it easier to visualise the extent of compatibility between parents and teachers. For instance, where the heights of the parents and teacher columns are equal, there is total compatibility between parents and teachers. As can be seen there were ten such cases (consisting of one Scottish child, five Finnish and four Indian children) where parents' and teachers' approach to ethnic identification matched. Hence, it could be said that there were more Finnish and Indian children than Scottish children whose parents and teachers both followed the same approach to child ethnicity. Moreover, in the majority of these cases (that is six of the ten) parents and teachers were categorised as Type III: Passive - Promote. These were adults who were described as being less impassioned and more quiescent, accommodating a child's interest in her/his culture without much fervour or fuss (refer chapter 4).

Tables 8.3 (a) - (c): **Comparison of parents' and teachers role perceptions**

Table 8.3 (a): SCOTTISH children's parents and teachers

CHILD CODE	PARENTS' ROLE	TEACHER'S ROLE
S1	Active - Suppress	Passive - Promote
S2	Passive - Suppress	Active - Suppress
S3	Passive - Suppress	Passive - Promote
S4	Passive - Promote	Active - Promote
S5	Passive - Suppress	Active - Suppress
S6	Active - Promote	Passive - Promote
S7	**Passive - Promote**	**Passive - Promote**
S8	Passive - Promote	Passive - Suppress
S9	Active - Promote	Passive - Suppress

Table 8.3 (b): FINNISH children's parents and teachers

CHILD CODE	PARENTS' ROLE	TEACHER'S ROLE
F1	**Active - Promote**	**Active - Promote**
F2	Active - Promote	Passive - Promote
F3	**Passive - Promote**	**Passive - Promote**
F4	Passive - Promote	Active - Suppress
F5	Active - Suppress	Passive - Suppress
F6	**Passive - Promote**	**Passive - Promote**
F7	**Passive - Suppress**	**Passive - Suppress**
F8	Active - Promote	Active - Suppress
F9	**Passive - Promote**	**Passive - Promote**

Table 8.3 (c): INDIAN children parents and teachers

CHILD CODE	PARENTS' ROLE	TEACHER'S ROLE
I1	**Passive - Suppress**	**Passive - Suppress**
I2	**Active - Promote**	**Active - Promote**
I3	Passive - Suppress	Active - Suppress
I4	Active - Promote	Passive Promote
I5	**Passive - Promote**	**Passive - Promote**
I6	Active - Promote	Passive - Promote
I7	**Passive - Promote**	**Passive - Promote**
I8	Passive - Promote	Active - Promote
I9	Active - Suppress	Passive - Suppress

Figures 8.3 (a) - (c): **Comparison of parents' and teachers role perceptions**

Figure 8.3 (a): SCOTTISH children's parents and teachers

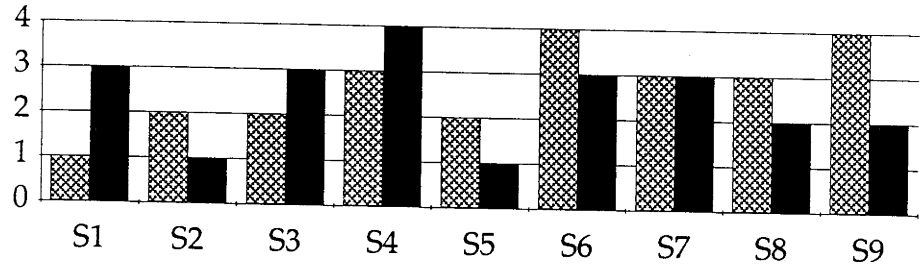


Figure 8.3 (b): FINNISH children's parents and teachers

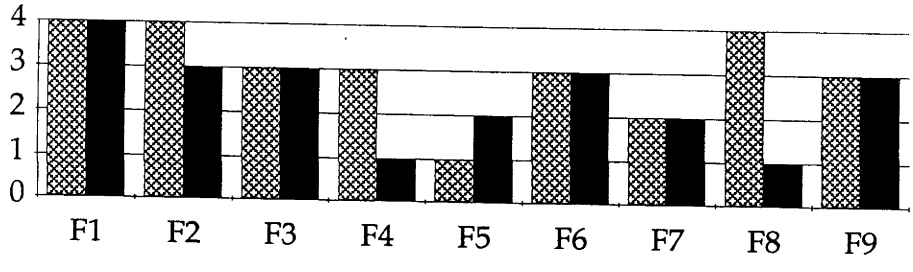
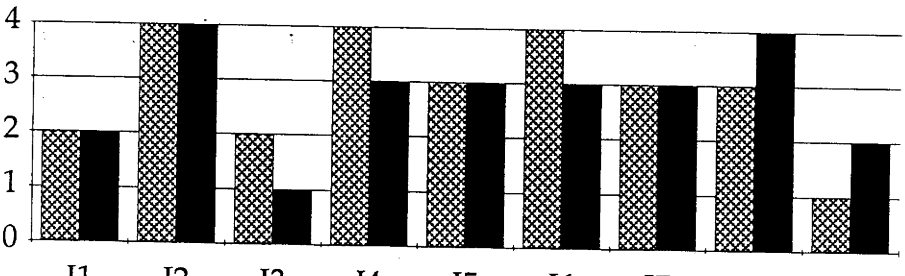


Figure 8.3 (c): INDIAN children's parents and teachers



Notes:

1 = Type I: ACTIVE - SUPPRESS
2 = Type II: PASSIVE - PROMOTE
3 = Type III: PASSIVE - PROMOTE
4 = Type IV: ACTIVE - PROMOTE

Parents' View ■ Teachers' View

There were no cases where both agents, the child's parents and the class teacher, followed an active - suppress approach to child ethnicity. However, there was one case where the Indian boy, I2's parents' and teacher's views on actively promoting child ethnicity matched. As discussed in chapters 5 to 7, in this case, the child's parents and the teacher enjoyed a close and warm relationship. Hence, this finding was to be expected. The results of tables 8.3 (a) to (c) were then collated to produce table 8.4, making it easier to analyse overall trends between parents and teachers in their approach to child ethnicity.

