Using Cultural Brokering Strategies to Improve the Early Childhood Education of Roma, Gypsy and Traveller Children: Case Studies from the UK and Serbia

Sarah Maria Klaus

Final Thesis Submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Education (International)

Institute of Education

University College London

December 12, 2018

Declaration

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

Word count: 43,966

Sarah Maria Klaus

12 December 2018

Abstract

This thesis explores the use of cultural brokering to promote the inclusion of Roma children in early childhood education through examining case studies of the Traveller Education Support Services in the UK and Pedagogic Assistants in Serbia. It suggests that cultural brokers add value to systems through extending the social capital of marginalised communities by linking them with broader social institutions. It uses Bronfenbrenner's ecological model of human development as a tool for understanding the value of integrating cultural brokers at various levels of early education, and specifically in both early education services (preschools and primary schools) as well as at municipal levels. It develops a definition of cultural brokering in early childhood education, which incorporates four key functions: 1) provision of direct support to children, families, preschools and schools; 2) liaising between communities and early education services; 3) enabling linkages of families with other necessary resources and services; and, 4) serving as advocates and role models to support social inclusion and counter discriminatory practices. It creates an argument for extending cultural brokering across early childhood education systems to support social inclusion of the most marginalised groups and illustrates the importance of strong engagement of both national and municipal governments in establishing enabling conditions. Finally, this thesis suggests that significantly improving the social inclusion of the Roma population in Europe will require earlier and more complex interventions that support children's development well before they enter the formal education system.

Impact Statement

Most studies about early education of diverse students are premised on the assumption that services, as they are structured and staffed now, can adapt effectively to meet the real needs of very disadvantaged ethnic minority groups. This thesis explores the possibility that in order to significantly impact young Roma children's development, broader changes in early education systems are needed, not only in classrooms and schools, but also in the local authorities that manage access to services.

The concept of *cultural broker* explored in this thesis has had little application in early education. A cultural broker is, essentially, an additional staff position hired intentionally to strengthen linkages of young children and their families with early education provision. This thesis looks at cultural brokers embedded in the early education systems in the UK and Serbia in order to develop a common definition that could be applied more thoroughly in future studies, perhaps, importantly, studies that compare outcomes of young children from families that have had the benefit of support from cultural brokers, with those that have not. Interestingly, this study reinforces the importance of intervening at multiple levels of systems, in this case in both classrooms and local authorities.

Findings from this thesis could inform improvements to or expansion of the cultural brokering initiatives explored in the UK and Serbia, and these strategies should be shared with other countries/areas that have Roma populations. However, the concept of cultural broker might be further applied in Europe as a mechanism to support other fragile, minority communities facing discrimination, including migrants and refugees. Cultural brokering could offer these communities not only an easier pathway into early education, but it could potentially provide employment opportunities for newcomers, who were educators in their home countries. Cultural brokers may well be required during an essential transitional phase to support communities that initially have very little traction in early education systems. In a world where so many people are on the move, deeper adjustments to the early education system may well be necessary. The findings

from this study speak to changes in policies and service provision that would have impact on academics, educators and communities alike.

I plan to share the findings from this thesis in the UK and Serbia, but also to spread the idea of introducing cultural brokers into early education systems more widely, through publications and presentations at conferences and events. I am particularly interested in reaching out to policy makers and educators across Europe, including those working at the European Commission, and to civil society coalitions, such as the Moving Minds Alliance and the Roma Early Years Networks focused on young refugee and Roma children respectively.   These coalitions actively seek and disseminate promising service models.   As the early childhood field gains momentum, greater attention is being paid globally to the early childhood workforce and there are opportunities through my position at the Open Society Foundations to introduce this research into these discussions, as well.

Acknowledgements

This doctorate has been a decade in the making, and a long one at that. I would like to thank Professor Iram Siraj for her patience, guidance and wisdom throughout and for her enduring belief that I would eventually finish. I also wish to thank the Open Society Foundations, which supported my doctoral studies and provided me with the sabbatical that enabled me to complete my research and writing.

This study is about Roma children and their families and how they interact with early education systems. I would like to acknowledge up front the Roma parents who participated in this study for trusting me enough to share their stories. Many policymakers, academics, principals, teachers, teaching assistants, and other education staff, also generously shared their experiences and ideas with me and for this I am grateful. This research would not have been possible without the assistance of Arthur Ivatts, formerly of Her Majesty's Inspectorate in the UK, and Milena Mihajlovic, Executive Director of the Center for Interactive Pedagogy in Serbia, who provided advice and contacts throughout this study. They made linkages with the appropriate contacts in the four municipalities and provided encouragement along the way. Big thanks also go to the education officials in the local municipalities who organized visits, interviews and focus groups. In each city I was fortunate to be in the hands of a local education expert, who provided guidance and accompanied me on visits.

I dedicate this thesis to my father, Dr. Marshall Henry Klaus, a pediatrician, neonatologist and researcher of infants and their parents, who passed away as I was writing it. His lifelong interest and curiosity in child development continue to be an inspiration.

Table of Contents

Table of Tables

Table of Figures

Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Explanation
ACERT	Advisory Council for the Education of Romany and other Travellers
CIP	Centre for Interactive Pedagogy
EC	European Commission
ECCE	Early Childhood Care and Education
ECE	Early Childhood Education
ECEC	Early Childhood Education and Care
FRA	European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights
GRT	Gypsy, Roma and Traveller
HMI	Her Majesty's Inspectorate
IFS	Institution-Focused Study
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Study
MoEST	Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development (Serbia)
NATT+	National Association of Teachers of Travellers and Other Professionals
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
Ofsted	Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe
SIPRU	Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit (Serbia)
TESS	Traveller Education Support Service (UK)
UK	United Kingdom
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Education Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WHO	World Health Organisation

Reflection on the EdD Experience

I entered the Doctorate in Education (International) programme, inspired both to enrich my career in international early childhood development with deeper academic and scientific content, as well as to develop a distinct area of expertise. Studying at the Institute of Education has spanned ten years of my life, a decade in which the international field of early childhood development has shifted decisively from a focus on survival of young children to a broader agenda emphasizing children's right to develop and thrive. Adopted in 2016, the Sustainable Development Goals for 2030, include, for the first time, a target aimed at ensuring all children are developmentally on track when they enter school (Richter et al., 2016). The World Bank, UNICEF and WHO have announced major initiatives and investments in early childhood, and interest from governments, academics, donors and professionals is accelerating. My doctoral studies have supported my participation in this movement.

This reflective statement summarises my academic journey through the international EdD programme. It highlights linkages between the required elements (the four taught courses, the Institution Focused Study and the thesis), and assesses how the International EdD programme as a whole has supported me to expand my knowledge of the field, to develop deeper conceptual, theoretical and analytical thinking, and to improve my methodological and analytical writing skills.

Review of the Required Elements of the International EdD Programme

In the assignment for the **Foundations of Professionalism** course, I explore professionalism in the context of the co-development of an early childhood postgraduate programme at BRAC University in Dhaka, implemented in collaboration with my institution, the Open Society Foundations. I assert that in developing the courses for the MA programme, it is fundamental to forefront the impact of culture on both human development and on understanding of quality early childhood settings. I argue that doing this requires a special kind of professional – one who can negotiate cultural differences – and a process of co-

creation by international and local faculty working together. The paper helped me define my own professional role as an international academic practitioner, being engaged with theory, but also grounded in pragmatic design, implementation and evaluation of programmes. I was encouraged to refine my academic writing style and to dig deeper into terminology and theory to identify dichotomies and tensions.

The *International Education* course introduced me to new ways of advocating for investments in early childhood. In the main assignment, I summarise evidence supporting the critical importance of the early childhood period and relate this to the capability approach of Amartya Sen. The crux of the paper is in its linking of the evolving capability of young children – now and in the future – with the capability of parents and caregivers, who support and scaffold children's developing independence. Through these essays I identify connections between early childhood and the social justice issues that are of primary concern to the Open Society Foundations where I work, and I have subsequently used the arguments developed in this course to support my perspectives at work.

During the *Methods of Enquiry I* course, I designed a study to evaluate the effectiveness of a Bosnian parenting programme, which seeks to reach young children who do not have the opportunity to attend preschool before they enroll in primary school. The paper summarizes literature on the factors that facilitate successful transition to primary school and on the concept of *readiness for school* and how to measure it. The methodology of the study was shaped by Rimm-Kaufman and Pianta's dynamic ecological model (Rimm-Kaufman & Pianta, 2000) of the transition to formal schooling. Their model defines this transition as a multi-year process that emphasizes the shifting relationships that young children have with their parents, peers and teachers, and which is grounded in the socio-ecological approaches of Bronfenbrenner (Bronfenbrenner, 2005). The paper is an early attempt at designing a study, overly-ambitious in its scope with an under-developed conceptual and methodological framework.

In the second methodology class, *Methods of Enquiry II*, I embarked on a small study of two Bosnian Roma children, who had recently entered primary school. The

aim was to pilot collection of data about how they were settling into school. Using the dynamic ecological theory of transition identified in the first Methods of Enquiry class as a framework, I sought to better understand how the relationships these children had with their parents, teachers and peers were supporting their transition. The study uses naturalistic observations in the classroom and interviews, methods adopted from sociology and anthropology. This exercise tested my ability to conduct research, reinforcing the importance of carefully matching the methodology to the purpose and scope of the study and of advanced planning to ensure selection of a purposive sample and observation tools.

As I developed the proposal for my *Institution Focused Study (IFS)*, my supervisor, Professor Iram Siraj, encouraged me to link the IFS and thesis in order to enable deeper exploration of my chosen topic: Roma children's participation in early childhood education (ECE). We decided that the IFS would take a broad look at the Roma ECE workforce in Europe and its impact on Roma children's participation in ECE, and that the thesis would delve deeper into an area that develops out of IFS. The resulting IFS, *Straggling Behind: Participation of Roma Children and Employment of Roma Staff in Early Childhood Education in Europe,* builds on areas of interest and learning from the four courses: the concepts of professionalism, social justice and transition to primary school. The paper consolidates current information about Roma participation in ECE in Europe and explores the employment of Roma staff as a means to increasing participation. It reveals that in European countries with the largest Roma populations, Roma are vastly underrepresented in the ECE workforce, and there are no trends regarding the employment of Roma staff in ECE. Most experts surveyed believe that increasing Roma participation in the ECE workforce would improve Roma participation in education and have positive impacts on both Roma and majority ethnic children.

The study employs largely qualitative data collection methods (documentary analysis, survey, interviews), but also collected limited quantitative data. For the survey, I sought to recruit a key informant from each of the 21 European countries with the largest Roma populations. This proved to be a positive challenge, and one

that connected me with Roma experts and policy makers across Europe. I conducted a limited number of interviews, but did not have enough space to use these data effectively within the IFS; instead, these informed my thesis. I have subsequently used the main finding from this study – that Europe would need 8-10 times more Roma ECE staff (more than 50,000 additional staff) in order to achieve a teaching force that reflects the diversity of the potential student body – in my professional work, and have presented this research at conferences.

The topic of my *thesis*, cultural brokering, thus, grew naturally out of the IFS. Surveys and interviews conducted for the IFS had highlighted the role Roma staff play in bridging cultural gaps, and survey responses suggested that increasing the Roma ECE workforce would improve enrolment, attendance and achievement. I became particularly interested in the Serbian government's large-scale initiative to establish the new position of Roma pedagogic assistant to support Roma children in preschools and primary schools. Moreover, in the process of conducting interviews for the IFS, I learned of the existence in the UK of Traveller Education Support Services, created at the municipal level to support enrolment and improve cultural responsiveness of schools. Both of these are examples of cultural brokering, and further study revealed that cultural brokering is relatively unstudied in education contexts. Thus, exploration of cultural brokering as a means to improve Roma participation in ECE became the focus of my work. Whereas in the IFS I took a broad look at the Roma ECE workforce across Europe through a survey of 21 key informants across as many countries, the thesis uses a case study approach to drill down and better understand cultural brokering in ECE systems the UK and Serbia.

Linking Learning Across the Programme

My focus of study across the International EdD programme has been early childhood education and development, appropriately, because my studies are sponsored by the Open Society Foundations, where I am employed to direct a global early childhood programme. One of my aims has been to develop expertise in content areas that are relevant to my work, such as: the quality of ECE settings, the impact of culture on children's development, professionalism in ECE, young

children's transition into formal education. All of my research-related work has focused on Roma ECE, an area of great interest for both me and for the Open Society Foundations, with the result that I have gained through the doctorate a distinctive area of expertise. Additionally, my work has explored wider themes from sociology, developmental psychology and economics, including the socio-ecological model of human development, social capital, cultural brokering, and the capability approach. The table below summarizes where I have woven in these content areas across my period of study, and it shows how the thesis brings together almost all of the content areas that I studied across the programme. Though I find great resonance with Sen's approach to capability, social justice and equity and use these ideas in my professional work, the capability approach did not figure into my research-related work (the two Methods courses, the IFS or the thesis).

Content Areas of Focus During Completion of the International EdD

	Foundations of Professionalism	International Education	Methods of Enquiry I	Methods of Enquiry II	Institution Focused Study	Thesis
Quality in Early Childhood Settings	X		X	X	X	X
Impact of Culture on Children's Development	X	X	X	X	X	X
Professionalism in ECE	X				X	X
Children's Transition into Formal Education			X	X	X	X
Roma ECE			X	X	X	X
Socio-ecological model of human development	X	X	X	X	X	X
Social capital		X	X			X
Cultural Brokering	X				X	X
Capability Approach		X				

My studies have pushed me to explore different epistemological approaches, and in particular, they introduced me to post-structuralist perspectives, which question terminology and bring to the forefront issues such as individual freedom and power relationships (Cannella, 2005; Freire, 1993). My research work, however, has generally used a social-constructivist framework, and draws heavily on the writings of Vygotsky (Vygotsky, 1978) and Bronfenbrenner (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, 2005). This perspective recognizes the influence of experience, culture and interpersonal interactions on human behaviour and development and seeks to identify generalizable phenomena. Focusing in this way on the quality of interactions and relationships is particularly appropriate for studies of young children, whose development is so highly dependent on others.

My research-related work has been largely qualitative, employing documentary analysis, interviews, focus groups, participant observations and semi-structured surveys. The experience of conducting several studies (the Methods study, the IFS and theses) has reinforced the importance of designing studies of a manageable scope and of advanced preparation; for example, pilot testing instruments, preparatory visits to organize schedules and sampling. The Roma population I have focused on faces deep discrimination, and as a result, my work has required close attention to the ethics of power relationships. Further, arranging interviews and focus groups with members of the community has required me to build relationships with people who are already trusted by the community.

In conclusion, this academic journey has pushed me both to engage more deeply with the content and terminology in my field of ECE, and to strengthen transferable skills. I've been encouraged to elaborate more on discussions of theory, to interrogate and challenge ideas, and to position my arguments in relation to those of others. This thesis is a culmination of what I have learned, bringing together knowledge and skills that I have gained into what is hopefully a well-conceptualized study with convincing findings that contribute to the very under-studied area of Roma ECE.

Definitions

Roma and Gypsy Roma Traveller (GRT)

It has become widespread practice across the European Union to use the term Roma to refer collectively to Roma, Sinti, Kale and related groups in Europe, including Travellers, and to cover the wide diversity of ethnic communities concerned, including persons who identify themselves as 'Gypsies' in the UK, for instance. Roma collectively make up the largest minority and are amongst the most disadvantaged citizens in Europe. Due to under-reporting, stigma and mobility, estimates of the total population are widely contested (McDonald & Negrin, 2010); however, the most accepted estimates from the Council of Europe indicate that there are approximately 10-12 million Roma living in Europe and approximately half are citizens of the European Union (Support Team of the Special Representative of the Secretary General of the Council of Europe for Roma Issues, 2012). This thesis, for practical reasons, will use the term Roma when referring collectively to the groups included in applied terminology across Europe. However, it will use a different strategy for referring to the relevant ethnic communities in Serbia and the UK.

When referring to these communities in Serbia, this paper will follow the regional European practice and use the term Roma collectively to refer to the diverse ethnic groups that now live in Serbia and that identify with the wider European Roma community. This includes Roma who are native to Serbia, refugees and internally displaced Roma who have migrated to Serbia from across the territories of the former Yugoslavia, and Roma who have been readmitted to Serbia following attempted migration to other countries. In Serbia, the collective term Roma is used in the census, public documents and laws, and by civil society organisations and international agencies to refer collectively to these groups.

When referring to groups in the UK this paper will by necessity differentiate between commonly used terms - Gypsy Roma Traveller (GRT) and Roma - to both reflect how these groups self-identify and how government documents refer to these groups. Traveller and Gypsy communities have lived in the UK for at least 500

years, though they have different historical migration patterns, traditions, trades and cultures (Craig, 2011). Traveller communities can be further broken down into Irish Traveller, Traveller and new age Travellers (people who have adopted a nomadic lifestyle). It is important to note that the word 'gypsy,' which is preferred by many English Gypsies, has a negative connotation in continental Europe, where it is frequently used and perceived as an ethnic slur. Similarly, the term 'Roma' has a more specific meaning in the UK to refer to members of ethnic communities that affiliate under the term Roma and that have migrated from continental Europe from the mid-1990s onwards. Thus, the term Roma in the UK refers to the recent influx of migrants from Europe, while Gypsy and Traveller refer to groups that have long since settled in the UK (Craig, 2011). There is some logic for differentiating amongst these groups in the UK, as Roma – recent migrants who do not have English as a first language, have very different needs; however, the current practice of avoiding the discussion of, and planning for, the needs of new Roma populations in policies has rendered them invisible, rather than distinct. For the sake of clarity, this thesis will use GRT when collectively referring to all groups in the UK, Gypsy and Traveller, when referring to those groups that predate the migration from Europe from the 1990s onwards, and Roma to refer to groups who have migrated from Europe over the past 25 years.

Early Childhood Education (ECE)

This paper uses the international definition of early childhood to refer to the period from conception to age eight, recognising both the importance of a holistic developmental focus during these years generally, as well as the importance of creating smooth transitions and continuity between pre-primary and primary settings in the educational context more specifically. The term Early Childhood Education (ECE) will be used throughout to refer to preschool and early primary (usually through grade 2), which provide formal educational services to children eight years and under. Thus, it eschews two terms that have wider usage, but more limited meanings in the countries in question. In the UK, the term Early Years is used to refer to learning and development in the Foundation Stage, before children

turn five and begin formal schooling. For similar reasons, this paper will not use the term used by the European Commission and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) - Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) - as it also refers exclusively to pre-primary years. Nor will it use Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE), which, though it is generally used internationally to refer to the period of concern for this thesis (from conception to age eight), encompasses a wider framework of services, including services that offer care for working parents.

Chapter 1   Rationale

1.1   The Challenge and Promise of Roma Early Childhood Education in Europe

The idea for this thesis grew out of my institution-focused study (IFS), which explored the role of Roma staff in ECE. It uncovered a growing momentum across Europe to create positions for Roma staff in preschools and primary schools to facilitate communication with Roma families and children and to improve children's attendance and achievement. It identified a need to address cultural barriers to Roma children's participation in ECE by promoting stronger linkages and building trust between formal educational institutions and ethnic communities that have faced centuries of discrimination (Klaus, 2014).

The exclusion and deprivation experienced by Roma populations in Europe have been well-documented by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA), through three household surveys, the most recent in 2016. As a demographic group, they are one of the youngest populations in Europe, and though all socio-economic levels are represented across the community, over 80% live in households that fall below national poverty lines. A substantial number live in isolated settlements or poor neighbourhoods in unsuitable housing, many without access to basic utilities. Fewer than one third of Roma are in paid employment and around half of the population indicates they have faced discrimination in the past year. Access to maternal-child health care is lower for Roma in many countries and malnutrition is high, leading to larger numbers of low birth-weight babies, higher infant mortality and higher rates of stunting. Vaccination rates are also substantially lower for Roma children across the European Union. Less than 20% of the Roma population completes secondary or vocational school; the level generally required by most employers (Bruggemann, 2012; European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, 2016; European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights & UNDP, 2012; Fundacio Secretariado Gitano et al., 2009).

Though participation in quality early childhood education has been identified as one way of reducing poverty and gaps in equity as well as increasing lifelong educational and economic attainment, the rate of participation of young Roma children in early childhood education in Europe is half that of the majority population (European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, 2016). Logically, European countries, which offer some of the most robust and universal early childhood education systems globally, should be well placed to ensure provision of services for all Roma children. Several documents have established European targets for early education, including specific targets for Roma participation, urging universal provision of at least two years of preschool prior to entry into formal primary education (European Commission, 2011, 2013a, 2013b). With the European Union and several nations increasingly focused on improving Roma participation in early education, there is a need to identify and share the most successful approaches.

Hungary is an example of a country that has made structural changes in the provision of ECE to improve access for the most disadvantaged children. This has included eliminating costs and barriers, providing financial incentives, and as of September 2015, early childhood education is compulsory. As a result more than 90% of Roma children four years and older attend early education in Hungary, a figure that is more than double the participation rate of Roma in most Central European countries, and which is only exceeded in Europe by participation rates in Spain (European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, 2016).

While results in Hungary are very promising, there is evidence that structural reforms are not enough to eliminate the gaps in participation in preschool education between young Roma children and majority populations. Data from a World Bank/UNDP/EC household survey in five countries indicates that while access issues, such as availability of preschool places, transportation, fees and hidden costs, such as clothing, remain the main barriers to Roma participation in early education, cultural barriers are also significant for many Roma parents. Between a quarter and a half of Roma parents who participated in the survey and who do not send their children to preschool would consider enrolling their children in preschool

if a Roma person was on staff (World Bank, 2012). Multi-country studies and guides on Roma ECE (Bennett, 2012; UNESCO & Council of Europe, 2014; World Bank, 2012) also identify cultural barriers as contributory factors to low Roma participation in ECE, yet, solutions remain under-explored.