Table 8.4:

The number of parents and teachers according to each ideal type

IDEAL TYPE	SCOTS		FINNS		INDIANS		TOTAL	
	P	T	P	T	P	T	P	T
Active - Suppress	1	2	1	2	1	1	3	5
Passive - Suppress	3	2	1	2	2	2	6	6
Passive - Promote	3	4	4	4	3	4	10	12
Active - Promote	2	1	3	1	3	2	8	4

Table 8.4 shows that there were three major trends in the way parents and teachers approached their roles in the development of ethnic identification in young children. These were:

1. that more than half the parents and teachers adopted a positive role by promoting child ethnic identification linked with the child's parents' country of origin;

2. that only one third of the parents and eleven of the teachers adopted a negative stance, by suppressing the child's sense of identification with the parents' country of origin;

3. that in either promoting or suppressing child ethnicity, the majority of both parents and teachers, irrespective of the child's ethnic background, adopted a passive approach.

This evidence suggests that on the whole the parents and teachers who participated in this study believed that ethnic identification should be promoted during early childhood. In this regard, the adults' views did not differ depending on whether the child was of Scottish, Finnish or Indian descent. The majority of teachers opted to pursue a passive, indirect role, which for the most part meant that interest in ethnicity was usually child generated and directed. In other words, it was largely left to the child to show an interest in getting to know about her/his ethnic background. The role of the parents and teachers was to provide a setting, at home and at school, which encouraged and stimulated children's interest in their ethnic background. As shown, these children's homes were oriented to their particular culture with reference to Scotland, Finland and India. Their school classrooms were settings which valued ethnic diversity in general and facilitated discussion about Scottish, Finnish and Indian cultures. However, there were only eight cases (less than one third of the sample of children) where parents and teachers views on promoting ethnicity matched. The majority of these children were of Finnish descent (namely, F1, F3, F6, F7 and F9); and the others were three children from Indian backgrounds (I2, I5 and I7) and only one child (S7) of Scottish descent (see tables 8.3 (a) to (c)).

The reasons which account for these trends are many and varied. Throughout the discussion in chapters 5, 6, 7 and 8 so far, specific explanations about individual incidents were provided. Hence, rather than go over this material in detail again, I will deal with several major themes concerning the role played by parents and teachers, and which continued to recur throughout the preceding discussion.

8.5 Recurrent themes

The results indicated that there were several major recurrent themes which cut across both parent and teacher ideal types, but differentiated along the ethnic backgrounds of the children. In other words, the adult's position as a teacher or parent was less important compared to the child's ethnic background in explaining the underlying reasons for the adults' behaviour, either in the home or school

environment.

Firstly, home language emerged as a central issue in ethnic identification, recognised even by Type I parents who did not promote the use of the mother-tongue at home. Amongst the Scots, although the Gaelic language had all but disappeared from daily usage, the Scottish accent continued to attract attention, especially in the school context. Hence, one could suggest that, for the Scots, accent rather than language was more important in ethnic identification.

The Finnish language was arguably the strongest indicator of Finnish identity. This was particularly important given that, according to the period of residence, the Finns were the oldest group of immigrants who participated in this study (see table 1.1). As Koviukangas (1986) found among the pioneer Finnish settlers, in this study, too, the teaching and promotion of Finnish language was essentially a task which the female family members carried out. Although maintenance of the Finnish language within the home was a crucial aspect of their ethnic identification, its impact in the school context was none or negligible. None of the participating schools taught Finnish as a part of ACTSA's community language policy. Although there were other Finnish speaking children in the majority of these schools, these children rarely played together or conversed in Finnish while at school. F1, for instance, possibly one of the most proficient Finnish speakers in this study, was in fact embarrassed when asked "do you talk in Finnish with 'X', (another Finn) at school?" F1 however was categorised as "bicultural" (see chapter 7) as she described herself as being "Australian and Finnish". At home, the use of mother-tongue for instance, reflected her allegiance to Finland. In contrast, at school, her behaviour was more indicative of her desire to be seen as an Australian, a member of the dominant majority. Even though, her class teacher promoted identification with Finland, the child's behaviour in peer relations suggest conformity to prevailing social norms of the mainstream culture as portrayed by peers. This was the reality of the child's social world.

Although there was also a strong interest in preserving Indian native

languages amongst the parent participants, these parents did not pursue the task of teaching their mother-tongue to their children with the same fervour as the Finnish parents. India's colonial links with Britain and Australia's immigrant selection policies in operation at the time these families came (as discussed in chapter 2) have more or less ensured that all the Indian parents were fluent English speakers. Thus, English was spoken daily in varying degrees in all of the Indian households. The linguistic diversity of native languages and the absence of a strong community commitment to teach Hindi (India's national language) in the ACT may have jointly contributed to diffuse the centrality of mother-tongue teaching in promoting identification with the Indian heritage.

Despite the importance of language teaching/learning within the home context, the same did not apply to the school setting. Only four of the nineteen schools participating in this study offered a community language. These were Spanish, French, Italian and Indonesian; none of which were spoken at home by the participants of this study. Moreover, these classes were planned and presented by bilingual teachers employed on a casual basis, and were largely run in isolation.[17] As discussed earlier, only one of the Type IV teachers put time and effort into learning the community language taught at the primary school where she was employed. She and the other Type IV teachers also incorporated various socio-cultural aspects of Spain, France, Italy and Indonesia respectively, into regular classroom activities. It could be argued that such behaviour was concomitant with the spirit and policy of ACTSA's multicultural education philosophy (see appendix 2). Sadly, these four teachers were in the minority, and for the rest, the gap between policy and practice remained in place.

More importantly, the Type IV teachers demonstrated interest and respect for a particular ethnic background providing the children with a pluralistic role model who valued ethnic diversity. It could be further argued that not having a Spanish or Indonesian native speaker in the classroom may have been an advantage as it enabled

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[17] Two of the schools had recognised this weakness and had started to in-service the regular classroom teachers; these classes were held after hours and run on limited funds.

the teacher to pursue ethnicity without showing favouritism or attracting special attention to a particular child. On the other hand, the ESL programs continued to direct attention to children from non-English speaking backgrounds. As discussed in chapter 5, indiscriminate placement of children in ESL classes is of grave concern. For instance, when I mentioned to the school principal that I had seen F2's name on ACTSA's preschool ESL enrolment list, his reaction was "he's not in ours. Oh well, that's another one for us then". He did not think it would have been more appropriate to verify the child's need for English language skills before placing him in the ESL class. Several Indian parents (such as I3's father) too expressed their discomfort in finding out that their child was in the ESL class. While parents and to a lesser extent the class teacher may have viewed the ESL class as punishment, the children for the most part enjoyed their sojourn away from the rigours of the mainstream classroom. More importantly, this situation illustrates the persistence of assimilationist tendencies of the 1950s: the assumption being that although the immigrant had much to gain by learning English, the English speakers had little to gain from learning another community language. This belief, however, violated ACTSA's stated policy on language learning - both English and other community languages.

Although by and large, community language learning within the school context was undervalued, the exact opposite was true of the majority of households participating in this study. This applied even to the majority of Scottish households where no second language was spoken. Some of these parents, such as S5's father, also had particular ideas about which languages ought to be taught at school. He said: "They should teach something like Japanese, an Asian language. Not Italian or Greek. Europe is too far away and not relevant for Australia". Unfortunately, there was no community language program at his son's school. In fact, although by 1985 there were fifteen primary schools in the ACT offering bilingual programs, for those children who participated in this study, learning a language other than English was largely a family responsibility.

Within this context, the role played by grandparents in using the parents'

mother-tongue as a device for cultural transmission requires further elaboration. It was shown consistently that the grandparents, especially the grandmothers (as in the case of I7), played a key role in raising the children's interest and awareness, as well as teaching them at least a few words of the parents' mother-tongue. However, though it may seem that access and contact between children and their grandparents may enhance early language learning, one needs to be cautious. The parents of the Finnish girl, F5, for instance, took pains to explain an incident where

> *She (the child) was really upset because grandma had insisted that she spoke ... asked for a drink. She couldn't get a drink from the fridge, unless she asked for it in Finnish. We were upset too. I mean, we were on holidays.*

Hence, teaching and/or learning one's mother-tongue may not be a simple matter of bringing the children together with their grandparents. One needs to take account of other factors, such as the amount of time they spend together, as well as the means and methods adopted by the family elders when teaching young children their mother-tongue.

Another recurrent theme common to both parents and teachers was the way in which their past history and experience as, or with, immigrants influenced their current role behaviour. Firstly, it was also possible to show that the parents' role differences cut across the three birthplace groups, and could be explained in terms of their motivations to migrate and settle in Australia. In other words, Scottish and Finnish parents' explanations for adopting a particular approach to child ethnic identification were described more on economic and/or political grounds than on social and personal factors, which were more often expressed by the Indian parents. The majority of Scots parents remarked that they were generally unhappy about the effects of 'Thatcherism' on Scotland and yearned for Scottish independence from England. However, as S5's father remarked, that since this was "just a pipe-dream, no pun intended", one could describe these parents' political orientations as a form of escape, as they were unable to see the realisation of Scottish nationalism during their lifetime. Esman (1977 in McKay, 1980: 256) makes a similar observation about early Scottish nationalists who were "fuelled by a nostalgia for the past and by a pronounced anti-British bias ....". These families too, especially those who

adopted a suppressive role in ethnic identification (S1, S2, S3 and S5) seem to want to abandon their heritage in favour of a new identity in Australia. As S5's mother said "what's there to talk about? (Scotland) It's too depressing".

Similarly, having left Finland during economically depressed periods, the majority of Finns had also significantly improved their economic status in Australia. However, notwithstanding this at least one family had made plans to return to Finland to live there at least for a year. Again, economic issues of survival were of upmost concern to them, as their length of stay in Finland was dependent on the father's ability to find a job. Politically, although the Finns were not as vocal as the Scots, one of the older father's (child F9), who had lived on the Finnish-Russian border, intimated his dislike of the (then) Soviet Union because of the possible threat that the "communists could take over Finland" and he was glad to "live in a free country" like Australia.

Invariably, all the Scottish and Finnish parents drew parallels in relation to their economic status and way of life in Australia as compared to what it would have been if they had stayed on in either Scotland or Finland. Although these parents had migrated to Australia at different historical periods,[18] following migration the majority had experienced a substantial improvement in their living standards, as shown in the following comments:

S1's mother: *We just couldn't live over there the way we do here. I mean things that we take for granted here (such as meat) are luxuries over there.*

S3's father: *We couldn't afford to buy a car over there. It's unheard of that you buy a piece of land and have a house built on it.*

F5's father: *Life is better here; easier ... We have everything we want. The weather too, is better.*

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[18] Refer to chapter 2 for a historical overview and chapter 6 for specific background information about these families.

These comments by those, such the parents of S1, S3 and F5, not only illustrate the adaptability of these families, but also the importance of economic survival needs and relevance of political orientation of the parents in determining their approach to ethnic identification. These issues shed light on "some of the shared beliefs and presuppositions that come to school with the children" (DiMartino: 1999: 218). In taking the children back to visit their homeland, the past and present experiences are brought together. By providing a first-hand experience of their ethnic background in the country of origin, parents add to the repertoire of shared memories and meanings.

In contrast, teacher - child relationships were more diffused, functionally specific and were to a large extent circumscribed by school policies. The majority of teachers did not encourage the same sense of proximity or intimacy as parents, and tended to be more universalistic and rational in their approach to ethnic identification. Their behaviour too, however, reflected their experience with parents in general, and immigrants in particular. For instance, misconceptions about multiculturalism as discussed earlier were indicative of Type I teachers in particular, who have had little or no training and experience in multicultural education. Avoidance of parent contact was likewise symptomatic of their rejection of a pluralistic approach to early childhood education.

Of greater concern was teachers' lack of knowledge about normal child development theory or research. Contrary to available evidence and despite undergoing professional training, the majority of teachers were unaware or ignorant about developmental processes pertaining to ethnicity as discussed in chapter 4. It is argued that this may have exacerbated the disjunction, or at least interrupted the flow of knowledge, between parents and teachers, creating a fractured approach to ethnic identification during early childhood. Our understanding of child ethnicity is, however, incomplete without taking into account the reality of this situation, as perceived from the child's vantage point. This is the focus of the final chapter.

Chapter 9

LINKING CHILDREN WITH PARENTS AND TEACHERS

9.1 Introduction

Over the past decade, numerous scholars have been critical of the dominance and reliance on adult perceptions which has so far informed our knowledge about the nature of childhood socialisation (see for example, Adler and Adler, 1987). Seven years ago, surveying research on childhood socialisation, Thorne (1985: 697) claimed that

> *Adult definitions, indeed carry much power over the lives of children, but they are not the full story, and we can wish for more history (and sociology) grounded in the direct experiences of children.*

This thesis was based on such a study, where twenty-seven children of Scottish, Finnish and Indian background were observed and interviewed directly by the researcher in an attempt to obtain first-hand accounts of the day-to-day reality of the participants involved in the process of ethnic identification.