1.2   New Solutions to Old Problems: Exploring Cultural Brokering as a Strategy for Roma Participation in Early Childhood Education

This thesis aims to move beyond a discussion of structural barriers to Roma participation in ECE to explore one innovative solution to address the cultural gap identified above: cultural brokering. One assumption guiding this thesis is that cultural brokering will increase Roma children's participation in quality early learning programmes and improve involvement of parents, leading in the long term to improvements in learning and development outcomes, as defined by national standards. Longitudinal research studies, extending across decades in a wide variety of contexts, confirm that participation of disadvantaged children in quality early education programmes confer significant lifelong advantages and can mediate or reduce gaps in equity prior to children's entry into formal schooling (Heckman, Moon, Pinto, Savelyev, & Yavitz, 2010; La Paro & Pianta, 2000; Schweinhart, 2005; K. Sylva, Melhuish, Sammons, Siraj-Blatchford, & Taggart, 2010; Kathy Sylva, Melhuish, Sammons, Siraj-Blatchford, & Taggart, 2008). Programmes that begin when children are infants and toddlers, that seek to improve home environments and that address a wide range of skills have the greatest long term impacts, exceeding even the impressive benefits that emerge from quality preschool education initiatives (Stevens & English, 2016).

The research for my IFS was premised on the idea that the growing practice of hiring Roma ECE into preschools and primary schools is critical in bridging systemic cultural gaps. However, through both my work at the Open Society Foundations and on the IFS, I was introduced to the Traveller Education Support Services (TESS) in the UK, which I realised also effectively serve a cultural brokering function at the municipal level. These specialised units are located within local authorities (Councils) and typically provide two kinds of support for GRT children: 1) ensuring

nursery and school placements; and, 2) helping education institutions recognise and better address their needs.

This thesis seeks to better understand these two cultural brokering strategies through two qualitative national case studies, one focused on Pedagogical Assistants in Serbia, and the second focused on Traveller Education and Support Services (TESSs) in the UK. Strategies in these two countries were selected for this study to better understand how cultural brokering operates at various levels of the education system. The UK's TESSs strengthen the capacity of *municipal* structures to reach out to Roma communities, while the introduction of Serbia's pedagogical teaching assistants is an approach that supports linkages with Roma communities at the *classroom* or *institutional* level (preschools and schools).

The selection of each of these two national strategies as a case is purposive. The TESS (municipal cultural brokering approach) is unique to the UK, and, thus, is included as a single example of cultural brokering organised and replicated at the local governmental level, virtually across the entire country. The fact that the introduction of TESSs was initiated by local governments reflects the decentralisation of the education system in the UK at the time the TESS was formed (Alexander, 2000). Serbia was identified as the second country case study, through my institution-focused study, as it has one of the largest and best-documented programmes of hiring Pedagogical Assistants to support Roma children in early education (Klaus, 2014). The introduction of the new Pedagogical Assistant positions into the Serbian education system has been accomplished through efforts of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development (MoEST). The selection of these countries also fits well with my personal circumstances. I live and work in the UK, and understand and can function relatively well in Serbian, both of which facilitated data collection and analysis.

The political and economic contexts in the two countries are strikingly divergent, offering opportunities to compare how cultural brokering operates in very different circumstances while raising questions about why each strategy has developed within each context. The UK, a prosperous western European democracy and

currently a member of the European Union,[1] has a heterogeneous, multi-ethnic population. Even the GRT population is highly diverse, consisting of a variety of groups emanating from diverse backgrounds; Irish Travellers, Travellers, English Gypsies and Roma, to name a few. The education system is challenged to respond to diverse pupils with different ethnic backgrounds, many of whom need support in learning English. Educational outcomes and statistics are disaggregated by ethnic group, with the aim of identifying, understanding and remedying gaps in achievement. Increasing numbers of Roma families from Central Eastern Europe are migrating to the UK, challenging local authorities to develop new strategies to work with migrant Roma children who do not speak English.

In contrast, Serbia, a country facing huge economic challenges, is a former communist country seeking accession to the European Union. Until recently, the education system was structured to address a relatively homogenous population, offering very few accommodations to support pupils with special needs. Serbia is in the process of changing education laws and practices to adopt inclusive approaches, including accommodating children with special educational needs in mainstream classrooms, rather than educating them in segregated settings or at home. Attention to the education of Roma is largely motivated by requirements for accession set by the European Union, which is increasingly vigilant about protecting the rights of the Roma population (European Commission, 2011). Integrating the Roma population, which consists of several distinct cultural groups, often living in isolated settlements without basic amenities, creates huge challenges.

1.3   Research Questions

The crux of this study is an exploration of how cultural brokers – personnel hired by preschools, schools and municipalities to improve GRT and Roma participation and the quality of early childhood and basic education – function in two European countries using a comparative approach. It seeks to contextually identify why formal linking mechanisms between education systems and these communities

---

[1] As this thesis is being written, the UK is negotiating its exit from the European Union.

were introduced and why different mechanisms were developed within these different national contexts. It will compare key features of the approaches, attempting to identify where services have created positive linkages, where problems have occurred, and the extent to which the experiences share common elements. This will require an exploration of the national context of GRT ECE in the UK and Roma ECE in Serbia, the motivations that led to the introduction of these strategies, as well as emerging impacts. One interesting aspect of this study will be exploration of the extent to which changes have permeated the system in each country.

The effectiveness of each strategy will be assessed on several levels. A primary aim of cultural brokering in early education in the UK and Serbia is the improvement of GRT and Roma children's participation (enrolment, regular attendance) in inclusive early childhood education services (preschools and early primary grades). In both contexts cultural brokers engage with curriculum and teaching strategies used in early education institutions with the aim of improving the quality and relevance of instruction. Quality early learning settings seek to minimise discontinuities between home and school and use a variety of strategies to support children who come from different cultural backgrounds (Diversity in Early Childhood Education and Training & International Step by Step Association, 2012; Kathy Sylva, Siraj-Blatchford, & Taggart, 2006). The perceived satisfaction of GRT and Roma families, and staff in preschools, schools and local authorities with both early education services and with the work of the cultural brokers, are additional measures of effectiveness.

The following **research questions** will be addressed in this study:

a. Why were cultural brokering strategies introduced in each country?
b. What are the key features of these two cultural brokering strategies generally, and, more specifically, of the roles of the cultural brokers in each system?
c. What evidence is available to support the notion that cultural brokering strategies being used in two distinct cultural contexts increase participation in, and quality of, early childhood education for GRT and Roma children?

d. How do the people involved (cultural brokers, parents, teachers, children) perceive the impact of cultural brokering?

Though this study does not follow an experimental design, which would be required to conclusively answer questions about impact, existing quantitative data, such as participation rates, child outcome and quality measures (where these are available), will be cited, and qualitative information will be collected from study participants. The intent is to uncover aspects of the services that appear to have the greatest effects.

Chapter 2   Literature Review

Research in education has often neglected the use of broader systemic approaches in understanding change, though this wider lens is crucial in understanding both social inclusion and social exclusion (Downes, 2014). Such research might contribute to a better understanding of the gaps that so often ensue between the establishment of policies, representing the intentions of governments, and their real-life implementation through the creation and operation of complex, multi-layered systems. Indeed, education systems reflect the social and economic values of the societies in which they are embedded.

This thesis uses a systems approach to explore the potential of leveraging a unique type of human interaction – cultural brokering – at various levels of the education system to encourage and support a very marginalised population to access and participate in ECE services. Cultural brokering is concerned with the exchange and acquisition of social and cultural capital, through sharing knowledge and information across different communities, facilitating communication, and engaging in problem-solving, mediation, role modelling and advocacy. The aim is to create pathways for Roma, Gypsy and Traveller communities to break the cycle of poverty and discrimination that has enmeshed their community for centuries by improving lifelong opportunities and socio-economic status and enabling their acceptance and success as equal and valued members within wider society.

Exploring the impact of cultural brokering in early education contexts requires an understanding of how young children develop and learn. This study uses Bronfenbrenner's socio-ecological theory of human development as a framework to understand how cultural brokering can influence young children's developmental trajectories. It addresses how children's characteristics and their day-to-day interactions and experiences drive development, but also recognises the role played by family, institutions and social, political and historical contexts. It offers a way of exploring the complex mechanisms through which discrimination and marginalisation influence individual development. This chapter opens with an

overview of Bronfenbrenner's theory, and its application to early education systems, and then provides a review of the literature that addresses the fundamental elements of cultural brokering transactions and interactions: what is being exchanged or shared (cultural and social capital), and who is doing it (cultural brokers).

2.1 Education Systems and the Ecology of Human Development

This thesis uses a systems model – Bronfenbrenner's socio-ecological theory of human development - to understand the role that cultural brokering strategies in ECE have on the development of young GRT and Roma children. This contrasts with the deficit model typically used to describe the dynamics of GRT and Roma communities. The deficit model describes an almost inevitable material poverty and dependency on government support transmitted across generations due to low education and related low employment. It places very little responsibility on society and structures that actively exclude participation, holding GRT and Roma responsible for their marginalisation. The systems approach used in this thesis, however, recognises that education systems have embedded within them a wider web of social values, norms and politics that both enable and restrict the degrees of freedom conferred on its main participants: children, teachers and parents. It also recognises that individuals (children and their caregivers) are not merely pawns in a system that determines their lives. Rather, they are active agents with personalities, individual characteristics, capabilities and preferences that also drive their development. Development, thus, reflects the results of the continuous dynamic interaction of personal characteristics and social factors.

In its earliest version Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological systems model describes the influences of the variety of settings that surround the developing child. The *microsystem* refers to the immediate environment and interpersonal interactions. More particularly, it consists of a child's relationships with their main caregiver(s) and the embedding of these relationships within a family or care structure. The *mesosystem* refers to wider settings in which a child participates (preschool, school, playground, a friend's house) and to the relations between these settings, for

instance, between home and preschool or school, between siblings and peers. The *exosystem* describes the settings in which the child does not participate, but that directly influence the child's life (the parents' workplaces), and the *macrosystem* refers to the belief systems, cultures and ideologies that underpin society and specific communities. Importantly, this approach recognises the multiple and varied sources of influence on an individual's development and highlights that transitions across contexts (for instance, between home and preschool/school) and prevailing social ideologies present challenges to development.

Bronfenbrenner further refined his socio-ecological theory during his lifetime, publishing new iterations in the 1980s and 1990s. His revised theory elaborated a process of human development across four dimensions (Process/Person/Context/Time), of which the social institutional systems (contextual dimension), outlined above and in earlier versions, represent just one of these. Later versions define human development as driven by proximal processes (process dimension), which reflect the increasingly complex interactions between persons, things and symbols in the immediate environment. The role of time (time dimension) is also further elaborated with immediate interactions defined as taking place in micro-time, repetitive interactions taking place in meso-time, and a person's chronological age or cohort (factors specific to a historical period) defined as macro-time. Interestingly, the fourth variable, personal characteristics (personal dimension), describes how individual character traits interact with development. These traits include influences that a person has on others due to race, gender, age etc; differences in resources (mental, emotional, material) that an individual brings into each interaction; and, differences in individual temperament, motivation and persistence. Thus, human development is seen as a complex and dynamic process of interactions between an individual and the environment (familial and societal) over time.

These later iterations of theory provide a much richer, multi-dimensional perspective on human development. Bronfenbrenner defined *ecological niches* as particular regions in the micro environment of a developing individual that are

especially favourable or unfavourable for the optimal development of individuals with particular personal characteristics. As a result, his approach to researching development favours models that explore interactions between various inputs aiming to identify synergies between two factors that create a more positive developmental environment than would be expected if adding the simple sum of their individual effects. Conversely, he also drew attention to the negative impact of ruptures and environmental instability on development. Understanding the impact of instability on development is relevant to the contexts explored in this study. In fact, Roma populations live in environments characterised by great instability and many are recent migrants. Likewise, due to pervasive poverty most families live without assurances that their basic needs will be met, and they must be ready to adapt accordingly (to move, to switch jobs, to change housing arrangements).

Bronfenbrenner's later work also gives greater weight to the dimension of time or, as he called it, the *chronosystem*. As noted above, he bundled time into nested, small to large units placing immediate, single interactions in the present within a wider frame of repetitive interactions and cohort effects that reflect historical factors. The historical context is very relevant to the Roma populations in this study whose lives are impacted strongly by national political, economic and social trends, by new migration corridors across Europe, and by greater regional attention to the plight of Roma from European institutions. He also drew attention to the cumulative effect of development on the life of an individual, emphasising that future developmental potential builds on the earliest foundations. Thus, interactions taking place in the present impact later potential development. One interesting corollary he noted, is the potential of the developing child to influence the environment in which they live, including the characteristics of their caregivers, thereby impacting in a circular fashion their future development. One alarming implication of the additive nature of development is that the roots of social exclusion are laid down early (Schoon, 2006). On the positive side, early interventions that are successful can potentially change the life course of an individual.

This linking of lives, one with another and within a historical context, draws heavily on Elder's (1998) concept of life course development. Elder's work situates development in a historical and evolutionary context. Historical context directly impacts available opportunities to each generational cohort, as Elder's analysis of the life course of children born during the Great Depression in the US attests. Such historical forces create different developmental contexts for each cohort. Like Bronfenbrenner's work, Elder contradicts the notion that development is a simple matter of internally and individually-driven maturational forces. Of importance to this study is the emphasis Elder places on the disproportionate impact that critical transitions play in determining the life course of individuals. Early transitions, such as the start of formal schooling or the transition to higher levels of education, require that individuals reorganise themselves mentally, physically and socially to adapt to an unfamiliar environment. Such transitions offer moments of opportunity, or more intensive periods of developmental change, in the lives of individuals. The potential positive impact of intervening during critical transitions raises expectations for the role of cultural brokers, as we will see.

Tudge et al. (2009) point out the extensive misuse of Bronfenbrenner's theories in research. Many researchers have continued to use the earliest versions of this theory, which focus on the role of social context in human development. The later iterations of the theory offer a more empowering vision of development as being as much driven by the agents involved (children themselves, parents and other significant individuals) as by an inanimate system. This model also situates children's individual characteristics – what they bring with them – within an interactive framework that recognises the role that the quality of interactions play in development. This model is consistent with evidence that child-level factors (school-readiness, gender, socio-economic status) appear to predict 25% of achievements in primary school (La Paro & Pianta, 2000). Wider systemic and contextual factors play a substantial role in supporting children's school success. ECE systems are complex and include institutional (preschool/primary school), municipal/local government, community/regional and national government levels. Thus, Bronfenbrenner's theory implies that reforms at all levels are essential.

Applied to the GRT and Roma in the ECE context, Bronfenbrenner's theory provides a framework to understand both the challenges presented by discrimination in society as well as the reforms that can potentially mitigate this in the education system. It offers a way of exploring xenophobia, discrimination and anti-GRT and anti-Roma sentiments in wider society and their embodiment within educational institutions for young children. Inevitably, whether by intention or accident, social prejudices lead to the stereotyping of GRT and Roma children by other children, other parents and education staff. This may well explain why Roma parents in five Central European countries would prefer to send their children to an early education institution that has a Roma person on staff who is available to facilitate communication and provide cultural support and protection. The use of socio-ecological theory also offers a way of understanding the nesting policy relationships that exist between a classroom and the preschool/school, local government education department and national Ministry in which it is situated. The theory can be used to explain the necessity of introducing reforms to the education system at multiple levels to accommodate diversity.

In closing this section, it is again worthwhile to heed Bronfenbrenner's warning not to rely on single factors in understanding the course of human development. Cultural broker roles are created to overcome cultural disparities connected with ethnicity, yet human development, as defined through an ecological lens, is dynamic and multi-dimensional with many layers of interactions and multiple factors influencing outcomes. Thus, it is crucial throughout this study not to underplay the role of other factors, such as discrimination, poverty, gender, migration/instability, which are shaping the lives of young Roma and GRT children. However, cultural brokers cannot be expected to solve all these problems.

2.2 Cultural and Social Capital

The concept of capital is central to discussions of an equitable society and crucial in understanding the role of cultural brokers. In its simplest construction, social equity is encapsulated in the political theories of Marxism, which promote collective ownership and the absolute equitable distribution of services and goods. In this

definition capital reflects physical objects, resources and funds, which can be exchanged directly or converted and traded via currencies. However, Bourdieu (Bourdieu, 2006) recognised that the wealth of society – its capital – is more diverse. He defined three types of capital: economic, cultural and social capital. Economic capital, sometimes referred to as physical capital, consists of the physical objects, resources and funds that lend themselves to monetary valuation and exchange. Cultural capital is more complex and refers uniquely to human capacities – language, thought, creativity, spirituality - which require extensive intergenerational and community cultivation and development. Cultural capital includes an embodied form, or those qualities acquired by individuals through enculturation, an objectified form, represented by cultural goods (books, instruments, pictures); and, an institutionalised form (educational qualifications). Cultural capital takes years to acquire. It is transmitted person-to-person, from parent/caregiver to child, between family members, via peers, within communities or collectively through educational, cultural and religious institutions. Furthermore, it becomes integral to the person who acquires it, and dies with them if it is not transmitted further. Finally, Bourdieu defines social capital as the: 'durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition – or in other words, to membership in a group – which provides each of its members with the backing of the collectively owned capital, a 'credential' which entitles them to credit, in the various senses of the word.' (Bourdieu, 2006). It is a non-tangible web of personal relationships that offers, at any given point, the potential for interactions that can provide social support as well as facilitate access to other forms of capital. A fourth kind of capital is recognised by economists, who have argued that investments in the early years contribute to the *human capital* that forms the economic engine of a nation (Heckman, 2006). Human capital can be broadly construed as the skills and capacities of individuals; it reflects their physical, cultural and social capital.

This thesis explores the linkages between early childhood education and *social capital*, the social networks and reciprocal social relationships that bring a different kind of wealth – social cohesion. This concept of social capital has been further

elaborated by a wide range of scholars, not only economists, but also principally by sociologists as a way of describing how societies function. This review focuses on how Bourdieu (2006), Putnam (Putnam, 2000) and Coleman (Coleman, 1988, 1990) define the components of social capital.

All three theorists, Bourdieu, Putnam and Coleman propose that social capital is about relationships, behaviours and emotions, and that it is a dynamic source of power or energy that is created collectively (McGonigal et al., 2007). What differentiates their definitions is how and where they situate this resource. Bourdieu emphasises the relationship between social and economic capital, defining social capital largely in terms of individual privilege and connections, while Coleman suggests that social capital is more widespread than other forms of capital, such as human or economic capital, and defines social capital as a public good (Coleman, 1990). Putnam defines social capital more broadly as civic or social involvement, viewing it as a community resource (Croll, 2004). All three have relevance to the field of education, and Coleman (1987) in particular, frequently applies the concept of social capital to families and schools (Coleman, 1987).

Coleman divides social capital into three forms: *obligations and expectations*, *capacity for information flow*, and *norms accompanied by sanctions*. The first form describes how interpersonal relationships based on trustworthiness encourage individuals to act on behalf of others. Or in other words, the 'golden rule' of doing unto others as you would like done unto you. However, here the emphasis is on how the helpfulness of others creates a web of obligations to then help others. The second form describes the function of social networks as information networks. The final form describes the capacity of social networks to create and impose values and norms. Interestingly, Coleman explores how some forms of social capital (*obligations and expectations* and *norms accompanied by sanctions*) are feasible only in closed membership groups or networks, that is, those that have a defined and fixed membership, while the capacity for information flow is enhanced in more open networks that can be permeated with new contacts and information (Coleman, 1988).

This distinction and implications of 'open' and 'closed' social capital networks are further elaborated by Putnam who Putnam distinguishes between two types of social capital: 'bonding' and 'bridging'. Bonding within a high affinity group reinforces homogeneity and a common identity, thus perpetuating ethnic and class stratifications in society. Members can rely on the economic potential that is collectively created, which can leverage capital or labour for common interests be they communal or commercial; however, it also offers psychological and social support, which community members can count upon. In an intolerant society, bonding offers groups that face discrimination access to social capital that they generate and control. However, though bonding can create some financial and social stability, generally, the isolation of ethnic enclaves restricts mobility and growth and contributes to economic stratification. It leaves individuals and members socially excluded unless they can gain social capital needed to bridge or access a wider range of opportunities. In contrast, bridging will link members from diverse groups to a range of external assets, widening social and economic opportunity and reducing inequality. Bridging promotes heterogeneity and an identification with the wider society. Putnam uses these definitions to prove a hypothesis that social bridging and equity are linked, such that states or countries that foster the bridging of social capital have less poverty and greater equity, and those that do not, give rise to social and economic inequity (Putnam, 2000).

2.2.1 The Role of Bridging Social Capital in Education

The role of 'bonding' and 'bridging' social capital in education systems is not clear cut. Both Putnam and Coleman emphasise that the collective nature of formal education systems generates social capital. Children and their families by necessity interact with one another and with school staff at a variety of levels creating new social linkages, many of which transcend the school setting, extending beyond the school borders through friendships and diverse communal activities. To illustrate the complexity of 'bonding' and 'bridging' in this context, Putnam draws attention to the dilemma faced by many large cities in the US: whether to address segregation by implementing bussing schemes across large school systems. Here,

attention is drawn to the fact that while bussing creates a social bridge between otherwise isolated ethnic and/or socio-economic communities, it may not effectively pull together wider social networks of parents. There is also an opportunity cost in that bussing destroys the potential of a neighbourhood school to create local social capital amongst neighbours that may not otherwise interact if their children are dispersed to schools across a city (Putnam, 2000). Similarly, Coleman uses social capital to explain why schools that feature more intensive parent involvement outside school, such as religious schools, have lower high school drop-out rates. Coleman (1988) also correlates an increase in drop-out rates with families that have moved schools, thereby requiring the rebuilding of social capital in the new setting, or single parent families, reducing the extent of interactions, and, therefore, generating less social capital.

This thesis explores the potential of one bridging strategy: cultural brokering in early childhood education systems in Serbia and the UK, to effectively increase social capital of GRT and Roma communities, and more specifically, young GRT and Roma children, by supporting their participation in inclusive services. It discusses the interaction of educational institutions and local governments with GRT and Roma communities and majority populations. The concept of bridging and bonding has great traction in these ethnic and national contexts and is crucial in understanding the potential role of cultural brokers. Both Roma communities in Serbia and GRT communities in the UK are themselves diverse, which challenges, not only the notion of bridging, but also the notion of bonding within each community.

Though mobility and diversity challenge bonding within the Roma and GRT communities in Serbia and the UK, there is no question that experienced discrimination creates a motivation for bonding. Such bonding characterises the more established sub-groups, mainly the long-settled native Roma in Serbia and the Gypsy and Traveller communities in the UK. Given the circumstances above, it may well be that cultural brokers can play a role in supporting the development of bonding within the local Roma and GRT communities, as well as in creating bridging

between the Roma community and the education system and community, thus increasing available social capital to these fragile families to support their flourishing.