The ramifications of shifting boundaries of the social worlds of the old and the new country, between the home and the school, help to illustrate the dynamic nature of ethnic phenomena. This study presents three views of how ethnic identification operationalises during early childhood. The parents had to deal with the reality of immigration and resettlement in another country. The teachers, have to deal with issues of ethnic diversity in the classroom; and as for the children, who must travel between the two worlds of the home and school, making sense of ethnic identification during early childhood, the process differed. The participants' perceptions were grounded in their social world, and their behaviour at home and at school was indicative of their view of ethnic identification. In this chapter, these three views are brought together in order to gain an overview of the process of ethnic identification. It will also include a discussion of the limitations of this study and identify some issues for future research.

9.2 Interconnections between Children, Parents and Teachers

So far in this thesis, the adults roles in ethnic identification have been considered in isolation from the children's views. By putting together the typologies discussed in the preceding chapters, table 8.5 was tabulated in an attempt to summarise the findings and show the interconnections between children, parents and teachers.

Table 8.5:

Interconnections between parents, teachers and children on ethnic identification

CHILD CODE	PARENTS' ROLE	TEACHER'S ROLE	CHILD OUTCOME
S1	Active-Suppress	Passive-Promote	Birthoriented(A)
S2	Passive-Suppress	Active-Suppress	Birthoriented(A)
S3	Passive Suppress	Passive-Promote	Birthoriented(S)
S4	Passive-Promote	Active-Promote	Bicultural
S5	Passive-Suppress	Active-Suppress	Bicultural
S6	Active-Promote	Passive-Promote	Birthoriented(S)
S7	**Passive-Promote**	**Passive-Promote**	**Birthoriented(S)**
S8	Passive-Promote	Passive-Suppress	Birthoriented(S)
S9	Active-Promote	Passive-Suppress	Birthoriented(S)
F1	Active-Promote	Active-Promote	Bicultural
F2	**Active-Promote**	**Passive-Promote**	**Bicultural**
F3	**Passive-Promote**	**Passive-Promote**	**Otheroriented(A)**
F4	Passive-Promote	Active-Suppress	Bicultural
F5	Active-Suppress	Passive-Suppress	Birthoriented(A)
F6	Passive-Promote	Passive-Promote	Undecided
F7	Passive-Suppress	Passive-Suppress	Bicultural
F8	Active-Promote	Active-Suppress	Birthoriented(A)
F9	Passive-Promote	Passive-Promote	Birthoriented(A)
I1	Passive-Suppress	Passive-Suppress	Undecided
I2	Active-Promote	Active-Promote	Birthoriented(A)
I3	Passive-Suppress	Active-Suppress	Undecided
I4	Active-Promote	Passive-Promote	Birthoriented(A)
I5	**Passive-Promote**	**Passive-Promote**	**Birthoriented(I)**
I6	**Active-Promote**	**Passive-Promote**	**Bicultural**
I7	**Passive-Promote**	**Passive-Promote**	**Otheroriented(A)**
I8	Passive-Promote	Active-Promote	Birthoriented(I)
I9	Active-Suppress	Passive-Suppress	Birthoriented(A)

Table 8.5 shows that there was no distinct overarching pattern in the way that parents, teachers and children in this study related to one another in reference to ethnic identification. There were only three matching sets (refer to the bolded cases in table 8.5), consisting of parents and teachers who pursued the same approach to

ethnic identification, and who were in turn linked with similar outcomes for the children; firstly, S7 and I5, whose self identification were linked with their country of birth (namely, Scotland and India respectively) and whose parents and teachers were categorised as Type III; and secondly, F2 and I6, who believed that they could identify with Australia as well as their parents' country of birth (namely, Finland and India). Although their parents actively promoted their link with their country of origin, their teachers did so to a lesser degree. Finally, F3 and I7, who were both categorised as 'other oriented' in chapter 7, also had parents and teachers who passively promoted their link with Finland and India respectively. The remaining twenty-one children were each unique in that none of these children had at least one other child who could be matched with them, as in the case of S7, F2, F3, I5, I6 and I7 described earlier. Given such variability, one cannot make any conclusive statements about casual links regarding the role played by parents and teachers in the development of ethnic identification during early childhood.

These findings however, demonstrate clearly that irrespective of whether the child is of Scottish, Finnish or Indian descent, her/his parents' and teachers' views on ethnic identification do not necessarily match. Uni-linear development assumes continuity and consistency between the home and school setting and between the approaches adopted by parents and teachers. As discussed in chapter 2, the uni-directional nature of early childhood socialisation was widely accepted during the 1950s. However, this study provides evidence to the contrary, affirming the claims by those such as Bottomley (1983) who argue that socialisation, ethnic identification in particular, is a multi-faceted process. In other words,

> *We cannot assume* (original emphasis) *a pattern of change, as evolutionists did. Nor can we assume a common starting point. But we can explore regularities to try to reach some further understanding of these questions (Bottomley, 1983: 5).*

From the start, by aligning oneself with the interactionists, one may be criticised for beginning the analysis with a framework which undermines the uni-directional approach to socialisation. Accordingly, the claim could be made that the researcher's conclusions were based on a theoretical bias rather than hard research

evidence. Notwithstanding such criticism, it is argued that the data collected during this study provide overwhelming evidence to support the interactionists' beliefs about childhood socialisation. In the process of undergoing ethnic identification, whilst being socialised by significant others, the child may also socialise those around her/him. In other words, the child is an active participant in the process, aware and capable of, in acquiring knowledge, evaluating and then using it to guide her/his behaviour at home and at school.

Accordingly, this study confirms the findings of earlier research on children's racial awareness (such as Davey, 1983; Katz, 1976 and Ogilvey et al, 1990) and childhood socialisation (such as MacKay, 1973 and Schaffer, 1984), which indicate that children between the ages of 5 and 8 years have the capacity to acquire knowledge about ethnic identification. Numerous spontaneous examples were found which illustrated children's awareness of ethnicity, which indicated that their evaluations of physical attributes may not always be neutral or objective (Goodman, 1970: 38). It denotes the importance of the situational elements, which provide concrete experiences for the children.

There was also evidence to support claims of scholars (such as Katz, 1976) that adults, particularly teachers, may resist acknowledgment of their role in either promoting or suppressing ethnic identification during early childhood. Those who suppressed ethnic identification in this study, for instance, retreated by adopting stereotypical behaviour aligned with their traditional roles of authority and power as a teacher or a parent. The findings of this research therefore reiterate the need to improve teacher training courses which enable teachers to actively plan and implement early childhood programs which empower children (see Derman-Sparks, 1991) actively to learn the skills necessary to live in harmony in multi-ethnic societies.

These findings also question popular beliefs about the role of parents and teachers in either promoting or suppressing ethnic identification. For example, it is difficult to say conclusively that even if parents and teachers actively promoted

ethnic identification, that a child would always embrace their view. My findings support MacKay's claim (1973: 31).

> *... that children possess interpretive competencies undiscerned in standard research. The interpretive perspective makes available, then, children as beings who interpret the world.*

Children can (as much as adults do) evaluate their interactions though qualitatively, their interpretations may differ. For instance, the Finnish girl, F1, saw herself as being bicultural (or both Australian and Finnish) whilst the Indian boy, I2, considered himself an Australian "because it was the truth"; he was born in Australia. On the whole, all the children had some knowledge about their parents' views of their country of origin. Yet, there were no guarantees that the children would subscribe to the adults' views. Instead, as described in chapters 7 and 8, this study demonstrates that young children are capable of making an independent stance on how they wished to be identified, irrespective of their parents' and teacher's approach to child ethnicity.

In most cases, the parents were usually aware that their children did not see eye-to-eye with them in learning to become either Scottish, Finnish or Indian. For example, consider the cases of the Finnish boy, F6, and the Indian girl, I8, discussed in previous chapters. In such cases, the parents adopted a passive - promote approach in an effort not to antagonise or alienate the children by actively pursuing identification with their country of origin. Instead such Type III parents were aware and sensitive to their children's thinking and have opted to promote child ethnic identification in more indirect and less obtrusive ways.

In this context, some parents actually maintained dual standards. For instance, the parents of the Indian boy, I3, remained strict vegetarians whilst allowing their children to eat meat. These parents seem to accept that change in lifestyle was an inevitable consequence of migration and they were more accommodating of the different perceptions between the children and themselves. Perhaps they felt that to do otherwise may create disharmony within parent - child relationships, including total rejection of the parents' ethnic heritage. The strong personal and emotional bond which parents and children share, makes the parents'

role in ethnic identification very different from that of the teachers'. Year after year, whilst class teachers come and go, the same parents and children share the same household, at least for the first fifteen years of their lives or until the child leaves home. The impact of these cumulative life experiences on the child's ethnic identification in the future is difficult to verify without long term follow-up research.

Of course, there is always the danger that having dual standards could in effect either confuse a child (such as in the case of I3) or create a positive sense of dual identification or biculturalism (such as in the case of I6). A similar situation arose with the Finnish children F6 and F4. Since the diet of the Scot was not distinctively different, like the Finns or the Indians, it had little or no relevance as an ongoing, daily issue. Instead, the differences were raised usually on special occasions such as Christmas and New Year, when something special from Scotland was prepared by the mothers. This is a minor illustration of the proposition that the promotion of ethnic identification is essentially the responsibility of females. In other words, as shown in this study, it is a socialisation task which is carried out by women, who are either mothers, grandmothers or teachers. Of course, sample bias in this study cannot be ignored because there were no male teachers and there was greater contact between the mothers who were at home than between the fathers (and mothers) who were in paid employment (see chapter 1).

The process of ethnic identification during early childhood may also be viewed as a contest between two women: the children's mothers and their class-teachers. It was a contest because, irrespective of the child's views, the real struggle was between the teachers and the mothers, two women, who were significant adults in the children's eyes. Both women were charged with the same or similar task of inducting the novice to participate effectively as a member of society. Some of the women (Type IV parents and teachers) chose these roles voluntarily,[1] whilst others were more reluctant (Type II and III parents and

1 These include mothers who opted to staying at home, largely for the sake of their children, and teachers who have undergone training in multicultural education, which was assumed to be a personal decision.

teachers) participants displaying ambivalence and those who rejected their expected obligations (Type I parents and teachers). Bureaucratic policy implied that schooling was to be shared between parents and teachers. The reality contradicted policy objectives. A situation of conflict arose because, as shown in this study, in the majority of cases, consisting of seventeen children, their parents' and teachers' roles in either promoting or suppressing ethnic identification did not match (see tables 7.4 (a) to (c)). It is indeed an irony that seemingly complementary agents of child socialisation are seen to be assuming adversarial roles in the development of ethnic identification during childhood.

The extent to which the bond between children and parents is influenced by the nature of the parent - teacher relationship itself or the processes of ethnic identification in particular, it is difficult to say. Research done by those such as Tizard et al (1984), as discussed in chapter 3, shed light on the nature of home and school relations and the possible tensions between parents (in particular, mothers) and teachers. Findings in this study also confirmed that tensions exist between home and school, particularly in relation to teaching/learning about cultural diversity. As discussed in chapter 5, whilst teachers were regarded as the academic or educational experts, parents were seen to be the "cultural experts", best equipped to teach children about their own ethnic heritage. Evidence of collaboration between the two experts regarding child ethnicity was rare and limited to ad-hoc events such as 'international days' (refer chapter 5).

Overall, the meaning and salience of various cultural attributes in either promoting or suppressing ethnic identification were largely situationally specific. For the Finnish children, their mother tongue was an important aspect of cultural transmission at home; but for the Scots, the difference between them and others was heightened through their distinctive Scottish accent when speaking at school. Similarly, when at school, the Indian children and to a lesser extent the Finns, attracted attention because of their physical attributes such as skin and hair colour. Diet and dress on the other hand, were less important in determining the nature of interactions within the school setting. However, the dilemma between food eaten at

home and at school was extenuated during children's birthday parties. Both Finnish and Indian parents had usually opted to provide a mixture of Australian and Finnish/Indian finger-foods. For instance, in inviting me to her son's birthday, the mother of Finnish child F6 said "if you want to try Finnish food, doesn't matter if you get late because the kids won't eat it any way and I'll bring most of it out for the adult's party later on". Not all parents were comfortable in having children's parties. The following case about I8, the Indian girl's birthday, illustrated this point further. During their holiday inndia, I8's brother had his birthday there. The mother recalled "we don't celebrate birthdays in Indian (sic). It's so different...no candles...no cakes...no games. (Instead) the priest came and we had a fire ceremony". However, upon returning to Australia, the mother said that she "had to make a cake, get a present and have chips and things because two of her (the daughter, I8) friends came". Thus although the parents were not totally comfortable about having "an Australian party", they went along with the child's request. It was a sign that they were adapting to the ways of their adapted country, for the sake of the children. In one sense, this is also an example of the child resocialising the adults.