2.3 Cultural Brokers

Cultural brokering is a term that was introduced by anthropologists and describes the role of brokers and negotiators that provide linkages between colonial governments and the societies over which they ruled. Their roles included providing simple translation, interpretation of cultural concepts, serving as buffers, mediating disputes and facilitating commercial relationships (Jezewski, 1995). Early accounts of cultural brokers provide individual case studies of interesting individuals who were exposed to hybrid cultures, and then used this unique psychological experience to serve as a go-between. These cultural brokers gained their status because of local knowledge; thus, they were tied to a specific setting and period of time. They had to work to gain and keep the trust of both parties, and their livelihood had to survive the scrutiny of both. As anthropology shifted from the study of single cultural groups to the relations between social groups and to nation-building, the role of broker became of greater interest (Wolf, 1956). In many cases these early anthropological accounts come across as condescending, when viewed from the perspective of today's highly diverse societies, as they define individuals who interpret a traditionalist, 'minor' culture to a more modern, mainstream or dominant culture.

The approach has broadened over the years and has been adopted intentionally in services as diverse as healthcare, disability, mental health, business, education, and child welfare as governments seek to provide services to indigenous or new migrant populations. Such formalisation requires tighter definitions of the roles and capacities of cultural brokers (National Center for Cultural Competence, 2004). A frequently cited definition of *cultural brokering* is provided by Mary Ann Jezewski, a health services provider:

Bridging, linking or mediating between groups or persons of different cultural backgrounds for the purpose of reducing conflict or producing effective change. (Jezewski, 1995) page 20

A guide produced for the US National Health Service Corps (National Center for Cultural Competence, 2004) offers a more comprehensive definition of cultural brokering describing how it can reduce inequitable access to healthcare for underserved populations, including ethnic minorities. The guide defines four essential roles of cultural brokers. They serve as *liaisons* between two systems, both of which they know well. Secondly, they are *cultural guides* who provide advice to healthcare systems on how to incorporate culturally and linguistically competent principles, values and practices. Thirdly, they serve as *mediators*, establishing and maintaining trust, building a meaningful relationship between clients and healthcare providers. Finally, they are *catalysts for change*, who create inclusive and collaborative environments, modelling and mentoring behaviour change, advocating and breaking down stereotypes. These functions can be taken up by anyone, on the condition that they are aware of their own cultural identities and the social, economic and political factors that influence the communities with which they work, understand the values and beliefs of these cultural systems, and are able to communicate, negotiate and mediate cross-culturally. Less emphasised in this definition is knowledge of the mainstream system. However, the guide is clear that brokering strategies must be co-created with constituencies and then responsibly implemented under a committed leadership (National Center for Cultural Competence, 2004).

2.3.1   Cultural Brokering in Education

Attempts to define the role that cultural brokers can play in education systems are substantially less developed than the example cited above. Nonetheless, cultural brokering is proposed by several educationists for the application in diverse circumstances, generally as a means of solving a given problem. At a very fundamental level, Herzog (Herzog, 1972) details their service as a mediator in a community-level dispute about building a school to point out the potential of

cultural brokers in negotiating equitable solutions in education-related disputes. Wyatt uses the example of developing a community school in a small rural Indian community in Canada to explore how native teachers can be mentored to co-create new forms of culturally-relevant learning that synthesise community and mainstream elements (Wyatt, 1978-79). Drawing on experience in higher education, Gentemann and Whitehead explore a model of employing teacher-counsellors from minority communities to serve as role models and mentors to scaffold the engagement and learning of minority students in higher education institutions. In their conclusion they propose cultural brokering has applicability across various levels of education and a wide range of cultural settings (Gentemann & Whitehead, 1983).

As noted above, university students, professors and native teachers have been proposed as cultural brokers. This raises the question: where should cultural brokers be situated in an education system to best facilitate successful engagement of marginalised populations? Again, there is very little literature on this. Even children who translate for their parents have been cited as cultural brokers (Phillips & Crowell, 1994). Parent liaisons, a professional position promoted to schools that serve the most disadvantaged children in the US as part of the 'No Child Left Behind' act of 2002, have been promoted as cultural brokers who advocate for the community, bringing knowledge about the community into the school and linking families with needed services and education-related activities (Martinez-Cosio & Iannacone, 2007).

But what about teachers generally? There is general consensus in the early education field that services should aspire to hire a diverse workforce that reflects the community (Vandenbroeck & Lazzari, 2012). However, none have gone so far as to indicate that social inclusion can only be achieved through hiring minority staff, and there is substantial literature about the pedagogical competencies required of all teachers to meet the needs of diverse students (Diversity in Early Childhood Education and Training & International Step by Step Association, 2012; University of East London & University of Ghent, 2011).

When discussing cultural brokers, however, there are some who believe the role can only be fulfilled by members of the minority community, as they understand the community inside out (Wyatt, 1978-79). Jezewski and Sotnik (2011), on the other hand, while remaining open to the possibility that community members and community-led NGOs can serve as excellent cultural brokers, cautions that cultural brokers from disadvantaged communities may struggle to gain adequate knowledge about the majority culture and the linked-in services (education, health, welfare etc.). Others are more open-minded about the ethnicity of the cultural broker and focus on the broader necessary skillset (Gentemann & Whitehead, 1983; National Center for Cultural Competence, 2004). One interesting twist on the qualifications of teachers and cultural brokers is put forwards by Geneva Gay, who proposes a revamping of teacher education systems to foster teachers who can serve as cultural bridges with specific minority communities (Gay, 1993).

Clearly context – whether there is a single or a few minority groups represented in the school, or many – has a key role to play. Most agree that cultural brokers need to liaise with the minority community, provide cultural guidance to the institution on how to adapt services and mediate between these two groups. Many see cultural brokers as change agents – people who are willing to take on a complex intermediary role and to catalyse different ways of conducting business (Szasz, 1988). For community members, having access to a cultural broker likely increases the length and quality of each family's engagement with the education system, which in the long-term can potentially reduce disparities in access and hopefully in lifelong opportunities. Cultural brokers can create more efficient communication processes, can demonstrate to parents that preschools and schools are committed to serving them, and this can encourage others from the community to become more active. On the side of preschools and schools, cultural brokering systems increase the quality of information educational institutions have about families and children, they improve the efficiency of communication and therefore of services, they improve parent satisfaction and they support preschools and schools to become more embedded in their communities.

2.3.2 Cultural Brokering and Roma Education

Assistants play an increasingly significant role in ECE. The latest research indicates that assistants make up as much as 50% of ECE staff in some countries, including in the UK. Yet, they continue to remain largely invisible in statistics, with little data collected about their qualifications and ethnicity and few opportunities available for their professional advancement (Peeters, Sharmahd, & Budginaite, 2016). Peeters et al., (Peeters, Sharmahd, & Budginaité, 2018) describe three main roles attributed to assistants: a teaching role, a caring role and a bridging role. Roma assistants have been introduced with this third role in mind.

The explicit hiring of Roma staff into educational settings in Europe dates back to at least the 1980s with very early pilots documented in Italy and Spain and since then it has been attempted in at least twenty-six countries (Liegeois, 2013; Rus, 2006). [2] In a large number of cases, NGOs are the first to introduce Roma mediators or teacher assistants (Demeuse, Frandji, Greger, & Rochex, 2012). Only in some cases are new salaries absorbed into the budgets of local or national governments (Rus, 2006). And even when local governments absorb the costs of these positions, they remain contract-based and low paying, with thin job descriptions specific to each context. Relatively few countries have adopted the strategy at a national level, Serbia being one that stands out.

Most positions dedicated to Roma are titled either *teacher assistant* or *mediator.* Teacher assistant positions put emphasis on pedagogy and direct work with children and teachers in classrooms, while mediator positions put greater emphasis on community engagement, document gathering and conflict resolution. They share in common, however, a focus on improving access to education, reducing drop-out rates, improving academic achievement and fighting discrimination (Duvnjak, Mihajlovic, Skarep, Stojanovic, & Trikic, 2010). They have the potential to pay attention to issues that are not covered by teachers; for example, providing

---

[2] Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, the United Kingdom.

additional support to children, engaging in deeper communication with families, providing conflict resolution and developing interagency connections. Typically, schools appreciate the additional support.

Difficulties, however, can arise when Roma staff are perceived as too close to either the school or to the community (Rus, 2006). Schools may end up relying too heavily on Roma staff to work with Roma children, and non-Roma teachers can fail to build strong relationships with Roma parents. And, though Roma mediator and teaching assistant positions were created to empower Roma and promote better educational outcomes for the community, in some cases Roma who have qualified as teachers have found that they are only able to secure lower-paying, para-professional positions (Demeuse et al., 2012).

2.4 Linking the Ecological Framework, Social Capital and Cultural Brokering

Bronfenbrenner's ecological model of human development elegantly links with the concepts of social and cultural capital and cultural brokering that emerge from the fields of sociology and anthropology respectively, as iterated above. Bronfenbrenner associated ecological systems theory with the socio-cultural theories of Vygotsky and colleagues. Vygotsky's work focused on the enduring aspects of intergenerational transfer, principally, the enculturation of the younger generation by the older generation through acquiring human cognitive constructs such as tools, symbols and language. It is a phenomenon that endlessly repeats itself in each generation, through a process that is dependent on social interactions (Vygotsky, 1978). These social interactions are, essentially, the proximal processes that Bronfenbrenner suggests guide children's development. Coleman, similarly, describes these social processes, but refers to them collectively as a set of resources (social capital) that supports the cognitive and social development of the child (Coleman, 1990).

However, though enculturation is universal, cultures are not. Importantly, Bronfenbrenner recognises that developmental achievements cannot be solely interpreted using a universal cultural framework. Thus, achieving social or class

status (getting a high paying job) or getting a good grade in class may not reflect a mastery of cultural accomplishments expected in a given sub-culture. This makes assessing development more complex, as it requires attention to contextually and culturally-referenced measures; culture impacts all levels of the ecological framework. What is clear is that children that are raised in a sub-culture that differs from the mainstream culture that dominates the ecological framework in which they live face challenges to their own development that arise from conflict between the community culture and the mainstream culture. These cultural differences become magnified as individuals negotiate transitions, encountering new cultures and social structures. Cultural brokers can help navigate the gap between these territories.

This study explores more specifically the function of cultural brokers in ameliorating the gaps between the community culture and the mainstream culture to enable access to and participation of, a very disadvantaged population in early education opportunities. At first glance, the role appears to be one that is organised to facilitate the linkage of families (micro-systems) with education institutions (meso-systems). One primary function is to facilitate young GRT and Roma children in the complex developmental transition from home to preschool, preschool to school or home to school, which has been termed a 'critical period' (Entwisle & Alexander, 1989). Such transitions require developmental reorganisation and the cultural broker might indeed play an enabling role in supporting children and their families as they negotiate these challenges. Daily, cultural brokers are called upon to facilitate ongoing communication and understanding between these two contexts. They open the community towards social and cultural capital that is embedded in the school. These interactions are not one way (preschool/school to family), rather, they include sharing information about Roma and GRT cultures and lifestyles with early education institutions, so that the educational environment and curriculum reflects and links with children's lives at home and reinforces the development of their home language and cultural identity. A high-quality early education environment that is well-attuned to children's home cultures might potentially be classified as a positive 'environmental niche' that enhances development.

This thesis also explores the idea that cultural brokering can mitigate the challenging transitions children make between contexts (home and preschool or school) and it suggests that in some way, cultural brokering impacts the micro-interactions (between children and parents, teacher or peers) that when repeated over time, support children's growth and learning. Cultural brokers are the key agents in both bridging strategies explored in this thesis.

As will be seen from the research, the cultural brokering roles in Serbia (Pedagogic Assistants) and in the UK (Traveller Education Support Services) are defined primarily in terms of a narrow role: creating a bridge between the family and the relevant education institution. However, the actual activities they perform extend well beyond this primary linkage and include helping families access health, welfare and social services and serving as advocates and role models more generally. Using an ecological system approach to development helps to reframe the cultural broker as a bridge or interpreter between two macrosystems, one, which embodies mainstream culture and the other, which embodies Roma and GRT cultures. Thus, the links created by cultural brokers might be seen as enabling links between two cultural systems at all levels (micro, meso, exo, macro), rather than as linking two discrete institutions (any number of families with a specific set of education institutions). These links ultimately extend the social capital of the children, families and institutions involved.

2.4.1 A working definition of cultural broker in ECE

Pulling together the fundamental elements of cultural brokering transactions and interactions, referenced at the beginning of this chapter - what is being exchanged or shared (cultural and social capital), where these transactions take place (within complex ecological systems), and who is doing it (cultural brokers) – are queries that provide a framework for a tentative definition of the cultural broker in early childhood education systems:

A Working Definition of a Cultural Broker in ECE:

Cultural brokers proactively enable positive, trusting relationships between young minority children, their caregivers, and broader education, health and social protection systems with the aim of increasing opportunities and the quality of children's formal and informal learning and development, as well as the social capital of the child, their family and community. Cultural brokers achieve this by facilitating communication and information sharing between families and early education settings, by participating in the planning of services, and through mediation, conflict resolution and problem solving. Cultural brokers also serve as change agents, role models and advocates for both members of minority communities and personnel working in the early childhood sector to counteract social exclusion and to reduce discrimination and ethnic disparities in society.

This study aims to break new ground by attempting to identify commonalities across two positive examples of two very different national strategies that promote cultural brokering in early childhood education to shape a definition of the role. By investigating the role of two types of cultural brokers in both national contexts this thesis offers an opportunity to test this definition and to explore the core competencies required for cultural brokers operating in early childhood education. This study also explores how cultural brokering impacts the lives of those who are directly involved: cultural brokers, educators, parents and children.

Chapter 3 Methodology

3.1 Motivations for using a Case Study Approach

This thesis uses a qualitative methodological approach, case studies, to explore two cultural brokering strategies: TESSs in the UK and the employment of Pedagogic Assistants in Serbia. The selection of two very different cultural brokering strategies – one that operates at the level of preschools and schools (Serbia) and a second that operates at the level of municipalities (UK) – provides an opportunity to think systemically about how cultural brokering can be used to support young, ethnic minority children by actors who function at distinct levels of the education system. Each of the two national strategies selected for study defines one case study.

The case studies conducted for this thesis fall into what Robert Stake has deemed *instrumental* or *collective* studies. That is, each of the two country case studies includes two embedded cases, each conducted in one city. Collectively, the research in these four cities (two in each country) seeks insight into the phenomenon or concept, cultural brokering, rather than focusing on the uniqueness of the localities (Stake, 2000). This design was adopted because it would be difficult to explore the dynamics of a national strategy through the study of a single example, which might, in fact, be atypical. Focusing on how cultural brokering strategies play out in a number of cities in each country, offers an opportunity to understand at least a few of the variations inherent in how cultural brokering is being currently implemented. Attempts were made to select cities in each of the two countries that offer different iterations of cultural brokering. This approach offers greater scope to generalise than would be possible by conducting an *intrinsic* case study, which would seek to understand a single example of particular interest (Stake, 2000), for instance, a study of one TESS in the UK or one Pedagogic Assistant in Serbia. At the same time, it was essential to establish a manageable scope for this research considering the time available for data collection and limitations on the length of the thesis.

Because the construct of *cultural broker* is relatively unstudied in early childhood contexts, the field has not yet clarified definitions, collected and described

examples of cultural brokering, or identified measurable variables that could inform an experimental design. Achieving these aims requires observing and understanding ordinary daily interactions and operations of cultural brokers in these two contexts. This very wide lens calls for an exploratory research method that can generate and address questions regarding motivations and strategies for using cultural brokering approaches. It would defeat the purpose to interfere in the environments being studied, by implementing and assessing the results of an intervention. A qualitative or 'relativist' approach, rather than a quantitative method, is appropriate. A flexible design is required (Robson, 2002). Case study is, thus, an appropriate methodology to use as the researcher in this case has little control over the events or context.

Given the complexities of the contexts that are being studied and the importance of capturing the diversity of perspectives of participants, this study takes a constructivist approach. It aims to describe, collect and interpret multiple meanings, with the aim of tentatively proposing a definition or hypothesis about cultural brokering in early childhood education, rather than attempting to conclusively assess the utility of the approach. Establishing a broad tent beneath which many perspectives can be explored is crucial when working in contexts where power is unequally distributed, as it offers the possibility of giving visibility to viewpoints, including those of Roma, Gypsy and Traveller communities, which are often excluded. Emancipatory frameworks, such as this, attempt to capture the lives and experiences of diverse groups and to analyse how and why inequality is reflected in asymmetrical power relationships, and, importantly, how social policies and actions can address these imbalances (Robson, 2002). The shaping of this research study – the questions it addresses and the presentation and analysis of the data – adheres to a social justice framework, which seeks to name and address discrimination and inequalities and to find solutions.

3.1.1   Complication of intersectionality

The groups being explored in this study – GRT and Roma children and their families, educators in early education settings and the cultural brokers seeking to mediate access and quality of early education services – raise broader issues regarding

culture, identity and affiliation. In comparison with other minority groups, Roma and Gypsy/Traveller populations face extraordinary levels of discrimination across Europe, including the UK and Serbia (CeSID, 2013; Fundamental Rights Agency, 2018; Lane, Spencer, & Jones, 2014). Yet discrimination in education settings extends beyond sensitivities to ethnicity. Every individual in the settings that were studied are endowed with multiple, confounding characteristics, such as gender, level of education, socio-economic status, religion, home language, and in some cases, refugee or migrant status, to name a few. Each characteristic brings with it a set of stereotypes, which elicit different responses from the broader society, including from educational institutions.

Defined first by a black feminist legal scholar in the United States (Crenshaw, 1989), the concept of *intersectionality* is used to describe such multiple, complex interacting social relations in which confounding identities complicate discussions of discrimination. The concept of intersectionality presents unique methodological challenges to this research. The strategy of introducing cultural brokering for GRT and Roma communities is founded on the idea that mediating cultural and social issues relating to ethnicity alone will improve GRT and Roma participation in early education. Does this in some way negate the impacts of other potentially discriminatory individual characteristics, such as gender, religion or socio-economic status? To remain open to this possibility it is important for this study to use a research method that does not seek to limit such variables.

Sociological research has identified three methodological approaches, each with its own philosophical underpinning, to guide research designs that focus on the multiple identities inherent in intersectionality (McCall, 2005). These three approaches form a continuum. At one end, approaching research from a perspective of *intercategorical complexity,* entails maintaining a belief that using analytic categories is valid and important to understand human behaviour. Such studies quantitatively compare behaviours between groups using multivariate analysis to assess the weight of each characteristic (race, gender etc.) on outcome measures. At the other end of the spectrum, the approach of *anti-categorical*

complexity adheres to an underlying belief that human society defies categorisation. Research in this vein addresses everyone as unique, through genealogies, use of critical theory (in literature) or ethnography (in anthropology). Such research advances a post-structuralist perspective, opposing positivist approaches that seek generalisable truths from experimental studies.

This study takes the middle approach to researching intersectionality, *intracategorical complexity,* which recognises both the utility of using categories to understand human behaviour, as well as the inherent limitations. Such studies address neglected social groups at the points at which various identities intersect, for instance, through narrative essays, reflecting individual experiences, or through case studies, which reflect the complexity of social life of groups or communities. In line with this approach, this study uses case study methodology to best capture the complex interaction of disadvantaged communities with the education system. This approach makes no assumptions through predefining variables to quantitatively measure. Rather, interviews, focus groups and observations were used to gather different perspectives, which can be analysed for patterns.

Interestingly, Bronfenbrenner, whose ecological model of human development was discussed earlier, devoted considerable time in assessing research strategies to use to test his model, drawing upon a variety of existing studies to illustrate his points. Of importance to this thesis are his repeated warnings not to oversimplify development to fit into simple cause and effect models. He is critical of studies that take a single demographic characteristic – for instance, socio-economic status, social class or ethnicity – and seek generalised effects. Such studies, he emphasizes, fail to take account of the micro-environments in which individuals live and develop. The case study approach offers an opportunity to keep these multiple characteristics in mind. Similarly, Yin (2014) argues that case studies are an appropriate methodology to address 'why' and 'how' questions that require in-depth descriptions of social phenomenon, like two of the four questions posed for this study. The remaining 'what' questions will be answered largely through

secondary data, complemented by interviews with participants in each of the two cases.