When one becomes an immigrant in a country dominated by values, traditions and beliefs vastly different to those associated with one's own ethnic heritage, it can increase the need for direct and active learning to acquire knowledge about one's cultural background. For the Finnish and Indian children, their contact with others from their country of origin was limited by the numerically small size of their birthplace population living in the ACT. Hence, by arranging to visit family and friends from the same country of origin living in Australia and/or in Scotland/Finland/India, parents can actively provide direct opportunities for their children to interact with others who share their heritage. Teachers, however, can rarely do the same. It is rather unrealistic to expect class teachers to arrange to take 5 to 8 year olds to India, Finland or Scotland for a visit! Yet, proponents of multiculturalism or an anti-bias curriculum (such as Derman-Sparks, 1991 and Ramsey, 1987 in particular) have provided innovative strategies which assist early childhood teachers to conceptualise and implement programs which value ethnic

diversity. Thus, teachers too, like parents, can intervene directly to promote child ethnicity. In other words, both of these adults, by virtue of their role and position in society, can (and do) set the context for either suppressing or promoting ethnic identification during early childhood.

9.3 Limitations of the Study

This study was based on a carefully selected group of twenty-seven children, their parents and teachers. Hence, any general trends applicable to Scots, Finns and Indians, for example, cannot be applied wholesale to other ethnic categories without qualification. However, the findings may be reasonably assumed to be indicative of the type of issues confronting parents and teachers in general, pertaining to ethnic identification during early childhood. Moreover, since this study was carried out during a particular period in time, the relationships and findings are essentially historical. Changes in individual development as well as contextual changes within the family (such as the birth of another sibling in the case of S6) as well as within the school (such as changes in government policy) will alter the meanings and significance of the findings.

On the other hand, immigration and ethnicity both reflect change. Hence, in the data collection and analysis, it was necessary to adopt a historical stance. It is further argued that the conceptual framework utilised in data analysis, takes into account the fluidity of the findings. As McKay (1980: 255) asserts, a typology based on a

> *matrix model is better suited for examining social change. In the polar model changes in meaning and structure tend to be linear, unidirectional and irreversible. ... The matrix model allows for change to occur in a number of different directions.*

The findings of this study also suggest that the four approaches to ethnic identification adopted by the adults are not mutually exclusive and there is a degree of unpredictability because of the mediation of factors of time, setting and people. However, the descriptive basis of a typology has little value when viewed simply as a classification device or tool. It describes the what, but it is the exploration of the why, the underlying reasons which explain the behaviour, that is more important to

the sociologist. In this study, therefore, the adult typology, for instance, was not used simply to categorise the participants according to their role behaviour. Although the categories do set out individuals who share the same attributes, the main purpose of the study was to identify relationships or links between the various categories of parents, teachers and children.

In carrying out fieldwork, proponents of ethnographic research believe that "the aim throughout is to maintain a more or less marginal position" (Hammerseley and Atkinson, 1989: 100). In this case, while it was possible at most times to retain the role of participant-as-observer with the children, with the adults this was not always possible. The parents and teachers were more aware of my real task, which was to collect research evidence. Moreover, time constraints imposed externally by the school setting also restricted informal interactions with the teacher. In effect, in getting to know the teachers as individuals, the task was perhaps not as consistent or thorough.

Nevertheless, the main methodological advantage in using typologies is that they help to isolate dimensions of analysis which makes it possible to discriminate between and among individual parts contained within the matrix. Individual differences identified between children (N=27), their parents (N = 54) and teachers (N = 25), demonstrate the danger of treating them as if such differences do not matter to the individual concerned. This was discussed in chapter 6 in relation to I8's visit to India. The typology advanced was based on the perceptions of the participants of this study. As discussed in chapter 1, in adopting an ethnographic methodology, by its very nature the typology was subjective as well as exploratory. In collating the results, there were "varying degrees of organisational rigidity with respect to membership criteria" (McKay, 1980: 255), indicating that differences in interpretations are possible. Perhaps a larger sample may enable one to categorise the participants more precisely. However, large scale macro research is often condemned because tabulation of naturally occurring " ... behaviour into discrete categories ... can obscure 'the contingent nature of interaction'" (Mehan quoted in Silverman, 1985: 17). It would be better therefore to adopt the same or similar

methodology with another population, to examine further the usefulness of the typology. Accordingly, in studying ethnic identification during early childhood, rather than remain "inherently an individualised approach", it is hoped that this study would encourage much "more collective appraisal" (Woods, 1986: 150) between researchers from diverse disciplines including anthropology, psychology and sociology. Such collaboration would help to refine the categorisation as well as conceptualisation, and thereby increase the validity of the conclusions drawn (Woods, 1986: 163).

9.4 Some Issues for Future Research

It is worth noting that in the ten cases where parents' and teachers' roles on ethnic identification were matched, the majority of mothers were not involved in helping the teachers with any classroom work (such as reading or craft activities). This finding would therefore question the popular belief that parent involvement in the classroom enhances parent - teacher relationships. As discussed in chapter 5 and chapter 6 earlier, the majority of parents in this study were reluctant to become involved in classroom activities and only a few teachers welcomed them into their classrooms.

Except in the cases of F7 (the Finnish boy who was an only child) and S7 (whose sister was too young to attend school) in all other cases where parents and teachers had similar views on ethnic identification (namely, F1, F3, F6, F9, I1, I2, I5 and I7), each child had a sibling(s) attending the same school. Hence, their parents would have known more than one teacher at that school and it is possible that these teachers would also exchange information about the family, at least informally. For instance, I found that it was not uncommon for some of these teachers to remark that they have taught the older/younger brother or sister. Consequently, it is possible that over time, parent - teacher relationships may continue to grow, gradually reducing the gap between their differential approaches to ethnic identification for subsequent children in the same family. This may suggest that in determining the nature of parent - teacher relationships regarding ethnic identification, the presence or absence of siblings at the same school may assume

more importance than parent involvement in the classroom. Although there is some evidence to support this claim in this study (refer for example, the case of F9), given that this study was restricted to twenty-seven children, this proposition requires further testing with a larger, more variable, sample.