3.2   Design of the Study

Situating the two types of cultural brokers being explored in this thesis within Bronfenbrenner's socio-ecological framework of development (see diagram 1) highlights the differences in their roles and functions. This diagram illustrates the four levels of Bronfenbrenner's socio-ecological framework surrounding the developing child. The most influential contexts are the most proximal, those closest to the child (family and classroom), located in the micro-system. The meso, exo and macro systems form further concentric rings around the child. The meso system contains the preschool/school and wider community, while the exo-system contains municipal institutions and other (Roma and non-Roma) communities. Finally, the macro-system (represented here by three blue rings, not populated in the diagram, as it would get very cluttered) includes national, European and international institutions that bear influence on young Roma children. These include Ministries of Education, Health and Social Welfare, academic institutions, and non-governmental organisations involved in relevant issues in each country, to name a few. At the European level the European Union, Council of Europe, Office for Security and Cooperation in Europe, European Court of Human Rights, Roma Education Fund, European Roma Rights Centre are all engaged in activities that influence the lives of the youngest Roma children, as are UNICEF, the Open Society Foundations and World Bank, which operate internationally. Discrimination and poverty, which frame the lives of so many Roma communities, are visible in the diagram as key elements in the social context.
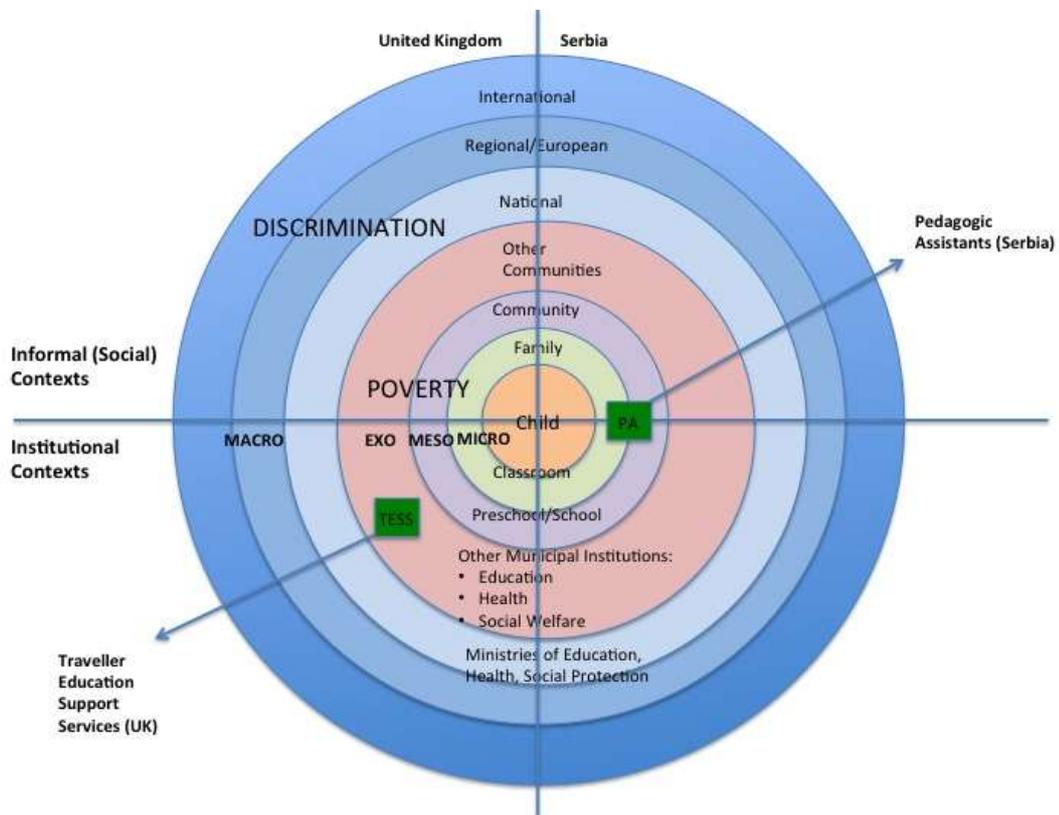
Figure 3-1: Cultural Brokers in an Ecological Framework: Supporting Roma Children in Early Education Systems in the UK and Serbia

For the purposes of this study, the bulls-eye diagram, which is typically used to represent Bronfenbrenner's theory, is further sub-divided into two semi-circles. The upper semi-circle contains the 'informal' influences on the child (family, community, broader social contexts), while the lower semi-circle contains the 'institutional' influences on the child (classroom, preschool/school, municipal institutions, Ministries). Distinguishing the institutional and informal influences makes it possible to more clearly visualise the very different perspectives of the two types of cultural brokers studied here, and the various kinds of social and cultural capital that they make accessible to Roma children and families. The Traveller Education Support Services (TESSs) in the UK are functional units within Local Education Authorities. They are located solidly within a governmental institution (exo-system). Their primary functions are to build trust with GRT families to assess and support children, facilitate communication between education institutions and families, to mediate or resolve disputes, to help preschools and schools better support GRT children and families and to facilitate linkages with other services as needed. They

help families link with the social and cultural resources embedded in education institutions. In contrast, the Roma Pedagogic Assistants in Serbia (RPA) sit at the crux of the micro- and meso-systems, on the border between informal and formal institutions. They interact with preschools/schools, individual classrooms, families, communities and, in many cases, they work directly with individual children. Their primary function is to facilitate linkages between micro and meso systems. Though they interact with municipal institutions and community structures, their core responsibilities relate to the lives of specific young children and families and the daily functioning of classrooms in preschools and schools. They not only build social capital between families and educational institutions, through a bridging function, they also build the social capital of the communities themselves, promoting bonding as well as bridging. The case study methodology offers a unique opportunity to compare these two very different cultural brokering roles.

3.2.1 Selection of Sites

In both national contexts, selecting municipalities to visit and securing official permission was accomplished with the help of national experts.

In Serbia, the planning of the research was developed with the help of the Director of the Centre for Interactive Pedagogy (CIP), a non-governmental organization, that first piloted Pedagogic Assistants, and which has remained closely connected with the national scaling up of the approach. CIP staff helped organise connections with the MoEST with local Roma NGOs and with local government officials in the selected cities. They assisted with the translation of information and permission forms to share with research participants and helped me identify translators as needed for various tasks. They also, together with Ministry officials, advised on the selection of cities for the two embedded cases. Two large cities, each with five Roma Pedagogic Assistants were selected. For practical reasons the selected cities were within a few hours of Belgrade and the local education authorities were comfortable with my research. In City A, the work of the Pedagogic Assistants was coordinated with the support of a strong local Roma NGO. In City B, the Pedagogic

Assistants were not all of Romani origins and there was no local Roma NGO supporting their collective efforts.

Site selection in the UK was organised with the help of national expert, Arthur Ivatts, a retired and respected official from Her Majesty's Inspectorate, who was at one time responsible for monitoring Gypsy, Roma and Traveller education across England. At his suggestion, two cities with differently structured TESSs were selected. The first, City C had, over a period of more than 20 years established and retained a robust and well-staffed TESS located centrally within the Local Education Authority. The second, City D, once had a strong TESS; however, as a result of funding cuts, the TESS service had been restructured during a reorganisation of education services. Arthur Ivatts arranged introductions to the relevant official in each city; I then wrote to each directly to request permission to include their city in the study. In both cities local officials were extremely forthcoming in providing support to organise a 3-day visit organised around the requirements of the research.

The design of this research is summarised in Figure 3-2 below and in Appendix 1.

Case 1: Serbia Pedagogic assistants as cultural brokers	Case 2: UK Municipal education support services as cultural brokers
Embedded case City A Pedagogic Assistants' work is coordinated by a Roma NGO	Embedded case City C: Municipality operating a traditional TESS
Embedded case City of B Pedagogic Assistants work without involvement of a Roma NGO	Embedded case City D: municipality where TESS has been restructured

Figure 3-2:   Research Design to Study Cultural Brokering Strategies in Two Countries

3.2.2   Types of Evidence Collected

To understand cultural brokering from a variety of perspectives and to enable clarification of meaning through triangulation, data were collected from diverse sources, and are grouped into four main categories: Documents, Interviews/Focus

Groups and Discussions, Observations and Participation in Events. Over the course of the study across the two countries I conducted 24 interviews and 3 focus groups, recording the perspectives of 57 people. In addition, I observed practice in 9 preschools and primary schools, shadowed 2 TESS workers in the UK and observed 4 Pedagogic Assistants in Serbia. More detailed lists are provided within each case study. Each category of data is described briefly below.

Documents: This included review of reports, national studies, laws and documents about cultural brokering Roma and GRT communities in each country; the collection of statistics about each city and its education services and the populations of children and families it serves; and, statistics and reports related to each of the schools, preschools and nurseries visited. Along the way, additional documents were collected, including, for instance, lists of schools and preschools, brochures from schools and NGOs, copies of reports prepared by Pedagogic Assistants, and applications and other forms used by cultural brokers in their regular roles for various purposes.

Interviews/focus groups/discussions: In each country, interviews were arranged with individuals who were key in establishing, promoting or studying the cultural brokering service being studied. In addition, in each city interviews were arranged with local officials. In Serbia, but not in the UK, interviews were arranged with leaders of relevant early education and Roma NGOs. In both countries, interviews or focus groups were arranged with cultural brokers, and at each education institution visited, interviews were conducted with Head Teachers, teachers, teacher assistants and other staff (pedagogists, psychologists). Finally, interviews or focus groups were arranged with Roma parents and other parents in both countries. Where possible, interviews were taped, transcribed and translated (from Serbian, where applicable); however, where it seemed inappropriate or unrealistic to use a tape recorder (for example, in a noisy setting) notes were taken.

Observations: In three of the cities I was able to follow one or more cultural broker (Pedagogic Assistant or municipal worker) and observe their work; a most enjoyable and unpredictable part of the research. I joined municipal workers as they made

home visits, as they accompanied parents to meetings at nurseries, and in one case as a TESS worker ferried a child from a trial experience at a new school, then back home. In Serbia, I joined Pedagogic Assistants as they met with parents to help them complete forms to apply for free books or places in preschool, observed them as they provided pedagogic support, observed their interactions with children and families in playgrounds and the community, and observed as they led after school classes and consulted with parents. In City A (Serbia) and City C (UK) staff brought me to Roma and GRT communities to see the housing and living conditions and to meet with parents in their homes. In each of the four cities I observed classes in nurseries, preschools and primary schools, paying close attention to the experiences of Roma and GRT children.

Events (Conferences and Workshops): In Serbia I was fortunate enough to be in the country during a conference on inclusive education, which was sponsored by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development, World Bank, UNICEF and Open Society Foundations. The event brought together education experts from countries in the region, primarily from across Serbia, and global speakers. It provided an interesting opportunity to collect official perspectives of the organisers as well as from Serbia's Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit/SIPRU, the OSCE and the European Union towards the establishment of the position of the Pedagogic Assistant. Previews of upcoming reports on inclusive education were presented and several relevant documents were distributed. In one of the plenary sessions, I presented results of my Institution Focused Study, which assesses the lack of Roma early educators across Europe.

I arranged my visit to City D to coincide with a half day workshop that the Local Education Authority organised for schools to discuss positive approaches for the inclusion of new Roma migrants. This offered an excellent overview of how education institutions at all levels – from nurseries to secondary schools – were coping with the huge influx of Roma arrivals. It also gave me an opportunity to meet with Head Teachers and other staff from schools I would be visiting.

3.2.3   Collection of Data Grouped by Level (regional, national, local)

To ensure the data were comparable, the study followed a parallel strategy in each country and similar strategies at each site. A common core of questions with variations for each national context was used for interviews and focus groups across the four municipalities (2 in the UK and 2 in Serbia).[3] Questions were organised according to the four overarching study research questions. For each of the four overarching research questions, a set of questions was developed for each type of interviewee; for example, parents, teachers, principals, local authority, Pedagogic Assistants and NGO leaders. The same questions were used in most interviews to gather multiple perspectives on important issues. Thus, the question 'Is the ethnicity of the Pedagogical Assistant important?' was asked of all interviewees, including all participating Pedagogical Assistants.

The variety of sources used to collect evidence ensured a rich base of information. In this section, these sources of evidence are further elaborated for each of the three levels addressed in this study: regional (European), national (2 countries) and local (2 sites in each country).

The **regional (European) context** of the study was established through consolidation of current documentary evidence and studies published by European institutions (Council of Europe and/or European Union), civil society organisations (for example, the Roma Education Fund, European Roma Rights Centre) and academic institutions.

National level: Relevant studies and basic data on young GRT and Roma children was reviewed, along with national laws and documents related to the implementation of the TESS in the UK and Pedagogical Assistants in Serbia. Two types of qualitative data were collected to establish the motivations for adopting cultural brokering strategies. First, interviews were conducted with national policy makers responsible for introducing cultural brokering strategies in each country. Second, interviews and/or focus groups were conducted with a small number of

---

[3] See Appendix 2 for example of question grid used in Serbia

TESS workers in the UK and Pedagogical Assistants in Serbia to better understand how they perceive their roles in practice. The data from these sources was used to answer the first two research questions that focus on motivations for adopting cultural brokering strategies and key features of each (TESS worker in the UK, Pedagogic Assistant in Serbia).

Local (site) Level: In each country, I visited two cities to better understand how cultural brokers operate in practice. During visits I collected basic descriptive data about each community and consolidated evidence about the effectiveness of the cultural brokering interventions. To assess the effectiveness of TESSs in the UK and Pedagogic Assistants in Serbia, I requested access to available aggregate data about the participation of GRT and Roma children in ECE, the quality of ECE settings, and, where available, children's educational outcomes, as defined by national standards. To better understand the level of provision quality, I observed a few preschool and primary school classrooms in each setting. The aim was not to compare classrooms one to another using standardised instruments, rather to gain a general understanding of how the ECE services operate to assess if they are of sufficient high-quality to expect positive outcomes for children and to be able to triangulate this with information about the services gleaned from interviews. The preschools and schools observed, offered an opportunity to see cultural brokering in action: 'where the rubber meets the road' in the classroom. Finally, interviews were conducted with Roma parents, principles, teachers and Pedagogic Assistants to understand how they experience cultural brokering.

Data collected at each level are summarised below:

Regional Context

1. Documentary evidence and studies from European institutions, civil society organisations and academic institutions.

National Cases

2. Relevant national studies and data on GRT and Roma ECE

3. National laws and documents relevant to each intervention

4. Interviews with key national policy makers and change agents responsible for the introduction of cultural brokering policies

5. Interviews or focus group with cultural brokers in each country

Embedded Cases (2 municipalities in each country)

6. Basic data about the community/school/preschool

7. Available attendance, enrolment, outcome data

8. Notes from following TESS workers (UK) and Pedagogical Assistants (Serbia) during their working days to understand their roles

9. Interviews with local authority, NGO leaders, educators at each site

10. Focus groups/interviews with GRT and Roma parents/family members in the community

11. Observations in classrooms/preschools/schools

Additionally, during research, as noted above, I participated in and collected data from topical conferences and events in Serbia and the UK. These sources produced a rich evidence base, which allowed for a triangulation of data and explanation building.

The table below maps the research questions to the data sources listed above, illustrating what data were collected to respond insightfully to each question.

Table 3-1: Data Sources for Each of the Four Research Questions in this Study

Research Question	Data Sources
a. Why were cultural brokering strategies introduced in each country?	Regional: • Documentary evidence and studies from European institutions, civil society organisations and academic institutions National: • Analysis of relevant national studies and data • Interviews with key national policy makers and change agents
b. What are the key features of these two cultural brokering strategies generally, and of the roles of the cultural brokers in each system?	National: • Analysis of relevant national studies and data and laws and documents related to each strategy (TESS in the UK; Pedagogical Assistants in Serbia) • Interviews with key national policy makers and change agents • Interviews/focus groups with cultural brokers in each country
c. What evidence is available to support the notion that the cultural brokering strategies being used in two distinct cultural contexts increase participation in and quality of early childhood education for GRT and Roma children?	National: • Analysis of relevant national studies and data • Interviews with key national policy makers and change agents • Interviews/focus groups with cultural brokers in each country Local (site) level: • Available[4] aggregate data on attendance, enrolment and learning and development outcomes of GRT and Roma children at each location • Interviews with local authority, NGO leaders, educators at each site • Focus groups or interviews with GRT and Roma parents/family members • Observations in classrooms
d. How do the people involved (cultural brokers, parents, teachers, children) perceive the impact of cultural brokering based on their experiences?	Local (site) level: • Notes from following TESS workers (UK) and Pedagogical Assistants (UK) during their working days to understand their roles • Interviews with local authority, NGO leaders, educators at each site • Focus groups or interviews with GRT and Roma parents/family members • Observations in classrooms

---

[4] Minimal data (disaggregated) is available regarding child outcomes.

3.2.4   Analysing and Processing the Data

Documents and reports were collected throughout the research period; read and annotated accordingly. Most of the remaining evidence for this study – except for a few discrete interviews conducted with individuals involved in national policy issues – was collected during field visits to the four cities in 2015. These included visits to both cities in Serbia (May 21- June 7, September 6-13), and in the UK to City C (June 11, July 1-3) and City D (November 18-20). Agendas were pre-arranged in close consultation, as noted above, with one lead from each of the four cities visited; however, these were always subject to adjustments due to unforeseeable events or to re-prioritise or fit in with something additional, for example, a visit to the village on the outskirts of town. Without possession of a car in any of the cities, I found myself hosted each day by one or another of the people I would also interview. Our informal discussions in the intervals while travelling by car, during breaks in the schedule and over lunches and sometimes dinners, were as interesting and important as formal taped interviews. These were opportunities to seek clarification on matters that were unclear as the observations, interviews and focus groups were unfolding. They were also opportunities to learn more about the cities themselves; the history of Roma and GRT communities; education, health, welfare and social protection systems; local authorities; neighbourhoods and schools. These informal discussions often provided deeper individual accounts of the lives of those involved in implementing cultural brokering strategies. In City A (Serbia), I spent a lot of time in the Roma NGO office, waiting between activities and observing the impressive range of work. Similarly, in City C (UK), downtime was spent at the Local Education Authority with the TESS team. Each day was different. To capture the spirit of the work, the insights I had at the time, the ideas that needed further clarification, I closed each day writing field notes that aimed to document the day and capture my reflections.

Interviews and focus groups that were taped were transcribed, and those that were in Serbian were then translated. Most, but not all, of the transcriptions were done by a talented recent Serbian graduate, who was helpfully identified by a leading

academic in Serbia. A recent MA recipient, she was fluent in both Serbian and English and experienced in transcribing and coding interview data for large studies. I have a good passive understanding of Serbian and reviewed several tapes to ensure they were accurately transcribed. Interviews conducted in Serbia that I felt were sensitive (for example, with a former Ministry official), I personally transcribed (these interviews were conducted in English, in any case), along with several of the interviews and focus groups in the UK.

Data processing included the production of memos documenting thoughts during the research process, observation notes, transcriptions of meetings and a review of documentary evidence. Early on it became clear that there was a natural resonance across much of the evidence relating to the first three research questions: the reasons cultural brokering strategies were adopted, the roles of the cultural brokers and the impact of their work. Differences in perspectives tended to focus on specific issues, for example, the importance of the ethnicity of the cultural broker or use of Romanes in education settings. Responses to probes related to the fourth research question, which concerned experiences of participants in cultural brokering programmes, were more diverse, but even here, perspectives from parents or teachers as a group tended to be more similar than containing differences; there was general agreement on gaps in the systems in each locality and country.

Thus, the emerging themes screamed out of the data. Analysis started with a re-reading of all of the transcriptions, memos, notes from observations, and documentary evidence, including English translations of taped interviews from Serbia. It became possible to devise a preliminary scheme to categorise information.[5] Evidence was categorised in two ways: first, evidence relating to the four research questions was highlighted and sorted by question(s) so that it could be easily drawn together when developing the report; and, second, evidence relating to key themes identified either in the literature review or emerging across the data was extracted.

---

[5] See Appendix 3 for an example of analysis of an interview

These emerging themes included:

- 'Bonding' vs. 'bridging' of social capital
- Cultural broker as a mediator of transitions across socio-ecological systems
- Intersectionality – where issues other than ethnicity appear to be at play
- Quality and accountability of inclusive education
- Rights (of children, minorities, migrants, refugees, differently abled etc.)
- Participants' future hopes and dreams

Key evidence from each interview, focus group and from field notes were entered onto excel sheets and categorised.[6] Further analysis involved reviewing evidence from each of the four questions and additional categories and noting where there was triangulation of data and where there were emerging explanatory patterns. The data and emerging patterns were then organised into a compelling narrative, capturing the dynamics of cultural brokering in each setting. To be able to identify patterns from across the cases, data related to the four research questions is consolidated by country, rather than by site.

3.2.5   Ethical Considerations

This study adheres to the ethical guidelines established by the British Educational Research Association (British Educational Research Association, 2011) and was conducted following approval of the Research Ethics Committee of the Institute of Education. In addition, as my research involved visiting preschools and schools, I obtained a Disclosure and Barring Service Check to certify that I do not have a criminal record. Consent to do research was obtained through local authorities and with the agreement of the preschools and schools that were visited. Further, as described in the application for ethical approval, routine ethical procedures were followed including ensuring confidentiality, obtaining written consent from all participants and protecting their identities. In Serbia, consent forms and a brief explanation of the research was translated into Serbian to ensure the information was accessible.

---

[6] For an example of how data was categorised in one city, City A, see Appendix 4

Additional measures were taken to communicate with, and protect the rights of, Roma participants, as they come from a marginalised community. When conducting interviews or focus groups, and especially with Roma participants some of whom do not have strong literacy skills, care was taken with the help of an interpreter to explain the aims and processes guiding the research project, participants' rights to withdraw at any time and how information would be used, stored and erased. Interactions with Roma communities and parents were arranged and supervised by cultural brokers – Pedagogic Assistants and Roma NGOs in Serbia and TESSs in the UK. Gifts were not used as incentives for participation; however, I provided each participant parent with a children's book and donated children's books or wooden toys to each classroom where I conducted an observation to thank them for their time.

An ethical approach also underlies how evidence is presented. In line with what Robson (2002) describes as a relativistic approach, the two case studies aim to present reality as perceived by participants in a way that honours the complexity of issues and contexts. As this is an exploratory study, no predetermined hypotheses limit the lens through which the story of these cultural brokering strategies is told.

3.2.6 Insider/Outsider Issues

One interesting issue for exploration in this study is the question of whether a cultural broker must be from the ethnic minority community that is being linked with education services. In GRT and Roma education the approaches remain fluid. In some countries, such as Serbia, the position of Roma Pedagogical Assistant was initially confined to adults of Roma ethnicity. However, the position has been redefined to focus on competencies (for example, knowledge of the community), rather than on the ethnicity of the staff. In the UK TESS service, most staff are members of the majority population, rather than the GRT community.

The impact of identities also complicates the identity and suitability of the researcher. I am a white, middle-aged, American-born woman. Though I have lived in the UK for 10 years and have worked with Serbia for over 20 years, I am neither

Roma, Gypsy, Traveller, nor native to Britain or Serbia and bring an 'outsider' perspective into these cultural contexts. Can an outsider understand the challenges GRT and Roma face in entering the education system? Or early education cultures in the UK and Serbia? In a seminal essay discussing whether insiders or outsiders are better suited to sociological research, Merton (Merton, 1972) describes the limitations of seeking a definitive answer to this controversy. Those who promote that only insiders have a valid perspective on a community, emphasise the similarity within the group being studied and potentially ignore in-group diversity. This imposes a monopoly on research and on the historical perspectives that emerge. The problem of intersectionality complicates things further, in that it recognises the multiple identities and experiences of the researcher and the researched groups, making it even harder to find a clearly matched researcher for each community-based study. Merton's conclusion is that insiders and outsiders each have their limitations and assets.

In the context of this study, as the researcher I am familiar with the cultural contexts involved in Serbia and the UK, but largely bring an open approach and analytic detachment to the issue of GRT and Roma children in ECE. More difficult in this research was to ensure that the cultural boundaries that surround GRT and Roma communities, early education institutions and education systems were permeable. This involved gaining formal approval in advance from the Serbian and UK institutions involved as well as from each participant. Secondly, it involved securing translation or interpretation in Serbia when necessary, as my grasp of Serbian is largely limited to passive, rather than active usage. Informally, it involved gaining acceptance by each community, as someone who can be trusted. To achieve this, I sought introductions through, and was accompanied during interviews and focus groups, by colleagues who are already trusted by the communities. One complication of this is that cultural brokers were present during all the interviews with parents.

One potential danger of an outsider researcher is the possibility of falsely assuming causation or correlations, observing perhaps too rigidly through the lens of ethnic

diversity. This is discussed by Phoenix and Husain (2007) in their paper on ethnicity and parenting. Their review of parenting studies showed how the lens of the researcher can unintentionally and unfairly attribute negative characteristics to ethnic groups, when in fact context (poverty, discrimination etc.) or other factors may be more highly correlated with the behaviour being studied. To guard against these kinds of methodological challenges of misinterpretation, I regularly consulted, but especially during the design of the research instruments and analysis of data, with GRT, Roma, Serbian and UK experts.

3.3   Limitations of the Study

It is important to highlight the limitations of this research. This study explores cultural brokering strategies that are situated within distinct levels of the education system. The theoretical framework, Bronfenbrenner's socio-ecological theory of human development, posits that human development is shaped by dynamic interactions between the unique intrinsic and extrinsic factors and influences in an individual's life. Implicit in this model is the idea that cultural brokering is an extrinsic factor that can increase a child's social capital and, ultimately, support their optimal development. The concept of intersectionality reinforces the very similar notion that multiple influences also drive everyday social interactions. Ethnicity and culture are just two such influential factors. The central challenge embedded in this thesis is to assess the extent to which cultural brokers are supporting improvements in young children's educational and developmental outcomes by creating bridges that link, or 'bond' to use Putnam's words, a population that faces great discrimination, more closely with wider society via the education system. A defining feature of cultural brokers is their deep understanding of two cultures and systems. Yet, what if different challenges – those posed by poverty, migration, gender inequality, discrimination – are more central in shaping these children's educational and developmental trajectories? Is attention on cross-cultural challenges the right focus? Though this case study collected a broad range of data, it is not structured in such a way as to be able to weigh the impact of these

diverse variables one against another. It risks over-emphasising the role of culture and ethnicity as a challenge to participation and success in education.

In relation to the design of the study, the samples were, by necessity, very small. For example, in Serbia there are more than 170 Pedagogic Assistants and my research brought me in contact with 8 of them. In the UK, I visited two municipal TESSs, however, at one time there were TESSs in almost every Local Education Authority across the country. These case studies would benefit greatly if they could be accompanied in a mixed methods study with results of national surveys of the cultural brokers being studied (of Pedagogic Assistants in Serbia and of TESSs in the UK). The aim would be to gather broader data relating to how cultural brokers spend their time, what impacts they perceive and how they experience their role. Time constraints did not allow this, but it would be very valuable to conduct such research in the future to further contextualise these case studies. Potentially, such data could increase the generalisability of some of the findings of this study.

Several activities in the initial plan were not achievable in reality. Gaining access to parents was understandably challenging; the initial research plan included interviews with Roma parents who had had experience with cultural brokers, and some Roma parents who had not had access to cultural brokers. Additionally, interviews were to be conducted with other (non-Roma) parents to gain their impressions of the work of cultural brokers. However, in practice, access to Roma parents who were not connected with cultural brokers and access to non-Roma parents proved impossible. Though this request was made in all four cities, it was not one that was easy for those connected with cultural brokering services to arrange, as in fact, these parents were not their clients. Interviews with Roma parents, however, were successfully conducted in all four cities. As a result, there is no data available to assess how parents that do not participate in the cultural brokering services perceive them or to understand why they may not be using these services if they are available.

As noted earlier, some sensitivity is required when seeking access to parents from a population that faces discrimination. Thus, these interviews were arranged with the

help of cultural brokers who knew the parents. In all interviews except one, at least one of the cultural brokers was present during the interview with parents. Cultural brokers were frequently present when I interviewed teachers. Thus, it is unlikely that parents or teachers in these situations would express criticism of the work of cultural brokers, particularly any critique that related to the cultural broker present at the time. However, I found that during parent focus groups, questions that related to the *strategy* of cultural brokering (not specifically to the work of the cultural broker(s) they knew) generated a wider variety of responses, not all positive. Thus, in more informal discussions with greater numbers of parents, parents were very interested in suggesting improvements.

Similarly, the research plan included observations of early education settings, and I asked to spend a few hours sitting in a classroom that included children eight years or younger in at least two settings with Roma and GRT children in each city. However, in a few instances I was on the spot invited instead to observe classrooms with older children (>10 years). In one such instance in Serbia, the teacher was not comfortable having an outsider observe her classroom. I came to understand that observing the work of the Pedagogic Assistant was easily accepted but observing a teacher's classroom was threatening. Thus, assessment of the quality of early childhood provision had to be made through a combination of the classrooms I was able to access, Ofsted reports in the case of the UK, and a triangulation of comments accrued during interviews with local experts.

Finally, in Serbia, I relied on paid translators to help me during interviews and focus groups. While my passive command of Serbian is good, I'm not able to speak with the linguistic and grammatical fluency needed to conduct an interview or focus group. In City A (Serbia), the translator posed a problem, sometimes failing to translate what I was saying correctly, or, in a few cases, added their own interpretations. I understand enough Serbian to be able to step in and correct this, but it must have had an impact on the interviews and focus groups.

Chapter 4 Cultural Brokers in Schools and Preschools: Pedagogic Assistants in Serbia

4.1 Part I: Context – Setting the Scene

"We are here in this moment to do something significant and enable our descendants to live in a more humane society."

Local Roma Government Representative, City A

As the bus from Belgrade pulled off the highway and onto the turnoff to City A, I received a call from the coordinator at the Roma NGO that would be hosting my week-long visit to learn as much as possible about the work of Pedagogic Assistants. The newly-built bus station was closed, he informed me, because it had gone bankrupt, so he would meet me where the bus pulls up, in a parking lot across the street from the defunct bus station. I would not be able to miss him, he noted, as he would be driving a very colourful van; he was right – it was decorated with cheerful drawings advertising a toy library for children. We drove to the office, slowly, because electricity was down in part of the city and traffic lights were not working.

A few days later I met the local Roma government representative for the city. He drew a distinction between Roma who have been settled in Serbia for many years (*domaci*) of which there are approximately 8,000 in City A, and approximately 2,000 Roma refugees who moved to City A from other parts of the former Yugoslavia, including Kosovo. The newer arrivals tend to be less integrated, live in deeper poverty and have larger families with more children. Many arrive without documentation: he commented, 'I simply couldn't believe that there could be so many legally invisible persons, and because of that they cannot practice their personal basic rights, let alone not having access to water which they need for maintaining hygiene.' He noted that while there are very few instances of ethnic discrimination against Roma registered each year, in fact the general Serbian population is very ethnocentric, even if they do not verbalise this. He continued: 'We have some affirmative actions that are not based on endangering others. For

69

example, a Roma child that got in as the 31st in class in school, but he didn't take the spot of any other child. We must be careful with this so that the ethnic distance doesn't become even worse, and that we survive here together. Eventually, we get active members of society who will pay taxes and that is in all our best interests.' What seems on the surface like a relatively neutral environment, is not necessarily so.

The aim of my visit to Serbia was to explore how the deployment of Pedagogic Assistants in preschools and schools by the central government was working in practice. I hoped to gain an understanding of how this position was created, and to understand how the relevant stakeholders perceive staff. I was particularly curious about how Pedagogic Assistants function as cultural brokers, and in building social and cultural capital of Roma communities.

The NGO hosting my visit to City A was established in 2005 by an inspiring husband and wife team, who were among the first Pedagogic Assistants hired when the position was piloted in primary schools in the two cities in 2002. The NGO focuses on improving the quality of life of Roma through education. In addition to hosting and serving as a base for the five Pedagogic Assistants that work in City A, the NGO also organises workshops for children, parents and staff from local institutions; summer programmes for young children; activities for very young children and their mothers; tutoring and homework support; securing books for pupils; providing assistance and information to parents; mediating enrolment in preschools and schools; linking families with needed services; conducting home visits; and, generally, engaging in a variety of projects that improve the lives of Roma and vulnerable children. They collaborate with the Roma National Council, educational authorities and institutions, the Red Cross and public health institutions, media, labour organisations and the Centre for Interactive Pedagogy - the national education NGO that first piloted the position of Roma Pedagogic Assistants in Serbia. Donors include, among others, UNICEF, USAID, Open Society Foundations, European Union, Ministry of Health, and the Roma Education Fund.

'We managed to create our role as an important social factor and partner of the educational and social institutions of this city,' the Director commented. He noted the NGO had also become a resource for capacity development of Roma individuals and organisations so they could be empowered to solve crucial questions for the Roma community. The work of the NGO also involves linking families with legal support, social support and health support. Like the local Roma Government Representative, he emphasises poverty, which is 'passed from generation to generation' and discrimination, not only in education, but also in social participation, employment and health services. Both are themes that came up again and again during my time in Serbia.

In 2015, the leaders of the NGO formally established an association to represent Roma Pedagogic Assistants and to support early years workers involved with Roma children and families in Serbia. The association brings together more than 165 of the nearly 180 Pedagogic Assistants working in Serbia. It aims to improve education, health and social protection of Roma children; to ensure their right to quality education and development; and to support and provide professional development opportunities for Romani and other professional staff working with children, families and Roma communities. The aim is to become partners with the Ministry and national institutions for the development and improvement of the quality of Pedagogic Assistants' work. But, as the Director also noted, 'we also want to protect our rights, because a number of colleagues are victims of discrimination on their jobs.' In several instances, Pedagogic Assistants I met related examples of not being treated respectfully by someone in their workplaces.

I found myself, thus, on that first afternoon right at the heart of the Roma Pedagogic Assistant community in Serbia. Occupying a ground-floor shop space in a cluster of apartments located near an area of the city with a high Roma population, the office consists of a large space shared by staff, a meeting room, and a cheerful, well-equipped toy library filled with books, toys and tables for children. The walls were covered in posters and pictures displaying the work of the NGO in the community. I was introduced to the translator I had hired to help for the week, and,

as the afternoon progressed, I also met several staff, five of whom were also employed as the city's Pedagogic Assistants. Sitting around the table refreshed with coffee and snacks, we spent time getting to know one another and refining the agenda for the week.

Our plans were ambitious. The agenda would include focus groups with parents and with Pedagogic Assistants, and interviews with the Roma government representative and two local education authorities, including the coordinator of inclusive education for the city and the pedagogue responsible for inclusion across the city's many preschool institutions. I would spend a few mornings and afternoons shadowing Pedagogic Assistants as they conducted their activities in preschools and schools, giving me some time to observe classes. And, I would have a chance to interview teachers, principals and psychologists. We would start the following morning with a trip to a small remote Roma village located nearby; a very full week ahead.

During my visit, I would also spend three days in City B, one of Serbia's largest, and home to another five Pedagogic Assistants. Unlike City A, the five Pedagogic Assistants in City B are not all of Roma ethnicity, and they do not have the benefit of relating to a local Roma NGO. While the Pedagogic Assistants in City A meet informally on a daily basis at the NGO office and collaborate on a range of additional education projects, in contrast, the Pedagogic Assistants in City B are largely independent, each affiliated with a single school or preschool. They meet as a group only when the local authority or national Ministry arranges a convening. My agenda in City B was negotiated with a very helpful representative from the local authority. The schedule included observations in a preschool and school, shadowing of two Pedagogic Assistants, a focus group with parents, and interviews with local authorities and with principals, psychologists and pedagogues. The following table provides an overview of activities and participants in the research in Serbia.

Table 4-1: **Interviews, Focus Groups, Observations, Discussions, Visits and Workshops Conducted in Serbia**

Activity	Location	Participants
Interview: Professor	Belgrade	1 Professor, University of Belgrade
Interview: Ministry Official	Belgrade	1 MoE staff responsible for Pedagogic Assistants
Interview: NGO Leader	Belgrade	1 NGO leader
Interview: Former Ministry official	Belgrade	1 Professor, University of Belgrade (former Ministry official)
Event Participation: Conference	Belgrade	Policy and Practice of Inclusive Education in South Eastern Europe
Focus group: Parents	City A	3 Mothers 1 Father
Focus group: Pedagogic Assistants	City A	4 Pedagogic Assistants
Focus Group: Non-Roma Parents	City A	3 Parents
Interview: Local Government	City A	1 Local Roma Government Representative 1 Pedagogic Assistant
Interview: Inclusive Education Advisor	City A	1 Inclusive Education Advisor (Preschool) 1 Pedagogic Assistant
Interview: Local Education Authority	City A	2 Local Education Authorities (1 responsible for inclusive education)
Interview: Roma NGO	City A	1 Director of Roma Pedagogic Assistant NGO
Interviews: Teachers	City A	3 Teachers in 2 schools
Discussion: Primary School	City A	1 Principal, Primary School 3 Pedagogic Assistants
Observations	City A	2 Primary schools
Focus Group: Parents	City B	1 Roma father 1 non-Roma mother with child with disabilities 9 Roma mothers 2 Pedagogic Assistants (1 preschool, 1 primary)
Interviews: Pedagogic Assistants	City B	1 Pedagogic Assistant (Preschool) 1 Pedagogic Assistant (Primary)
Observations	City B	1 Preschool 1 Primary School
Discussion: Primary School	City B	1 Principal 1 Psychologist

To establish the motivations for introducing Pedagogic Assistants, though, we must return to Belgrade where I interviewed academics, policy makers and NGO leaders.

4.2   Part II: Establishing Pedagogic Assistants in Serbia

> "We didn't only want the municipal level things, because we needed them in the schools, not just visiting the schools. Then they would have impact."
>
> Tunde Cerovic-Kovacs, University of Belgrade

Pedagogic Assistants made their first appearance in Serbia in 1997. The Fund for an Open Society, an independent national foundation affiliated with the network of Open Society Foundations, launched the Step by Step Programme in Serbia in 1994. Step by Step introduced child-centred learning, family engagement and community-based approaches into early education systems in 29 countries across Europe and Eurasia from 1994 onwards.

Beginning in 1997, the Fund for an Open Society in Serbia focused Step by Step on support for internally displaced families and Roma communities - populations that were receiving very little attention at the time. Between 1997 and 2006, the programme was implemented in 15 towns and communities and served between 130 and 775 children annually. The programme hired up to 112 collaborators, 70% of whom were Roma, including 22 Roma and 5 non-Roma Pedagogic Assistants and a number of local Roma community coordinators (Duvnjak et al., 2010). It was a complex and multi-faceted initiative that provided three hours of early education each day to multi-age groups of children between the ages of 3 and 7, made up largely (but not always exclusively) of Roma children. Most of the programmes were housed in Roma community or refugee centres, while a handful were housed in municipal buildings, preschools and primary schools. Each was run by a fully accredited preschool teacher, supported by one or more assistant, and a Roma community coordinator, often drawn from a local Roma NGO. The programme provided culturally-relevant, child-centred learning activities implemented with the involvement of families and the community. The Roma language was used

alongside Serbian, so children could gain competence in the language in which primary education would be delivered. Children were also provided with a free meal each day, regular health checks, and a chance to bathe and to have their clothes washed, as many families had no access to running water at home. The results were immediate and astonishing. In one village, where 60% of Roma children typically dropped out of first grade, the full cohort of children who had participated in the programme remained in school with almost all continuing on through the fourth grade (Stojanovic, 2000).

The idea for including Roma assistants in early education settings came from two sources. First, a small number of countries in Central Eastern Europe, including Czech Republic and Slovakia, had been piloting the use of Roma assistants, and staff of the Centre for Interactive Pedagogy (CIP) that was established to carry on the early childhood work initiated by the Fund in 1998, were very familiar with these occurrences in the region. Secondly, the Step by Step Programme, which was designed in collaboration with Georgetown University, was grounded in the US Head Start Program, which promoted the practice of training and employing parents in early childhood classrooms (Klaus, 2004).

In 2002, the Fund for an Open Society in collaboration with CIP extended their work to primary schools over a five-year period, employing Roma assistants in five primary schools. They introduced individualised, active study methods, thematic planning, authentic assessment, involvement of parents, and improvements to the psychological, social and physical environment in the classroom. Training and intensive mentoring were provided to improve the quality of education.

What is interesting in these early models is first, that the role of Pedagogic Assistant was defined within the framework of comprehensive, multi-sectoral initiatives. Second, Pedagogic Assistants were expected to support the development and implementation of a culturally-relevant curriculum, in addition to serving as a bridge to the local community and a resource for parents. The role involved setting up a database to consolidate information about the Roma community, paying visits to families and collaborating with Roma NGOs. At school, Pedagogic Assistants

supported both teaching activities and broader school activities, such as participating in teacher and council meetings and launching school clubs. Finally, most Pedagogic Assistants, but not all, were from the Roma community. The job description that emerged from the project defined a Pedagogic Assistant as:

> A person who acts as a bridge between the local minority community and institutions with the aim of providing support in the process of educating children belonging to minority/marginalised groups. Assistants can be members of Roma or some other ethnic group, depending on which minority group has the largest population in a given region. (Duvnjak et al., 2010).

By 2005, the strategy of hiring Pedagogic Assistants to support Roma education was being piloted in a variety of education settings, reaching preschools and primary schools as well as second chance programmes for adults. These were operated and funded by a range of institutions, including UNICEF, The National Roma Minority Council, Roma Education Fund, Swiss Agency for Development, Christian Children's Fund, MoEST and University of Belgrade (Duvnjak et al., 2010).

These pilot programmes were implemented during a period of political and social instability that followed the overthrow of Slobodan Milosovic in October 2000 and the election of a democratic, Western-oriented government. The first wave of reform (2001-2003) was built on a readiness that had been building during Milosevic's regime. Many teachers had received training because of programmes implemented by international donors and they were ready for a change. Ivic and Pesikan have described the limitations of this first wave of reform, which was 'conceptualised in a spirit of an '*etic*' rather than an '*emic*' approach' (Ivic & Pesikan, 2012). It used a vague notion of 'modern European education' and a '3D formula' of depoliticisation, decentralisation and democratisation of the system as the basis to propose, and in some cases to implement, a series of unprepared top-down changes to education law, system structure, curriculum, teacher training and financing. It lacked key elements of an 'emic' or more internally-referenced approach, which would have based reform on a solid analysis and assessment of the current context and engaged key stakeholders, including existing institutions and

the public, in debating reforms and developing implementable plans matched by financial resources.

One of the Roma Pedagogic Assistants I interviewed gave the following perspective on the early reform process:

> A lot of money was invested in the Roma population, in Roma education, in Roma politics, in Roma everything, but the programmes were created wrong, some of them. I mean, they looked at it from their own perspective, they didn't study the market first, or the beneficiary, his needs, but they just looked from their own perspective how to create a programme. It's improving now, but before 2004-2005, maybe even 2007, a lot of money had been spent in vain. Institutions, individuals, people in government had the most benefit from it, and the community and the beneficiaries got the least of it.

It is not surprising then, that when the first democratic government was replaced in 2004, as a result of conceptual and procedural weaknesses that characterised the first wave of education reforms, the new government could easily reverse many of the changes (Ivic & Pesikan, 2012). Between 2005-2008 with a conservative government in power, a series of education ministers followed, including one who was forced to resign after huge protests erupted when she forbade schools to teach Darwinism (BBC, 2004).

One enduring change from the first wave of reform was the introduction of a 'zero' year from 2007, known as the Preparatory Preschool Programme, for all children ages 5.5 – 6 years. Prior to this, formal education for children in Serbia began at age 6/7 in primary school. This extension of compulsory schooling would have profound effects on Roma; only a handful of whom had ever participated in preschool education. In parallel, the OSCE and the MoEST in collaboration with CIP implemented a formal pilot to introduce Roma Pedagogic Assistants into primary schools. Between 2006-2010 the programme trained and placed 55 assistants (22 male and 33 female) across 54 schools. Pedagogic Assistants were required to have finished secondary education, though 16 new Pedagogic Assistants also had some tertiary education. Their job description included four areas of work:

- Helping children to learn and continue education

- Supporting schools in developing an inclusive learning environment

- Empowering Roma families and mediating in the collaboration between Roma families and communities

- Collaboration with local communities (Duvnjak et al., 2010)

Tunde Cerovic-Kovac, now a professor at the University of Belgrade, had participated in developing the first wave of reforms and was brought back into the ministry of education in 2008. In between, Cerovic-Kovac had been based in Budapest at the Roma Education Fund, where with colleagues, they assessed strategies that were showing promise for Roma children across the region. Introducing Roma Pedagogic Assistants had emerged as a promising approach. The Serbian reform would benefit from these experiences.

It was an exciting moment in Serbia. A different kind of reform was being prepared, one that would succeed where the first set of reforms had failed. As Cerovic-Kovac explained, 'It's not an unintentional thing. It was an intentionally strong package. I came to the Ministry in 2008… I know I have 4 years and in those 4 years you must put together the whole thing. You must put together the legislation, you have to ensure that the implementation starts well, you have to be able to start monitoring, to do some fine-tuning, to do all the trainings. It's lots of sub-legal acts. There is lots to do.' If the first wave of reform focused on improving the *quality* of education, this second wave focused on *inclusion* of both Roma and children with disabilities. In 2009, a new basic education law bringing in inclusive education would be voted in by parliament in tandem with a much broader anti-discrimination law.

The timing was ripe for reforms that focus on inclusion. Some of the impetus came from Serbia's participation in the Decade of Roma Inclusion (2005 – 2015), a political commitment of twelve European governments,[7] civil society organisations and international NGOs and agencies to eliminate discrimination against Roma

---

[7] Governments that participated in the *Decade* include: Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia and Spain. Slovenia and the United States have observer status.

people, as well as gaps in equity through targeted investments in education, employment, health and housing. As Cerovic-Kovac pointed out, 'the Decade changed something in general, the attitudes, the other Ministries as well… There were grants to municipalities (to support employment of Pedagogic Assistants), there were lots of trainings. And there were these curriculum changes, with the Individualised Education Plans (IEP) with the idea of individualisation … At the same time the schools were opened for the Roma kids and for the kids with disabilities.' Cerovic-Kovac credits the work of good NGOs, including those that focus on minority rights, as well as demographic changes. Interestingly, the falling birth rate in Serbia put pressure on schools to increase their pupil base to retain teachers, creating another motivation for schools to recruit Roma pupils.

At European level there were additional motivations as well. In a well-documented protracted legal case, the Czech government was held responsible for violating the rights of Roma children who had been mis-assigned to special schools based on inappropriate testing. 'It was just like the cherry on the top of the pie for us,' Cerovic-Kovac commented. It set a precedent in the region, motivating countries to seek to improve education of Roma. Additionally, Cerovic-Kovac also referenced the European Commission's (2006) paper on efficiency and equity in education, which she used to convince the government to take on reforms that emphasise social inclusion and equity.