Overall, there is an urgent need for further analysis and research on child ethnicity which examines the roles and relationships between children, siblings, grandparents and peers. The changing nature of families suggests that relationships with siblings and grandparents, in particular, are changing (Edgar, 1989). Mediating effects of family size and structural change must therefore be taken into consideration in future research. Moreover, though there were some examples of gender differences pertaining to ethnic identification in this study (as in the case of I7), these were left largely unexplored because of the complexity of the task. This list of areas for future research is by no means exhaustive, but these will without doubt contribute to our understanding, and hopefully lead to improved practice in the field.

9.5 Conclusion

One of the main tasks of a sociologist is to assist practitioners to collect evidence which test claims about socially constructed behaviour. Collaborative research can provide comparative data and multiple verification. This is a major advantage when one considers the substantial implications of such research, in improving practices at the applied level. Early childhood professionals for instance, need to do more than just pay lip-service in getting to know children's ethnic backgrounds, and any reformulations of Australia's multicultural education polices must take into account the perceptions of the children, whose life chances they aim to influence. By all indications, Australia will continue to encourage migrant settlement, and structural changes affecting family life in this country are also likely to continue. Sociologists have hardly begun to discover the realities of the world view of today's children and what we find may have a profound impact on shifting our perceptions on ethnic identification during early childhood.

In spite of the existence of tensions and territorial demarcations between home and school environments, at least implicitly, neither the parents nor the majority of teachers who participated in this study have had any formal training on how to teach young children about their own and others ethnic identification. As shown in chapters 5 and 6, both groups of adults relied on past experiences: parents on what they had done with their older children, and teachers on teaching immigrant children in the past. This also suggests that the adult's role in ethnic identification is not static; rather, it is subject to change over time. This too adds to the complexity of understanding how the process of ethnic identification works during early childhood. For, early childhood is a period of rapid developmental growth, physically, socially, emotionally and intellectually. Hence, when exploring the processes of ethnic identification, one must be cognisant of the ebb and flow of the dynamics of normative child growth relevant to this period, in this case, children aged 5 to 8 years in particular.

Ethnic identification is socially acquired, and therefore can be unlearnt. It begins with interactions with significant others during early childhood. It includes more than parents and teachers, but perhaps equally important are the roles of grandparents as well as peers, and to a lesser extent, siblings. The success of this process is the ultimate test of living in a multi-ethnic society. Children are aware and are active learners, and the significant adults who share their life must therefore be more cognisant of the children's contributions to the learning process.

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APPENDIX I: INTERVIEW GUIDE

(a) PARENT INTERVIEWS

1. PARENTS - FAMILY BACKGROUND

1.1 What were your reasons for migrating to Australia?
1.2 What did you know about Australia before you came?
1.3 What were your first impressions of Australia?
1.4 Did you find it easy/difficult to settle down?
1.5 Did anyone help you with housing, shopping, schooling etc?
1.6 How have things/life changed for you since coming to Australia?
1.7 Is there anything that you miss from S/F/I?

2. PARENTS - CHILD - SCHOOL

2.1 How did you find out about the schools in Canberra?
2.2 When did X start schooling? Did s/he go to a child care centre or a play-group or a preschool regularly?
2.3 Does X like/dislike going to school? Has s/he ever refused to go? (please explain)
2.4 Does X ever talk to you about what happens at school?
2.5 To what extent are you involved with X school?
2.6 Does the school welcome parent involvement?
2.7 In your opinion should parents work in their children's classrooms with the teacher?
2.8 Are you satisfied with X's school?
2.9 Are there any areas of concern? Do you discuss these with X's teacher?
2.10 Do you think that the school should be interested in your cultural background? Should the school teach children about S/F/I?
2.11 Is it important that X's teacher knows of her/his link with S/F/I?
2.12 Some people say that it is a good thing for the schools to teach children about people from other cultures. What do you think?

3. PARENTS - CHILD - FAMILY LIFE

3.1 Does X help out with any household chores?
3.2 Can you describe X's daily routine?
3.3 Who disciplines the children at home?
3.4 When you have worries about your child/ren do you discuss these with anyone in particular? What would you have done in S/F/I?
3.5 What would you like X to be when s/he grows up?
3.6 What type of food do you usually eat at home: S/F/I?
3.7 Have your food habits changed since your arrival in Australia?
3.8 What does X take to school for lunch?
3.9 Do you have a "national" dress of S/F/I?
3.10 When are you likely to wear it? would you like X to wear it?
3.11 When speaking to each other, what language(s) is used between: husband -

wife, parents - children, children -relatives, parents - relatives?
3.12 Do you encourage X to learn Finnish/ etc? In what ways?
3.13 Is it important to you that X learns to speak/read/write your native language?
3.14 Would you like X to learn any other languages?
3.15 Do you read to your children? what language?

4. PARENTS - CHILD - SOCIETY
4.1 Do you belong to any associations/clubs?
4.2 What nationality are your friends?
4.3 Who does X play with mostly?
4.4 Does X get invited to visit her/his friends?
4.5 Has X ever stayed overnight at a friend's house? vise versa
4.6 Would you say that your home life is typically Australian or F/S/I? In what way is it similar/different?
4.7 Is it important that your children find out and learn about your cultural background? Who is responsible for teaching it?
4.8 What do you think of Australian people as a whole?
4.9 In your opinion, how does the way of life in your country compare with that of Australia?
4.10 Does what happens in S/F/I affect you? In what ways?

(b) <u>TEACHER INTERVIEWS</u>

3. TEACHER - PERSONAL
1.1 What can you tell me about your own background in teaching: qualifications, number of years in teaching, schools/grades taught etc?
1.2 Why did you choose teaching as a profession?
1.3 What is your basic approach to programme planning?
1.4 What methods do you use to assess student progress?
1.5 How do you cater for different learning styles of your students?

2. TEACHER - CHILD - FAMILY
2.1 What can you tell me about X's family background?
2.2 Have you had any contact with X's parents? When? Why?
2.3 Do X's parents attend teacher-parent meetings?
2.4 Do X's parents get involved in any school based activities? Please specify (eg. canteen, School Board)
2.5 Does X ever speak of her/his family at school? Please give examples
2.6 Do you have parents helping in your class-room activities? Please describe.
2.7 To what extent are parents/community involved in the running of this school?
2.8 How did you find-out about X's link with S/F/I?
2.9 Has this changed your approach towards him?
2.10 How would you describe X to another person who has not met her/him?