However, this strong emphasis on inclusion came too late for some and it is still not clear it is broadly understood or endorsed. One NGO leader summarised this argument: 'They made a big mistake. Starting with the reform of education not introducing inclusion and then introducing (sic) inclusion later… So people think that inclusion is something new, not connected with quality.' According to a Professor at the University of Belgrade, the political and social imperative for inclusion still may not exist: 'We never debate it on the level of society, the education system, what set of values are behind the inclusive education (sic).' A regional advisor for inclusive education agrees: 'inclusion was imposed to us from the top down. They

did it on a systemic level first, which I disagree with... It's not good in the sense that it wasn't prepared, and because of that we have local problems.'

However, the statistics provide a strong imperative for implementing inclusive policies that consider social justice and equity. Roma children grow up in a very different developmental context than most Serbian children. Though Roma have been living in Serbia for centuries, the community also includes recent migrants and refugees who have been displaced from other parts of the former Yugoslavia, as well as families who have sought and been denied asylum in Europe. Some live in isolated settlements that lack sufficient utilities and infrastructure, while others are fully integrated with their Serbian neighbours. Some speak versions of Romanes and Serbian, while others speak Albanian. A range of religions is represented, including Orthodox, Muslim and Christian. (Organization for Security and Co-Operation in Europe Mission to Serbia, 2008). In 2014 the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia conducted the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS); an international household survey coordinated with the support of UNICEF, sampling from across the Serbian population. Roma women from the settlements are married earlier (57% before the age of 18 compared with 6.8% in the general population) are less likely to be literate (80.1% of Roma women from settlements are literate, compared to 99.1% in the average population) and have on average more children (3.1:1.6). Infant mortality is twice as high in the Roma settlements, and of those who survive infancy 18.5% are stunted in contrast with 6% of the general population. While 71.9% of children in Serbia have three or more children's books in their home, only 11.9% of children in Roma settlements live similarly. Only 68% of children <5 years in Roma settlements will have engaged in a learning activity with an adult in the past three days, while 95.5% of children in the general population will have had this opportunity (Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia & UNICEF, 2014).

These gaps continue to expand as children enter education. Only 5.7% of children <6 years in Roma settlements attend any form of early education, compared with 50% of the general population. Even participation in the mandatory 9-month pre-primary programme is also skewed with 68% of children in Roma settlements

attending, compared with 95.5% of the general population. While 98.5% of all children in Serbia attend primary school and 97.9% complete primary school, only 84.5% of Roma children in settlements attend, and 77% complete primary education. Only 21.6% of Roma children from settlements attend secondary school, compared with 89.1% of the general population (Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia & UNICEF, 2014).

At a regional conference, 'Policies and Practice of Inclusive Education in South Eastern Europe' held in Belgrade in June 2015 and sponsored by the World Bank and Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development, representatives from the World Bank emphasised the economic necessity of improving educational outcomes for Serbia's Roma children. Cristian Aedo, Education Practice Manager for Europe and Central Asia stressed that 15-29% of new entrants into the labour market in Serbia are Roma and that falling demographics of the general population puts pressure on growth. In 2010, the World Bank estimated the annual fiscal loss resulting from the equity gap between Roma and the general population in Serbia at 58 million EUR (World Bank, 2010). Thus, the economy of the country is at stake. Put succinctly by Tony Verheijen, the World Bank Country Manager for Serbia: 'These children need us, and we need them.'

But not all Serbian citizens view Roma as equally entitled to participate in early education. One university professor elaborated: 'Roma parents, because of the long-lasting discrimination and marginalisation, sometimes they might even share the view that this is not a social resource that is available to them… They might be exposed to the feeling that they are a guest in the Serbian state, and that the state belongs to Serbian people in the first place, so that it needs to serve Serbian people. And I think that this view is also shared by the majority of citizens. It is sometimes hard to understand for Serbian people that this state, that every citizen has a right to the state resources.'

It is not only the general population that is confused, but also the municipalities that oversee funding and operate the preschool system. The law clearly states that disadvantaged children should be given priority places in preschool, yet the

municipalities I visited gave priority to children of working parents. A representative of the Ministry explained: 'Even if the preschool education law states that socially deprived children are a priority, it doesn't happen in reality. Why? The network is small, and the children of employed parents are accepted first, and after that there are no places left. There are no conditions to accept them. That paragraph of the law is not really applied.' Raising awareness amongst Roma parents of their children's rights to early education services is just one role of the Roma Pedagogic Assistants.

The position of Pedagogic Assistants was formalised in 2009 and since then they have been hired directly by the Serbian government and matched to schools through a competitive process. These assistants, however, now have a different role than those in the first pilot projects. The Director of one of the largest education NGOs, explains: 'They were initially called Roma teaching assistants. And the OSCE and Ministry, when they started to establish the role, it was a change because they expected them to work on the level of cooperation with family, not to be in the classes, not to be on the pedagogical issue in a way.' Cerovic-Kovac elaborated on why pedagogic work was eliminated in later job descriptions. Policy was motivated by the perspective that children taught by teaching assistants were 'getting second hand teaching', and that utilising assistants in class would encourage Roma children to be pulled out and tutored. She also clarified how the name of the position was changed from *Roma Pedagogic Assistant* to *Pedagogic Assistant*: 'We have put it (Roma Pedagogic Assistant) first in the legislation, and then someone at some level in the government sent it back – "do not do that" – and then we have just connected it through different articles that they should speak Romanes, and should be recommended by the municipal entity that is dealing with Roma issues. So that's it. Because we really wanted them to be Roma.'

The lead Ministry official responsible for the Pedagogic Assistants at the MoEST at the time of my visit was hugely appreciated in the field. As one NGO leader put it, 'She is like the mother and father of assistants'. A principal in City B put it more strongly, 'She is God to them. She pushed the thing forward, yes. You have to admit

that really.' The 2009 education law and subsequent updates and accompanying regulations define conditions for employment, as well as the needed qualifications and skills. Training consists of six classes provided by a national pedagogic institution in Kragujevac, and additional trainings are provided periodically by the MoEST. Trainees are awarded 30 credits that are recognised by the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS). In the 2015/2016 academic year there were 175 assistants (101 women and 74 men) distributed across Serbia. Their actual responsibilities depend on negotiations that take place at school level. The lead Ministry official clarified, 'the school or preschool plans which areas are dominant for them…Usually, the principal asks the assistant to come up with a plan, and that would be okay if the plan was reviewed by everyone in the school and they all agreed and verified it… It happens in some places, in others it doesn't … Some school boards review that and plan together, some of them left that job for schools to do on their own, and then the assistant is confused as well as the school.'

A national study commissioned by the Serbian government in 2015 describes the 'average' Pedagogic Assistant as working for five years in the position, aged 31-40 years old (collectively they range from 20 to 58 years old), with a high school education. A total of 135 of the 175 Pedagogic Assistants speak Romanes. The study further classifies Pedagogic Assistants into three groups. The first group (18%) have been working for 7-13 years, and are over 40 years old, and they work closely with school management, taking on responsibilities within the school as well as in classrooms and communities. The second group (28%) is younger (20-30 years old), they have worked only a few months or a few years and generally have a vocational education. Their work is characterised by administrative work largely in Roma communities with few having any responsibilities in classrooms. The third group (55%) is 30-40 years old, has completed tertiary education, and has been working as assistants for 4-6 years. Their work is very dependent on the daily needs of the preschools and schools where they work, split between classroom and community activities. They do not have close relationships to the management teams in their schools, and as a group, they are keen to achieve a more secure position for Pedagogic Assistants, and one that offers advancement (Milivojevic, 2015).

These findings certainly correlate in Cities A and B: each Pedagogic Assistant had a unique and entirely contextually-specific role.

4.3   Part III: Reality on the Ground

"I would never want to make one size fits all contexts. I like that they
are constructing their role in a contextually sensitive way."

Tunde Cerovic-Kovacs, University of Belgrade

Though the core elements of the work of each Pedagogic Assistant remained consistent with the general position description, each one that I met, whether assigned to work in a preschool - as about 25% of them are - or assigned as the other 75% are to a primary school - had a vastly different scope of responsibilities. In some cases, the number of children or institutions they were expected to support was staggering.

Take Boris.[8] He is one Pedagogic Assistant from five in City A, who works with children at the pre-primary level. When I visited, only 4 Roma children were attending full-day preschool, while between 40-50 were enrolled in obligatory half-day pre-primary. Obligatory pre-primary programmes are based in preschools or primary schools. In City A, this means that the 65 pre-primary classrooms across the city are based across 30+ preschool and primary buildings.

The geographic scope of his responsibilities required almost military planning. During my visit he was chasing up documents needed to put forward at least five Roma children as candidates for the 1,700 places in full day preschool. On the way to visit a preschool, we would pull up at the side of the road, so a parent could consult and hand him an application to enrol their child in preschool through the window of the car. He describes his work: 'we spend a lot of time as assistants doing informative focus groups and informing our citizens, our beneficiaries on the preschool programme, and that's the only way we can get them into the system'.

---

[8] Names of Pedagogic Assistants have been changed throughout the study to protect the anonymity of sources.

The city advisor on inclusive education for the preschool, a psychologist, who works closely with Boris, emphasises how unsupported inclusive education is at the local level. There are many children with disabilities or special needs (around 80 in the preschool system in City A), no additional funds to provide the necessary environment (personal assistants, ramps etc), oversubscribed classes (many with 40-60 children), and too few teachers with the necessary skills to support a variety of learners. Compared with the Pedagogic Assistants who work in primary schools, Boris spends more time with families: 'Preschool demands only basic stuff for the children to socialise, to learn some basic needs regarding education,' he noted, 'so I spend a lot less time in the groups, only when it is specifically needed, the main thing in the first two months is socialisation. And if there's difficulty in speech and language, then I mediate, or if a child starts preschool later, I spend time with that child ... until they adapt.' The advisor on inclusive education summarises: 'He can't even manage to look at every child, let alone go in depth in solving problems ... We have to joke a little in the end, because we can't solve even 5% of the problems.'

The preschool Pedagogic Assistant in City B plays a different role entirely, assigned to work in one preschool building that serves 520 children, 83 of them Roma. I spent a day observing as she pulled one or two or a few children out of class, according to a schedule, to work with them individually or in small groups on very differentiated activities: 'Teachers use frontal instruction, and we, Pedagogic Assistants, have more opportunities to work with two children at a time, or even individually. We are trained to do it differently, to try another method. And sometimes it happens that children really learn using a different method.'

Likewise, the roles of Pedagogic Assistants observed in primary settings varied enormously. In many cases, Pedagogic Assistants are assigned to large schools with substantial numbers of Roma children, more than can be realistically supported by one staff member.

In City A, one Pedagogic Assistant is responsible for a primary school, which has 100-110 Roma children, some of whom are doing very well, some attend and need pedagogic support, and around 50-55 do not attend school regularly. This Assistant

divides her time between supporting children in class, mediating problems and keeping in touch with the families of the children that do not attend. She writes regular reports to the Social Work Centre, which has promised to visit families to reinforce the necessity of children attending school. Her reports, described by the local education authority as 'the best reports in the school, related to practice and useful for other teachers' are largely ignored by the Social Work Centre, other teachers and even by the principal of this school.

In City B, one Pedagogic Assistant (Zara)[9] is assigned to a large basic school serving approximately 2,000 children attending three shifts across three buildings. Around 500 of these children are Roma and 100-150 do not attend regularly. The principal and psychologist emphasise how important this role is for the entire school: 'Having a Roma person in the school is an advantage. It offers an opportunity for closer communication and opens the door. The families feel comfortable with her. Everyone knows the Pedagogic Assistant and invites her home. Zara works now not only with Roma.' A non-Roma parent of a child with disabilities reinforced these observations: 'I worked at the library here…for a month, and the first thing I noticed was how much she meant to them. Everyone opens the door and asks for her. The sense of security that in their case is a good thing, and the basis for every healthy relationship is trust.'

Zara offers families additional support when they face challenges. This includes help for children from families that travelled to Western Europe to apply for asylum and that have now returned. She helps gather documents and arranges translation to support re-enrolment with the help of local humanitarian organisations. Zara described how the previous day a grandmother, crying, came in to explain that her daughter had died, and that the grandmother would take care of the children now. Zara gathered and shared the children's records with the grandmother.

The everyday needs of Roma families from the settlements are overwhelming. One parent described their dilemma: 'We can't teach our kids, because we can't read, we can't write. And that's hard for us. We have so many children we can't get

---

[9] Also, a pseudonym.

books, footwear. Books, pencils, notebooks, we can't afford them. We can barely feed the kids, let alone buy shoes and provide everything. The child has to go clean and our kids go dirty. At least our children have to finish school. Half of our community is in jail, because they haven't finished school, they don't work.' Zara helps alleviate this by distributing donations of soap, trainers and clothing from the Red Cross, by obtaining free books through the social welfare service, and by organising excursions for Roma children with the help of local NGOs. To create aspirations for families she brings parents and children from the very poorest settlements to visit houses of Roma in integrated neighbourhoods, and organises excursions for parents to visit the university.

At the other end of the scale, one of the Pedagogic Assistants in City A works in a rural primary school, which is spread across a main building and four outposts in villages and has around 20-30 Roma children enrolled. She can provide in-depth pedagogical support. During my visit, I watched her plan with teachers and then sit through subject classes working individually with a young Roma pupil who had an individualised learning plan and needed a great deal of support. Watching her work closely with the principal and teachers, it is clear she is a valued member of staff at the school. The principal describes efforts to overcome prejudice towards the Pedagogic Assistant:

> I went to a seminar in Belgrade and then organised several activities
> with the goal of the school adjusting to the cooperation with the
> Pedagogic Assistant... The relationship was full of empathy from both
> sides from the beginning. I fought the prejudice… that the teachers and
> parents had about working with a Pedagogic Assistant. First, we did
> some plays to explain to the kids. Roma kids participated in those plays.
> After that we had a big parent-teacher meeting, we organised a
> workshop for fighting prejudice about the Pedagogic Assistants, because
> that was an unfamiliar position here…

The role of Pedagogic Assistants in Serbia is, thus, very diverse and responsive to the micro-environments of the communities that surround the preschool or school. One regional inclusive education advisor described the context in their city:

Five institutions use Pedagogic Assistants as a resource, not only for Roma students, but for other students as well, students with certain learning difficulties. The problems of Roma students and families are different in every community, so every school has a different set of problems. So, for example, one from X needs to work in the field a lot. So, in the settlement there are families that they have to empower and support, or motivate in the area of their children's education. In Y, the Pedagogic Assistant is more focused on the school itself. In Z, that's the school with a lot of migrant families ... residents are mixed by origin and religion and ethnicity, and … the Pedagogic Assistants in those conditions have a very complex job. They are pretty much on their own.

There was no consensus on how much time Pedagogic Assistants spend working in the school and how much they spend working in the community with families. One local education authority estimated that two-thirds of the work is based in the school and one-third in the family. Pedagogic Assistants in the same city differentiated between the assistant working in the preschool, who spends, according to their estimation, at least half the time working with families and half in preschools, from assistants working in primary schools who described spending one day per week in the community and the rest in school.

4.3.1 Roles of Pedagogic Assistants

Several common roles, described below, emerged during this research.

Liaisons between education institutions and families and communities: Most Pedagogic Assistants in Serbia speak Romanes, and they use these language skills. One assistant noted: 'Only by speaking Romanes, do you know…I have to tell you that it means so much to them, that someone understands what they want.' However, sharing of information involves more than simple translation. Pedagogic Assistants spend time with families in their homes and settlements gaining an understanding of living contexts. Pedagogic Assistants described showing teachers photos of Roma settlements or taking them to visit settlements, so they better understand the lives of their class children. In one case, the Pedagogic Assistant organised a Roma history week in the primary school. They also carry messages from the school to families, and visit the homes of children that are not attending

school, for example. A local education authority representative commented: 'That connection with the family enables a better transfer of information from school to the family and from family to school… When a child doesn't come to school, or when there's a problem, she simply informs the family…Sometimes the family is being resistant and has its reasons for that and sometimes the school doesn't see the whole problem.' They hold workshops and seminars for parents to build parenting skills and to introduce the requirements of the preschool and school. To accomplish this role successfully, Pedagogic Assistants must build trust with both the educational institutions that employ them and the primary beneficiary – the Roma community. Some principals actively foster an atmosphere of trust and respect for the Pedagogic Assistant, while others do very little in this regard.

Links with other services: Pedagogic Assistants link children, families and schools with resources from other agencies and NGOs, providing families with access to new sources of physical, social and cultural capital. In some cases, this involves preparing primary schools to receive Roma children. It also involves working with the Social Welfare system. For instance, one Pedagogic Assistant sends monthly reports to the Social Welfare department, while others described making referrals, attending case conferences or mediating between foster parents, school staff and children. On a more formal basis, Pedagogic Assistants are members of school-based violence prevention teams and school-based inclusion teams. They obtain resources for families (books, soap, food, clothing), arrange links with health services and link returning refugees with NGOs that provide legal support. In the first city I visited, all Pedagogic Assistants were also staff members of the Roma NGO, and they used this to link parents with wider opportunities for adult education, parenting workshops, toy libraries and programmes for children.

Direct support to children, parents and other family members: While the earliest pilot programmes promoted a classroom role for Pedagogic Assistants, when the position was formalised and scaled up, the Ministry sought to minimise this. Nonetheless, where the ratio of Roma pupils to teaching assistants is low, Pedagogic Assistants spend most of the time supporting pupils individually or in

small groups and in some cases assist in the development and implementation of individual education plans. Additionally, Pedagogic Assistants sometimes serve as back-up teachers and offer additional educational programmes for children (after school) and parenting or literacy workshops for family members.

Role models and change agents: Pedagogic Assistants serve as role models for everyone they encounter. One local education authority representative remarked: 'Our assistants are really a role model for the children.' Pedagogic Assistants echoed this: 'My job is based on being a good role model, not just verbally, but with my looks, behaviour, contacts with my colleagues, parents, them, they notice all of that.' Another commented, 'the girls in class tend to hug me, some want to sit on my lap, to cuddle. I really think we are accepted (by all children).'

Several Pedagogic Assistants underlined their role as change agents for the community: 'We have always been advocating for democracy alongside this job. The real thing for the Roma community, is to unite, to stay, and that's the only way to get more rights, to advocate more for our identity, culture, language, everything. And I can say that that was the crucial thing why I got into this line of work.' One Pedagogic Assistant gave an example:

> I had a situation that a Serbian language teacher asked me to practice fine motor skills with a sixth grader. I stood up for him, that is a child that can do simple equations, reads pretty well. I think that there's no need to go back to that level, but that teacher thought that he was a lost case. The teachers have really low expectations of those kids… We want to change the prejudice in our schools. We want to show that Roma students are just like all other students, and they too have different abilities, and we just have to recognise those abilities and support them in achieving their full potential.

Pedagogic Assistants also serve in several roles that they were never intended to fill. This includes *providing support to children with disabilities*. Though the Ministry provides funds for personal assistants to support children with disabilities, it is insufficient. To start with, the salary for a personal assistant is so low (100€ per month, compared with 200€ per month for a Pedagogic Assistant and 350€ per month for a teacher); there is little interest. One Pedagogic Assistant described her

dilemma: 'I am focused only on 4-5 children in the class. Maybe the child with cerebral palsy is the one that needs me most. I feel that he does. But I, for example, group the Roma children near him so that I can work with them, too. I try to work with that group. If another child would ask me something, of course I will never tell him, "I'm not here for you."'

Ministry staff that created the legislation acknowledge the problem: 'That was never the intention the Roma are doing the work with disability children. That's nonsense… There is now a push for every problem being handled by the Pedagogic Assistant. That's a sign that they are really excellent, but on the other hand, I think it is the laziness of the system and that shouldn't happen. Unfortunately, I can't influence that any more… They are afraid of losing their jobs and they are actually qualified…so they cannot afford to say "no".'

Recognising that the formal education system is not meeting all needs of the community, on their own initiative, Pedagogic Assistants have implemented ***supplementary community based or parenting services and programmes***. In the first city, the Roma NGO implements supplementary educational activities for the community through several donor-funded projects, providing parenting classes, literacy programmes, home visits, toy libraries, homework support, activities and summer programmes for children. Likewise, in the second city the Pedagogic Assistants operate a summer preparation programme for children.

4.3.2   Challenges Facing Pedagogic Assistants

There is no question that working as a Pedagogic Assistant presents a unique set of challenges. As noted above, the specific role of each assistant is developed in collaboration with the preschool institution or school where they are based. Many interviewees commented on how many responsibilities are delegated to Pedagogic Assistants. Most frequently, Pedagogic Assistants mentioned taking on responsibilities supporting children with disabilities where there is a lack of specialised assistants. Pedagogic Assistants discussed the need to ensure that their role does not relieve the teacher of building a relationship with Roma children and

parents. One Roma Pedagogic Assistant noted that she accepts requests from teachers to contact families who live in the poorest settlements, where families do not always have phones and parents are harder to find. However, she pushes teachers to make direct contact families from the better off settlements that are easier to communicate with, so that they form closer relationships.

Significantly, Pedagogic Assistants have neither job security nor career progression. Financing for salaries is provided annually to schools through the central government budget. In the early years, before funding was routinely included in the budget, there were some gaps and Pedagogic Assistants had to wait for months to receive their salaries. Even now, the positions are not permanent. Individual employment contracts expire annually on August 31st and every September there is a job competition, which is usually offered to the standing Pedagogic Assistants, however the principal can hire someone else. In some cases, contracts are renewed every 3 months. This has personal consequences for the assistants, as banks do not allow clients without permanent employment to take out bank loans or mortgages. Further, there is no career progression. Teaching positions in Serbia require a degree from a pedagogic college or university, whereas Pedagogic Assistants are required only to have a high school diploma. There is no possibility to obtain a raise or promotion (though a number of the Pedagogic Assistants in fact have college degrees) because of the economic context and political pressure from current teachers to protect their positions. This puts career progression for Pedagogic Assistants further out of reach. Interestingly, in the 2014-2015 school year the Ministry reduced teacher salaries and teachers went on strike.

These concerns are one reason the Pedagogic Assistants formed a national association in 2015. The President of the association commented:

We have big social issues in Serbia. Poverty is getting worse. There is no more money. A reduction of the number of employees in education is announced and a large number of our colleagues are afraid… We want to put the status of the Pedagogic Assistants to a higher level as an educational profession that has an important role in the education system… We managed to create a network with national stakeholders…to work together to improve the quality of pedagogic assistance and establishing that profession, writing regulations, so that our position becomes more stable in the education system so we don't find ourselves in a position that someone…a new government that can come in 5-6 years simply announces that there's no need for that position. We want to protect our rights because a number of our colleagues are victims of discrimination on their jobs…

The issue of discrimination came up in several contexts (discrimination against Roma citizens, discrimination against students, discrimination against Pedagogic Assistants). One Pedagogic Assistant related how she addressed her principal after a colleague made several negative references to Roma in staff meetings.

Despite the crucial role that Pedagogic Assistants are playing in an education system that is seeking to achieve greater inclusion (and the multiple overwhelmingly positive perspectives about assistants that I collected during my visit), they struggle for recognition. In the words of one assistant: 'I really love my job. I think that my enthusiasm, what I get from parents and children, and the fact that things are moving forward, that's my biggest reward. And I hope that the State will recognise that and value my work and my effort.' This kind of personal commitment came to light again and again. As one assistant put it: 'I developed my identity through my work in the NGO. And those are the first moments when I was empowered enough to say that I'm Roma and I can contribute to my community as a Roma girl.' Being respected as a professional carried particular importance for one assistant, who related: 'A non-Roma parent came to the principal asking to enrol his child into my class. He didn't know that I was a Pedagogic Assistant. He thought I was a teacher. That was the biggest satisfaction for me.'

4.4 Part IV: Impact and the Future

"They kiss our children and they are dirty."

Roma Parent

There is ample evidence that Roma Pedagogic Assistants both increase participation in, and improve the quality of, early childhood education in Serbia. The results are largely qualitative as no formal randomised control trials have been conducted. The Ministry official in charge of introducing inclusion in 2009, indicated that she eschewed conducting an impact evaluation as it would have required unethically randomising some poor Roma communities to a control group, waiting for the results might have delayed scale-up, and there were so many synergetic projects it would be irresponsible to attribute any changes uniquely to the introduction of Pedagogic Assistants. Though no randomised control trials have been conducted, qualitative and retrospective quantitative data demonstrate positive impacts and a few challenges.

An evaluation by the Institute for Education Quality and Evaluation in 2009 assessed the impact of assistants in the 2008/2009 academic year and found positive impacts on academic achievement, attendance, Roma participation in extra-curricular activities and parent involvement. Pedagogic Assistants, teachers, experts, Roma pupils and parents all agreed introducing Pedagogic Assistants is important for education institutions (Institute for the Evaluation of Education Quality, 2009). A study published a year later by the OSCE and conducted with the Center for Interactive Pedagogy summarised perceived impacts by parents, children, teachers and Pedagogic Assistants. These included improving social cohesion in the school and society, and improving access to education and the quality of education (Duvnjak et al., 2010).

Two more recent studies reinforce these early observations. A World Bank funded study on the implementation of inclusive education in Serbia determined that Pedagogic Assistants are very well-received and there is a strong demand to hire more, both from schools that have Pedagogic Assistants, and those that do not.

They are credited with increasing student performance and improving school climate and communication with parents. Challenges noted include lack of clarity regarding the role of Pedagogic Assistants, particularly unrealistic expectations related to extending their work to children with disabilities, and the lack of employment stability. The study recommended institutionalising the position and tightening the job description along with hiring at least an additional 200 Pedagogic Assistants (Friedman, Pavlovic Babic, & Simic, 2015).

The only quantitative study was published in 2015 by a group of academicians, who retrospectively evaluated the impact of the Roma teaching assistant programme by collecting data on enrolment, attendance and grades from the first year it was scaled up (2009/2010). They observed a significant reduction in Roma pupil absences, increases in the grades of first graders and lower drop-out rates. They noted higher impact where there are fewer Roma in the school, which they suppose is due, either to the greater intensity of interaction with the Pedagogic Assistant when there are fewer Roma pupils, or to the deeper assimilation of the Roma population. They hypothesise that these successes derive from two mechanisms. First, including Roma staff in primary schools introduces positive changes into the education institution, reducing stereotypes and providing more support for learning. Second, they suggest that having Roma staff alters the preferences of Roma communities for education, inducing them to attend. Thus, the benefits are bi-directional (Battaglia & Ledinski, 2015).

Qualitative data collected for this study reinforces the overwhelmingly positive impact of Pedagogic Assistants in both preschools and primary schools. As one local education authority official put it, 'I think that the Pedagogic Assistants did the most for the children to be enrolled in preschool. The results, the number of enrolled kids wouldn't be so good if they didn't join in.' Another noted, 'It's fantastic! By increasing the number of kids enrolling into preschool and primary school they stay longer in the system. More and more of those children finish school and start high school.'

Impacts are also seen in children's outcomes. One principal explained, 'They are less absent when someone works with them and they have better grades…Some students who were about to drop out of school, there's a lot of progress. We have problems with foster care families. (The Pedagogic Assistant) is valuable there, because we communicate easier now. They are closer with her and they open up to her, so I know what their situation is exactly.' One Pedagogic Assistant noted: 'Expectations from the students are higher now. Because they feel a little more courageous, they are motivated to answer questions. They weren't encouraged to speak up, answer questions, participate in class and be active like that… The children get attached and they have more space to develop in that younger age when they have that stimulating environment and a supportive person who creates an atmosphere for that child to feel comfortable in that group.' Changes also extend more broadly to school climate, as noted by one local authority representative, 'I think there is less and less separation and hatred.'

Parents expressed relief at the opportunity to communicate with someone from their community: 'It's better when it is one of our own'. They are thankful for the educational activities (literacy and parenting workshops) provided; for clothes, soaps and books; and for help in sorting through documentation, 'We go to Zara when we do not have something.'

There is demand for more Pedagogic Assistants. A local inclusion advisor commented: 'What the Pedagogic Assistant does is not enough… So, for him to be able to identify even more families, and we would empower parents through workshops.' There is a sense among parents that the Ministry is out of touch: 'No one from Belgrade has been to this school. It's impossible for this woman to handle 500 children, and she has no possibility of targeting who needs support.'

4.4.1 Participant Perspectives on What Should Change

My observations in preschool and primary classrooms confirmed that while efforts have been made to improve access (provision of free textbooks, easier enrolment processes, mainstreaming of children with special educational needs), teaching

quality is highly inconsistent; very few teachers are able to diversify teaching and learning and many schools still suffer from inadequate infrastructure. Additionally, a national information system is needed along with a new financing system that provides schools that enrol disadvantaged children with additional resources (Friedman et al., 2015). Most classes I observed, with few exceptions, operated exclusively through teacher-led, full-group activities. In one extreme case the preschool classroom was set up in a U-shaped conference room configuration with five-year old children functioning as an audience responding to teacher-led instruction. More frequently, the preschool classrooms were divided into a desk area and play area with group activities predominating. I was impressed, nonetheless, with a maths and language lesson provided to a group of fourth graders. In this case, the teachers had a very warm relationship with students and provided opportunities for critical thinking. However, rural schools lacked resources and needed repairs with one that still had stoves installed as a back-up when the central heating was down.

The need to move beyond access issues and refocus attention on quality was the topic of my conversation with one university professor. He framed the situation:

> We have come to the limit with this game. In order to really go further to our ultimate goal, we need to somehow find a way how to support teachers and pedagogical assistants to create more professional collaboration for the sake of the learning of students… We can expect that what the teachers are doing is a little bit more supportive than before. We are not putting into focus learning and educational achievements at the moment…. Because this is the point, the point of education is not to be in the school or to sit in the school, but to go out of the school with some kind of a set of skills that will equip you to become an active member of society.

Interestingly, the Pedagogic Assistants, who have been trained in modern pedagogy, are in many cases more skilled than the highly trained teachers. A representative from the Ministry put it succinctly: 'Turns out that they (Pedagogic Assistants) are the ones that know most about social inclusion, which is a disaster!' Education officials at the local authority level have also observed this: 'Our teachers do not have the competencies that (the Roma Pedagogic Assistant) has when it

comes to pedagogic work. Pedagogic Assistants actually use individualisation most…but the teacher doesn't.' The President of the Association of Pedagogic Assistants emphasises the responsibility of teachers to create a positive atmosphere:

> It is their job (teachers) to secure a certain level of quality in the classroom with or without a Roma Pedagogic Assistant. If they would look at things that way, if they had a child of their own which they love and would give anything in the world just so that the child can be part of a peer group, they would realise how important it is for inclusion to be widely accepted as a social value…They should create an acceptable atmosphere for every child that enters the class.

The legal framework that Serbia put in place in 2009 is an asset. As one local authority representative remarked: 'Our laws give lots of opportunities for everyone in the system, some experts even say, and I love saying that, Finland says we have one of the best laws in the world. The problem is in the implementation of legal solutions in practice.' Such changes to the system will require an intentional approach. A leading expert at the university emphasised the need to amplify good practice examples by identifying them, promoting them and then creating grassroots networks of schools that can create a momentum for change. He emphasised that the top down approach in implementing inclusive education has the unintended consequence that not everyone shares the values behind the policy. The Ministry official who introduced the reforms also offered a vision for change. From her perspective, continuous political support from the Ministry, individual consequences (perhaps recalcitrant staff losing their jobs) and affirmative action to promote the hiring of minorities (including hiring Roma as teachers and principals, not only as assistants) would go a long way to incentivise change.

Interestingly, the evidence collected for this case study emphasised the importance of embedding changes at all levels. The director of a large education-focused NGO, commented: 'The big challenge for the system is that the system needs to change in all levels, all areas. They cannot just adopt a law. You need to change methodology. That's the main problem. And the Ministry didn't understand that.' She also

proposes changes at the level of schools - hiring of an inclusion coordinator in each school to take overall responsibility for the collaboration within the school and across institutions – and the creation of two categories of Pedagogic Assistants to recognise those with more experience and skills.

Several participants suggested a greater role for local authorities. One local education official in the first city commented: 'I have to say that the local authority, which has a lot of space for action, doesn't do much…It doesn't have the mechanisms, doesn't keep records on which children are old enough to start school, which kids have started school, and which haven't. There's the Ministry, which gives a legal frame, regulations, finance and has a service that supports and evaluates, the second level is the local authority, which is directly responsible for education in their region and the third level is the school. …That middle level, the local authority, is not involved in all of that yet.'

The President of the Association of Pedagogic Assistants echoed this, referring, ironically, back to the local education official quoted above: 'The problem is that we do not have the staff in the local authority who are sensitised enough and professional enough and that thinks about relevant policies that will improve, not only Roma education, but education in general. They (Roma) do not understand that they have space to influence local policy through school boards.'

Perhaps this is why the local Roma NGO in City A is so important. It functions like a local education authority for Roma, promoting enrolment in obligatory preschool; providing supplemental education opportunities for parents, children and teachers; arranging free textbooks and resources for needy children. It serves as an unrecognised cultural broker - one in many ways, that is quite like the Traveller Education Support Services that I observed in the United Kingdom, to which this thesis now turns.

Chapter 5   Cultural Brokers Based in Local Authorities: Traveller Education Support Services in the UK

5.1   Part I: Context – Setting the Scene

> "I must admit that the Roma have been a particularly challenging group because of the experiences, both life experiences and education experiences that they received, and their families have received before they get here."

> Head of Primary and Targeted Intervention
> Inclusive and Learning Services, Children, Young People and Families, Council

On arriving by train from London in the first of two Northern cities in England, the coordinator of the council service, Education for New Communities and Travellers, met me and we headed on foot over to the office to plan my research visit. Located aptly in a building called *Future House*, the Education for New Communities and Travellers is one of the more traditionally organised Traveller Education Support Service (TESS). Set up from the 1970s onwards, these services were created to support the inclusion of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) children into the education system. Established through the initiative of local education authorities, they were, at one point, almost universal in England: all but a few local authorities had a TESS. These services provide school placement support for GRT children, and work with schools to adapt programming to these children's needs and cultures. However, the situation has changed in recent years and many have been reorganised, absorbed into Ethnic Minority Achievement Services (EMAS), English as an Additional Language (EAL) units or units focused more broadly on new arrivals, asylum seekers and refugees.

This case study traces the origins of the TESS in England and motivations for their establishment. It explores how two TESSs both located in larger Northern cities (for the purposes of this study, they are referred to as City C and City D), are functioning today as cultural brokering services, linking GRT children and families with education systems. Particular attention is paid to the changing role of the TESS and

the experiences of those who staff or interact with TESS. The role of these two services has changed dramatically in the past ten years as the number of Roma in each of these cities has expanded rapidly with a particularly large population arriving from Slovakia to both cities. Large numbers of Roma children enter and leave schools each month. These new Roma communities have not developed strong linkages or bonds with the resident Gypsy and Traveller communities. Many seek to avoid ascription under the label Gypsy, Roma Traveller and declare themselves as 'White European other'; a classification that avoids the stigma associated with being Roma in their home countries (Penfold, 2015). In City C, the TESS service initially served approximately 110 children from GRT communities, Fairground (Showpeople) and Circus families; European Migrant workers, refugee and asylum-seeking families. In 2015, the same TESS served more than 3,400 Eastern European children, of which at least an estimated 2,300 are of Roma origins. Similarly, in the same year, the TESS in City D served approximately 2,500 Roma children, a significant increase from 2010, when the same system supported around 300 Roma children.

Because many Roma families do not identify themselves as Roma, both cities struggle to gather data regarding the number of Roma pupils. For example, to gain more accurate data in one city, the number of Roma was calculated by including all children from the category 'Roma' and any child from the category 'White Eastern European' speaking Romany or Slovak as their home language, as most Slovak migrants are of Roma origins. Both cities take measures to encourage Roma to ascribe as Roma, which would eliminate confusion, but this is a lengthy process. What is apparent is that the workload of TESS has greatly shifted in recent years, while funding to education is decreasing and services in general are being cut or re-organised. Migrant Roma children face discrimination like their Gypsy and Traveller counterparts, however, they are also faced with the daunting task of relocating to a new country, learning a new language and accommodating to a new culture and education system.

The migration trends noted above reflect a broader trend of Roma migration to the UK. The most recent migration figures indicate that there are at least 200,000 Roma in the UK and at least 200,000 – 300,000 Gypsies and Travellers, which results in a combined total of 400,000 – 500,000 GRT families; a significant number (Brown, Scullion, & Martin, 2013). While there has been some improvement in recent years, 37% of the British public hold a 'very or somewhat unfavourable' view of Roma (Pew Research Center, 2015). The media has not been kind, generally, towards Roma or Gypsy and Traveller families, often portraying them as benefit seekers (Brown et al., 2013). Yet, a survey carried out in 2009 by European Dialogue to explore Roma migration determined that Roma are moving to the UK primarily to seek work (59%), to seek a better life for their children (22.1%) and to escape discrimination in their home countries (15.4%) (Fremlova, 2009). In the cities I visited, the new migrant Roma families were living in crowded, rented accommodation, clustered in the poorer parts of each city, many finding only informal employment. Families move frequently to find better accommodation or a better job, or to return to their country of origin to help a sick relative or seek health services delivered in their own language. The result is considerable instability across the year in the school registration of Roma pupils, leading to further complications.

The cities that I visited were selected with the help of Arthur Ivatts, a titan of GRT education in the UK. Arthur chose to study the education of Gypsy and Traveller families at university, and then became a leading figure in the movement that began in earnest in the 1970s to bring GRT children into the education system. He was brought in as the first Field Officer for the National Gypsy Education Council, and later was given responsibility for monitoring and improving GRT education across the UK as a representative of Her Majesty's Inspectorate (HMI), now known as the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted). He advised me to visit one TESS that operates with a more traditional structure (City C), and a second that has been reorganised so that services are provided by several units and coordinated across sectors including health, education and housing (City D), both in the North of England. Though the intention initially was to examine how

TESS serve GRT communities, because of the huge recent Roma migration to both cities, my research ended up focusing on migrant Roma children and families and the supportive role that TESS provide.

Because of Arthur Ivatts' introductions, I was able to arrange excellent research visits to each city. In each city I interviewed the person in charge of the TESS, as well as a few staff members. In the first city I shadowed two different TESS workers on two afternoons as they made visits to homes, nurseries and schools. In both cities I met with Roma parents and young Roma teaching assistants or mentors that were recruited and trained by TESS to support Roma inclusion in educational institutions. In both cities I observed classrooms in nurseries and primary schools, interviewing Head and Deputy Head teachers, teachers and assistants. Finally, in City D, I was fortunate to be able to attend a half-day workshop focused on New Arrivals and Roma at which representatives of the TESS, as well staff from nurseries and schools, presented on current contexts and best practice. The table below summarises these activities and the participants in the research in the UK.

Table 5-1:   Interviews, Focus Groups, Observations, Discussions, Visits and Workshops Conducted in the United Kingdom

Activity	City	Participants
Interview: Arthur Ivatts	UK	Former UK Inspector for HMI
Interview: Director, TESS City C	City C	1 Director TESS
Interview: Slovak Roma immigrants	City C	1 Brother and Sister
Interview: Primary School Principal	City C	1 Head Teacher
Focus Group: Roma Trainee Mentors	City C	3 Roma Trainee Mentors
Observations	City C	2 Primary Schools
Shadowing (1 day)	City C	2 TESS staff
Interview: Director, TESS	City D	Director, Municipal Education Service
Discussion: Primary School	City D	1 Head Teacher 1 Teacher 1 Roma Teaching Assistant
Interview: TESS worker	City D	1 TESS worker

Activity	City	Participants
Interviews: Roma Teaching Assistants	City D	2 Roma Teaching Assistants (interviewed in their classrooms)
Interview: Roma Parents	City D	2 Roma Parents
Observations	City D	1 Nursery 2 Primary Schools
Event participation	City D	Council-organised workshop on GRT children in education

5.2   Part II: Establishing TESS in the UK

"TESS was a result of cunning or manipulation, not government policy."

Arthur Ivatts, Retired Official HMI

Whereas the introduction of Roma Pedagogical Assistants across Serbia was inspired by projects piloted by non-governmental organisations and then scaled up nationally by the MoEST, the establishment of Traveller Education Support Services (TESS) across almost all Local Education Authorities in England was neither planned nor led from the centre. The network of the TESS grew out of the determination and commitment of a handful of individuals, working initially through non-governmental organisations to ensure the rights of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children in education. A 1967 report published by the Central Advisory Council for Education (England), chaired by Bridget Plowden and entitled *Children and their Primary Schools* drew attention to a community that had been largely invisible to the education authorities:

> (Gypsy children's) educational needs are nevertheless extreme and largely unmet. Moreover, the economic and social handicaps of the group from which they come arise, to a large extent, from the fact that successive generations of gypsy children are deprived of the education that would enable them to compete on equal terms with the rest of the community. Extreme as they are, the needs of gypsy children cannot be effectively met by measures of the kind we recommend for the more general problems of urban deprivation. They will require special attention and carefully planned action. (Plowden Report, 1967, p. 595)

According to the Plowden report, less than 10% of the estimated 6,000 Gypsy children in England at the time were attending some form of schooling (Department of Education and Science, 1967). Ivatts describes the limited response to the report: 'Initially it was a few people who reached out to a very isolated and stigmatised nomadic community' at a time when 'education in the UK was struggling to address the education of Black and Asian pupils…to come to terms with the history of racism.' Ultimately, the innovative approaches in teacher training and curriculum that were being formulated to support British education systems to fully include new Black and Asian migrants would benefit GRT children, but not immediately.

Eventually, a series of rights-focused, and later education-focused non-governmental organisations, served as an arena for discussing and debating how to move forwards. The National Gypsy Education Council was established in 1970, an outgrowth of the previously established rights-focused Gypsy Council. These bodies included both Gypsy leaders and professionals and the politics were messy with some attesting that the Gypsy members were largely puppets of the non-Gypsy members. Debates ensued about whether to pursue separate education provision for Gypsies in their communities or to integrate children into existing schools. With the help of Lady Plowden, very modest start-up resources were obtained from the Ministry of Education and several foundations, and these were used to hire Arthur Ivatts as a Field Officer to work with communities. A few years later, in 1973, a faction led by professionals split off and formed the Advisory Council for the Education of Romani and other Travellers (ACERT), taking the resources (the funds and Ivatts) with them. In 1983, Arthur Ivatts took a position with Her Majesty's Inspectorate (HMI) and ultimately became responsible for monitoring the education of GRT children across England (Ivatts & Day, 2014).

The earliest attempts to address the education of Gypsy children included the setting up of classes in communities and providing resources, training, curriculums, funding and encouragement. Often the solution chosen by authorities was to hire a few teachers to travel to sites or schools and work with children. According to Ivatts, the process of setting up TESS in the 1970s happened gradually, with

substantial personal involvement of Lady Plowden. She or Arthur would informally meet with Local Education Authority representatives on the edges of conferences and persuade them to take up the offer of a visit by the Field Officer. Arthur would follow up and meet with individuals in the caravan sites, schools, local authorities, learning about the community and planning the establishment of support services (Ivatts & Day, 2014). By the mid-1970s many local authorities had at least a few peripatetic teachers and by the end of the decade, provision had expanded considerably (Binns, 1990); moreover, HMI had launched several training events focused on Gypsy Traveller education.

Several government initiatives in the 1980s further reinforced the growth and establishment of Traveller Education Services across England. First, in 1980, what was known as the 'No Area Pool,' consisting of financial resources that were pooled together from local authorities and then redistributed to cover unanticipated costs such as managing refugees, was also made available to support Gypsies and Travellers on the basis that many were mobile. 100% of any exclusive (segregated) education provision in community classrooms and 75% of the additional costs to schools enrolling Gypsy and Traveller children were eligible for funding according to need. By 1990, £15 million was being distributed annually to support TESSs in local authorities. Secondly, in 1981, the UK passed the Education Act, which defined each school's duty to serve all children residing in their area. Clarifications were provided to ensure this included nomadic Gypsy and Traveller children. Thus, Local Education Authorities and schools increasingly found themselves in need of the TESS to meet their statutory duties, and the No Area Pool Fund conveniently provided needed resources. In 1983, at an HMI conference Senior Chief Inspector Eric Bolton, citing an abundance of evidence, made it clear that HMI would not accept segregated provision. Taken together, these developments dramatically shifted the kinds of services TESS were providing. If in the past they had been providing some services at or near caravan sites and some services to support schools, the emphasis shifted towards supporting schools. As a result the names of many services changed from Traveller Education Service (TES) to Traveller Education Support Service (TESS) (Danaher, Coombes, & Kiddle, 2007). This case study refers throughout to all these

services as TESS. Though the name does not fully reflect it, the TESS serve GRT communities, as well as Fairground and Circus Travellers and the so-called new Travellers (people from different ethnic groups who have adopted a mobile lifestyle).