3. TEACHER - CHILD - SCHOOL

3.1 How long have you known X? Has s/he changed during this time? In what way?

3.2 How is X getting on in the classroom? Do you have any problems with 'X'? Please explain.

3.3 Does X have any special qualities or characteristics?

3.4 How would you describe X's attitude to work?

3.5 How much relief from face-to-face teaching do you get per week? What do you usually do during this time?

3.6 What ethnic groups are found in the school as a whole and in your classroom more specifically?

3.7 In what ways do you categorise children in your classroom?

3.8 It is often said that young children cannot and do not distinguish cultural differences? What is your opinion?

3.9 At what age do you think, children begin to differentiate between cultures? In what way?

4. TEACHER - CHILD - EDUCATION SYSTEM

4.1 In your opinion, what are the aims of schooling? What is the role of the class-teacher?

4.2 What do you understand by the term multiculturalism?

4.3 Do you incorporate the notion of multiculturalism in your classroom? In what ways?

4.4 Does this school have a policy on multicultural education?
Yes - How was it developed? How is it implemented?
No - Why? Is it necessary to have one?

4.5 What support is available to you to plan and present a multicultural education program in your classroom?

4.6 Have you had any difficulties in presenting a program based on multiculturalism?

4.7 What effect has the multicultural education program, had on your students? (Ask only if 4.3 = yes).

4.8 What are your thoughts about migrants in general? Have they changed over the years?

4.9 How should schools cater for the needs of children from different cultural backgrounds?

4.10 Have you changed your approach to teaching, as a result of educational policy changes towards multiculturalism?

(c) CHILD INTERVIEWS

1. CHILDREN - SELF KNOWLEDGE

1.1 What are some of the things you enjoy doing?

1.2 Do you collect anything? (hobbies)

1.3 Who are your friends?
1.4 What languages can you speak? Who taught you?
1.5 What language do you use when speaking with parents/siblings/grandparents/school friends?
1.6 What are things that you don't like to do?
1.7 What are you good/not so good at doing?
1.8 What would you like to do when you leave school?
1.9 If someone asked you whether you were S/F/I or Australian, what would you say? Why?
1.10 Would you like other children to know that your parents are from S/F/I? Why/Why not?
1.11 What do you think the other children think of you as being S/F/I or Australian?
1.12 What can you tell me about S/F/I?
1.13 Who do you think should tell you about S/F/I, your teacher or your parents?

2. CHILD - FAMILY

2.1 Where were you born? Where were your parents born?
2.2 Does mum or dad talk about that country? What have they told you?
2.3 Have you ever been to S/F/I? If yes, what can you remember about S/F/I?
2.4 Do you miss anything from S/F/I?
2.5 Where would you prefer to live - in Australia or S/F/I? Why?
2.6 Where do you think Mum and Dad would prefer to live: Australia or S/F/I?
2.7 Do your friends from school visit you at home? Do you go to visit them at their homes?
2.8 Do you watch television? How often? Which programs?
2.9 Do you read? Do your parents read to you? In what language?

3. CHILD - SCHOOL

3.1 What can you tell me about your school?
3.2 Do you know anyone in school who speaks Finnish/ etc?
3.3 ESL classes: like/dislike? what happens? who else goes?
3.4 What do you like/dislike about going to school? Explain.
3.5 Are you usually happy/sad at school? Explain.
3.6 Do you think that you are different or same as all the other children in your classroom? Explain.
3.7 Who do you usually sit next to?
3.8 With who do you usually play at school?
3.9 What do they teach you at school?
3.10 Is there anything else you would like to learn?

APPENDIX 2:

MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION: THE STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHICAL ACCEPTANCE

ACT Schools Authority, 1979

The following statement of philosophical acceptance on multicultural education was endorsed by the Authority on 10 September 1979.

1. Multicultural Education

1.1 The A.C.T. Schools Authority accepts that multi-cultural education requires:-

- an acknowledgment that Australia is a pluralist rather than a homogeneous society and that the various ethnic groups are able to make significant contributions to the mutual benefit of all members of the community;
- a perception of the cultural diversity within the Australian community that includes cognisance of the special position of Aborigines;
- a recognition by teachers and educational administrators that multicultural education is not an additional or optional subject, but an ethnic which should permeate all curriculum areas;
- a commitment by teachers to programs which allow groups to maintain their ethnic identity, customs and self-esteem;
- the continuing development within schools of attitudes of tolerance in all children towards others whose languages and lifestyles differ from their own.

1.2 In the light of the above statement the Authority recommends to school boards that they seek the involvement of their communities, especially minority ethnic groups, when considering courses designed for education in a multicultural society.

2. English as a Second Language

2.1 While accepting the necessity for multicultural education, the A.C.T. Schools Authority notes that English is the major language of communication in Australia and that this situation is likely to continue.

2.2 The Authority therefore believes that, as a priority, special assistance must be provided for children of non-English speaking backgrounds in order that their

lack of fluency in English does not inhibit their ability to realise fully their educational and social potential.

BILINGUAL EDUCATION

The following resolutions were agreed to by the Authority at its meeting on 17 August, 1981.

1. The Schools Authority adopts as policy on bilingual education and foreign language early start programmes that "there is educational and cultural value in giving all children the opportunity to learn a language, in addition to English as the mother tongue, from the early primary years".

2. Primary schools should have equal opportunity to bid for resources for bilingual education and foreign language early start programmes.

3. Participation in bilingual programmes and foreign language early start programmes should not depend on additional cost to the parents of the child.

4. Within this policy framework, schools should be encouraged to develop varied approaches to bilingual education and foreign language early start programmes.

5. That the Authority establish five teaching positions within the defined needs pool for the development of bilingual and foreign language early start programmes in primary schools and review the allocation of these positions to selected schools from time to time.

6. The Schools Office recognises that primary schools with bilingual programmes have specialist staffing requirements. In the recruitment, training and allocation of staff, special consideration be given by the Schools Office to the needs of schools who may wish to offer bilingual and foreign language early start programmes to ensure that such professional expertise is available in A.C.T. schools.

7. That the Schools Office note the need to:-

   (a) Set up procedures for evaluation of existing resource material and the development and provision of further curriculum materials for second language courses.

   (b) Develop a range of assessment strategies to test student acquisition of second languages and multicultural attitudes.

   (c) Examine the professional needs of special language teachers in primary schools with regard to permanency of employment, promotional prospects and staff development.