In 1985, the UK government's Swann Report on the education of ethnic minority pupils devoted a chapter to the education of Traveller children, reinforcing the need for a more intensive response, particularly given the very clear expectation that all schools have a duty to educate all children in their district. The report notes: 'In the context of education, the degree of hostility towards Gypsies and other travellers' children if they do enter school is quite remarkable even when set alongside the racism encountered by children from other ethnic minority groups.' (Department of Education, 1985). By 1990, just over half of Local Education Authorities had established TESS. The Education Reform Act, which was adopted in 1988, replaced the No Area Pool. It included a measure of ring-fenced funding for the education of travellers, though the amount available initially (£3.5 million, eventually climbing to £8.5 million) was considerably lower than what the No Area Pool had provided. In 2004, with the passage of the Children's Act, which emphasised holistic support to children's wellbeing, ring-fenced funding was discontinued, and Local Authorities had to include support for GRT children within more inclusive services. It cannot have helped that at this exact moment, many Local Authorities were also absorbing increasing numbers of new Roma migrants from Eastern Europe, who required resettlement support and English as an Additional Language, further blurring the line between migrants, refugees and GRT children at the level of schools and authorities. Very quickly, the number of Roma migrants needing additional support to access education surpassed the number of Gypsy and Traveller families in many Local Authorities. Unsurprisingly, the combination of the elimination of ring-fenced funds and increasing numbers of Roma migrants likely encouraged Local Authorities to merge TESS with other education support services.

Prior to 1997, few politicians had openly supported GRT children's needs, despite the fact that several reports documented the deep discrimination these children

faced in accessing education. Instead, leadership of the movement was largely in the hands of professional educators and civil servants. This changed between 1997 and 2007 when Tony Blair brought opposition Labour party into power. As Ivatts noted, 'So really and truly it was only in those periods of Estelle Morris and Lord Andrew Adonis that we pushed policy up to national level with an enormous professional dedication against this backdrop of professional awareness of what was right and just in race equality…In that period it was a very rich golden age. That was the high point of the whole 40 years of work.' At the zenith, almost every Local Authority in England, except for a handful in London, had established a TESS. In 2008, the government marked June as national Gypsy Roma Traveller History Month, to raise cultural and historical interest and awareness; however, now only specific localities continue to celebrate.

Politicians were not the only group missing in the early years of the establishment of the TESS in the UK. Indeed, Gypsy, Roma and Travellers themselves were not typically part of the development of the TESS or the schools, Ivatts relates:

> Initially it was all gadjo (non-Roma) involvement. I think we were all guilty of not realising that. I mean these people belonged to us. They provided a virgin professional territory where we could move in and cut territory up and make statuses for ourselves. It was not about saying wait a minute, we should only be here temporarily. These people have got to do this themselves…but the best TESS realised this and have started employing people from the community mainly as teaching assistants or as welfare assistants. I personally think it is absolutely vital that people of the same ethnic background are at the same range of professional levels within the support services and in the schools.

It is interesting that this kind of cultural brokering – hiring ethnic Gypsy, Roma and Travellers onto staff in schools - came only later in the UK, while in Serbia, hiring Roma Pedagogic Assistants has been one of the central elements of the national inclusion reforms.

5.3   Part III: Reality on the Ground

> "TESS joined the hands of anxious schools with the hands of
> downtrodden Travellers. Sometimes they didn't join but held both
> hands. Best was when they could bring hands together. "

> Arthur Ivatts, Retired Official HMI

Serving as a link between GRT communities and the education system, TESS sought to ensure access to nursery and school places and to improve the quality of teaching and learning provision. In their book, *Teaching Traveller Children,* which summarises the results of interviews in 1999 with 26 TESS workers, Danaher et al. (Danaher et al., 2007) outline the kinds of skills that staff of the TESS indicated they require. They serve as buffers between the community and education systems, function as diplomats when they negotiate access to schools, take on the role of dual advocates (representing both the education system and communities) and serve as spokespersons when GRT community voices are not being heard or are perhaps misunderstood. As Ivatts describes, the role requires a high-level of commitment and confidence to overcome discrimination, particularly in earlier years:

> TESS tried to work on negative attitudes in schools. They would take
> families to school. They would have stand up rows with the
> Headteacher. They would report teachers for racist comments to the
> local authorities. So, they backed their way into the system as advocates
> for the families and the children.

TESS also develop and provide schools with training, support and curriculum resources to ensure teachers of children at different levels of the education system can deliver high-quality, culturally-contextual teaching and learning. Thus, hard core, professional teaching, training and mentoring skills are essential.

There has never been a formula for setting up a TESS, beyond that each service needs to provide all of the support systems described above, and thus the number of staff, their roles and the Local Authority policies and structures that govern their

work, can vary. What is clear is that many of the original TESS have undergone structural changes (reorganisations across other departments, closures, downsizing) as a result of the elimination of ring-fenced funding for GRT services in 2004, the financial crisis in 2008 and the election of a new government in 2010, which ushered in an austerity policy and put additional strains on the finances of councils across England and Wales. The embedded cases below outline some of the similarities and differences between a traditional TESS (City C) and services in a city (City D), where the council reorganised TESS as part of a restructuring of education services generally.

City C: A Traditional TESS

For nearly 35 years, the coordinator of the Education for New Communities and Travellers in City C, a de-industrialised Northern mill town, has worked on the full inclusion of GRT children in the education system in a large Local Authority. Initially, though, as he pointed out in our first interview, there was no intention that the TESS would persist for so long:

> The idea of the service, the philosophy, was to work the service out of a job. It was to mainstream services…so that Traveller children, just like other children should be the responsibility of schools and the Local Authority and not be seen as an addition.

Also, there have been significant changes over the years in how the service is organised. The goal of the TESS shifted from supporting individual GRT students with peripatetic teachers (the coordinator had started his career in this role), a process that unintentionally took some responsibility for GRT children from teachers and schools, to supporting schools and raising the expectations placed on them to provide excellent teaching for GRT children. Schools are now held to account by parents, who can indicate preference for enrolling into a certain school, and by Ofsted, which is increasingly focusing on achievement and attainment of vulnerable groups. Schools in City C formed a peer support association, which coordinates professional development and arranges mock Ofsted inspections to help schools prepare for formal visits. One school I visited, which had many Roma

pupils, had hired in an enthusiastic Head and Deputy Head teacher five years prior to raise the quality of both their school and a very poor performing school to which they had been paired. Both schools were beginning to flourish: a very diverse student body, including a considerable number, more than 100 Roma pupils were making excellent progress and had high levels of attendance. Parents were very engaged in the school, too. The Deputy Head teacher shared a positive impression of their TESS, citing celebrations that the TESS organises to recognise GRT History Month.

These relationships with schools are essential, because the TESS is partially supported by funds that are pooled from school budgets. The TESS in City C is divided into two units. The first focuses on teaching and learning, and this includes one teaching and learning leader, two consultants and an early years' worker. The other unit is focused on enabling access to schools. It includes an access leader, three migrant worker liaison officers (two who speak Polish and one who speaks Slovak/Czech) and one asylum officer. The TESS hires interpreters as needed on contract and has a relatively new scheme - the Roma Trainee Mentors Programme, which on an annually competitive basis offers up to four Roma three months of mentoring and an internship within a school. This initiative is modelled on one the TESS ran in earlier years to encourage Gypsies and Travellers to become interested in jobs in the field of education. The new programme with Roma has led to several Trainee Mentors being hired into the schools where they initially served as interns. The needs of the schools to have on-staff language capacity in Slovak and Romany and better insights into relationships with the Roma community are simply too great for schools to manage on their own. The discovery of the Roma Trainee mentors was a surprise for me; inadvertently, I had stumbled upon a new group of cultural brokers.

I met and interviewed three Roma Trainee Mentors during my visit and incidentally met with a Roma Teaching Assistant who was working in a nursery. All were enthusiastic and very satisfied with the contributions they are making in their entry-level jobs and with the warm reception they have received from school staff,

parents and children. None were sure they would continue with their professional development, which in some cases would require returning to first complete secondary education.

Roma are not the only group the TESS is set up to support, though the Coordinator estimates that 80% of their work is with new Roma. In addition, they continue to support Gypsy and Traveller children, asylum seekers and Fairground and Circus children. Around 65% of the work of the TESS focuses on securing access for children to schools. This is no small task, as there are large numbers of new arrivals each year. The other 35% is focused on improving the quality of teaching and learning in schools for these children, and the TESS workers in the teaching and learning unit provide schools with training, mentoring, culturally-relevant curriculums, resources and helpful videos in different languages to explain the British school system and expectations to migrant parents.

During my visit to City C, I had the opportunity to shadow several migrant liaison access workers as they went about their work. We visited families in their homes to check if bus passes had been received, to help them fill in forms required for school enrolment, verifying identities so that the TESS could write a letter to support a benefits claim, and in one case we were detectives trying to find a child/family that had recently disappeared from school, seeking the family across a trail of addresses. Additional support is provided to children with special educational needs. In one instance, the TESS had arranged a place for a child in a school that could cater to their special needs (a process that took months), but which is far from home, and the TESS worker brought the child to spend a day visiting the school, later picked them up, brought them home and discussed the day with their mother. In another case the TESS worker visited a nursery that was holding an open day with parents to serve as an interpreter for a family enrolling a child with complex medical needs. TESS workers enter data from these visits back at the office; however, several mentioned that a new system would allow them to input data into tablets while on the go. At the end of the day, each worker called in to update the Coordinator and

sign off for the day. The TESS also offers weekly drop in hours in the Council offices, so that families can stop by for advice.

As a group, the TESS workers are a friendly bunch. They regularly eat lunch together, know one another well, and during the working day when anyone goes to the kitchen, which is a bit of a walk, they offer to get tea for the rest. This kind of support is welcome because the stresses are numerous: families do not all turn up for appointments or are not at home as planned; staff, parents and children are sometimes distressed; dealing with traffic and parking around the city in all weather is not always simple, to name just a few challenges. Many families also seek to solve all of their problems – housing, employment and health – through the TESS. One confessed that they recently helped a family with poor English find a plumber to get a boiler working on a chilly day. There is sympathy for these kinds of requests, but at the same time, the case load is so large that these additional 'asks' take time away from getting children into school. The unit has a target of getting a place for any child that is referred to them within two days and to achieve this, the team must work together and stay focussed.

As a response to these kinds of issues, the access leader became involved in setting up a self-organised professional network, the Central Eastern Working Group (CEWG). Set up in 2006, the aim is to provide a better response to the increasing numbers of families that began arriving from 2004 onwards. At the time of my visit, nearly 10 years later, the CEWG was bringing together more than 120 professionals from City C, employed across a range of voluntary and statutory agencies. It is aimed at professionals who work on the ground with families directly, to help them identify and address gaps and pool resources. They meet approximately every six or seven weeks, and in between communicate electronically through a newsletter and listserv. They conduct training on awareness, attitudes, history and culture, racism of non-Roma and have also organised sessions on human trafficking, child exploitation, domestic violence and housing. One member sits on the Council's Race and Ethnic Strategic Group, a strategic alignment that enables the CEWG to raise issues at this level as necessary.

Perhaps most importantly, the Roma parents I met appreciated the accessibility of the TESS and the support received. Roma who had been settled in the city for more than 10 years thought that the new migrants had an easier time because of the more targeted services that had developed over the years. However, one could also argue that in other respects, changes in welfare benefits and requirements for European migrants to demonstrate employment within six months, now make it harder for new migrants.

I left City C with several videos and resources and a sense that the TESS is providing a very valuable service. In return, to thank them, I left behind a stack of books from my organisation published in Eastern European languages, including some in Romany.

City D: Restructured Services for GRT Children

> "In City C, all services and all provision is centrally based and is focused on the central base and moves out from there. What we've tried to do (in City D) is to develop partnership working with the schools and with other organisations, voluntary organisations, with other Council services so I think our model is more integrated in a way that we are working with schools and other services as partners."
>
> Head of Primary and Targeted Intervention Inclusive and Learning Services, Children, Young People and Families, Council

Throughout my visit to City D, I concentrated on trying to identify the TESS, and at times I wondered why Arthur had so strongly recommended visiting this city. In fact, the large service that had existed previously and which had been supported with central funding (the ring-fenced funding that disappeared in 2010), an Ethnic Minority Traveller Assistance Service (EMTAS), had been dismantled and restructured because of funding cuts. At its zenith in the 1980s it had employed around 20 staff members including 1.5 staff dedicated to two caravan sites, as well as education consultants, a complementary schools service (home provision), services for refugees and a language assistance team, which provided assessments and supported home language. According to one Early Years specialist that I interviewed, it offered advantages compared to the divided departments that exist

today, as staff were based in one location and could consult more frequently. The Head of one of the Units within the division of Children, Young People and Families described the transformation:

> We sought to separate off the 'T' aspect and the aspects of the service that dealt with the location or relocation of asylum seekers and refugees into one area of service, and the school facing work came into the inclusion and learning service. So part of the team that we have as our New Arrivals and English as an Additional Language team are part of the service that moved from the old EMTAS.

Thus, the resettlement functions and 'social cultural factors' as one interviewee noted, now are embedded in the unit focusing on asylum seekers and refugees, and schools-facing issues (English as an Additional Language, inclusion) are in a different unit in a separate building, located twenty minutes away. Also located within the Local Authority is a Multi-Agency Support Team (MAST), a wrap-around support for children and families, which, according to the Head, is unusual for a Local Authority, and expensive.

Though the EMTAS had been downsized and divided up with staff spread across two buildings, there were several factors still motivating collaboration. First and foremost, the high numbers of Roma and the issues they bring with them require closer working relationships between various sectors, including housing, health, social care and education. To deal with these issues, the Local Authority created a Roma Steering Group made up of representatives of Council Offices from different services that meet monthly to coordinate services. During my visit I had a chance to participate in a Council-sponsored workshop for educators (several are held each year) focused on the education of New Arrivals and Roma, which brings together practitioners and heads of services to share experiences and new knowledge. City D also participates in a partnership project sponsored by the British Council and European Union, which links educators from Portugal, Norway and the UK who work with Roma and New Arrivals. The TESS workers in City D had gained new ideas about how to organise services from these international contacts.

If the TESS in City D was hard to find, the Roma para-professional staff, teaching assistants and liaison workers, another variety of cultural broker, were not. Four years ago, the Local Authority funded a New Arrivals pilot for two years that supported 30 schools (infant, primary and secondary) to develop their practice. It was a real learning experience and one that reinforced the necessity of paying close attention to cultural and social issues. The Head of the Unit reflected on this:

> It took us a year for the schools to have those induction processes, for them to be training up at least some home language teaching assistants, to be able to be supporting the translation and family liaison in their first language. And then we did find that into the second year of the pilot we could then move into what education and what learning looked like for those children.

To address immediate needs, schools had begun hiring young Roma people and taking them off the streets. Though they had low levels of literacy, they were effective at communicating in their home language and some were desperately needed. One Headteacher described the chaos that was going on in a failing primary school she had taken leadership of three years hence. Three years before she arrived, 92% of the school pupils ascribed as white British. Over a six-year period these numbers shifted, and now more than 50% require English as an Additional Language and around 30% are Roma from remote areas in Slovakia. As the new Headteacher took over, 'The Roma children's needs were not being met and the families' needs were not being met.' She employed a young Roma who expressed an interest in working in the school. One of the teachers described their relief: 'The first thing he did was sit on the carpet with the children with his legs crossed and the Head said 'yeah, he's good.'

Partially in response to a recognition of need following the two-year pilot, the Local Authority then ran a programme of strategic overstaffing of Roma Teaching Assistants. They gave schools funds to recruit a cohort of young Roma and then worked with them to provide training. Initially, select schools served as training sites, loaning Roma Teaching Assistants out to other schools, with the idea that, eventually, some schools would hire them. The Local Authority provided training –

fourteen half-day sessions – and placements for three cohorts of fourteen Roma Teaching Assistants (a total of 42) over a six-month period. The training topics included an introduction to the UK education system, safeguarding children, language development, story-telling, using books, basic English as an Additional Language, importance of home language, early phonics concepts and basic early maths. They were also trained in how to work with parents, including how to enrol children into school.

The impact has been mixed; according to the Head of Unit:

> It did without doubt increase the number of Roma Teaching Assistants working in schools in that area of the city, however, we did feel very often that it was a case of one step forwards and two steps back…The successful ones move on. The cohort did really lack resilience, so we had to do an awful lot of work in terms of having them to come to work five days a week and getting them to arrive on time every day.

An Early Years expert involved in the project noted that the school's needs are met through hiring Roma Teaching Assistants, but in some ways these systems exploit them. 'They have just enough information to survive' she observed before suggesting they need more training. At the same time, like the situation in City C, few Roma Teaching Assistants in City D would like to take on further education. The Head of Unit noted: 'Trying to get them to go to evening courses or classes was difficult. They didn't want to do that, but we could see that that was a really secure way of providing them with employment for the future, if they could get those qualifications.'

The Roma Teaching Assistants that I observed in classrooms were doing a great job. I watched as one co-taught with another teacher a lesson on body parts, numbers and colours for a circle of nine alert and engaged young Roma children sitting in the hallway. They did this by listening to a story about a dinosaur and discussing and drawing a dinosaur together using both Romany and English language. Staff from several schools noted how in-demand the Roma Teaching Assistants are with

parents. Around half of their time is spent communicating with parents and the other half is spent in classrooms with children.

Roma families in City D may be even more needy than children who have settled in other cities. Many come from the most remote rural parts of Slovakia and they do not understand city life, let alone life in the UK, and they do not speak English. Roma Teaching Assistants tend to be more advantaged and from larger cities in Slovakia. One Slovak Roma Teaching Assistant commented that his Romany language differs from that spoken by the Slovak Roma children in his school. Unusually, a substantial proportion of Slovak children who have settled in City D (just over 20% of the new arrivals in 2014-2015) have moderate to high hearing impairments, often having gone undiagnosed in their home country. There is sometimes poor engagement around getting children to wear hearing aids; one school has trained the Roma Teaching Assistant to help a line of almost 20 children get set up with their hearing aids each morning.

Tragically, funding that came into cities to support Roma in the decade before, came too late for the surge that hit City D. This shortage of funds was a recurrent theme throughout my visit. The Head of the Local Authority Unit commented, '(City C) still seems to have an awful lot of money to its services. We have been constrained by real reductions in the Council over the last few years.' One after another Head Teachers noted that no extra funds were received to support the huge influx of Roma migrants. A Head Teacher from one of the schools that hosted a cohort of Roma Teaching Assistants added: 'Our school has developed a complex understanding of cultural bridging, but we are in a time of austerity. There just isn't money. That really impacts on the learning. If things aren't okay, children can't learn.' Benefit cuts to families are also having an impact on schools, particularly for families that work in the informal labour market. Parents must declare a need for the school to receive the per pupil premium, which provides extra funds to support additional needs of children in poverty. Many Roma families are afraid to do this, partially because families that do not find work within 6 months are no longer eligible for benefits. Additionally, children of parents that are successful and obtain

work for more than 16-24 hours per week are not eligible for free school meals, so schools end up covering these costs. Schools are confronted with a population of pupils that requires language support, special support staff to aid communication with families and support for learning needs with very limited funds. City D's Head of Unit illustrates how it is stretched to its limits:

> There was no community infrastructure established (in City D). There were no Roma community leaders like Somali or Yemeni. It will take a generation for this community to change. The challenge that has been placed on us is so many, so quickly, and we had to really, really galvanise all our resources to try to support the community as effectively as possible over a relatively short period of time.

Fortunately, the influx of Roma migrants is starting to stabilise.

Observations from the two cities: Common roles and challenges for cultural brokers

Though the Local Authority services are structured and function very differently in both cities, several common roles and challenges emerged during the research process.

First, services in City C and City D **provide direct support to schools** to enable them to support Roma children and families. In City C, this support forms one of two arms of the TESS and its staff is tasked with developing resources and providing training and support to schools with large numbers of GRT children and children of asylum seekers. In City D the ongoing support to schools is no longer separated into a single division targeted for GRT children; however, the leadership has involved the city in several add-on initiatives to respond to the influx of Roma and reinforce the more general support services that the Local Authority provides for all new arrivals. These include participating in a European Union learning project to understand how other countries are addressing these issues, convening learning workshops for practitioners from schools, and funding and implementing a pilot project for two years to improve practice across 30 schools.

Both services **support families in liaising with education institutions,** though, again in City C these services, which focus on access, are organised through the TESS and rely on specialised staff that have a deeper understanding of the languages and cultures of GRT children; while in City D these services are organised more generally through units that deal with all New Arrivals. An Ofsted report in 2014 explored how three Northern cities, including City D, were dealing with the large influx of Roma children. Staff in City D were understandably sensitive to the report that critiqued the city for having a generic approach to meeting the needs of all new pupils, rather than a specific Roma strategy. According to the report, by closing specialist services, City D had lost the capacity to serve particular groups and had lost the trust and confidence built up over many years with hard-to-reach communities, putting a greater burden on schools (Office of Her Majesty's Inspector of Education Children's Services and Skills, 2014). Yet, the reorganisation of services was largely necessitated because of funding cuts over which they had no control.

In both City C and City D, Local Authorities **create links with other services and between them**. This was particularly visible in City D, where Multi-Agency Support Teams (MAST) were established to support families in need with wrap-around services. Also, in City D, the leadership across the Local Authority departments created a cross agency group that meets monthly to address issues related to Roma children. In City C, TESS workers refer families to additional services as needed. Additionally, they spontaneously created, with other front-line workers, a network devoted to improving services for New Arrivals from Central Eastern Europe. In both cities, space has been created for professionals from different sectors to collaborate around issues of Roma and other New Arrivals. Yet, while coordination mechanisms have been established at the local level, regional and national linkages are notably absent, leaving each TESS largely reliant on local resources and knowledge.

Though staff of the Local Authorities are generally not from the GRT community, they **advocate for the community**. Everyone I met working for the TESS was passionate about and committed to helping Roma children get a good start in the education system and helping struggling migrant Roma families link with services.

Both cities also face similar <u>challenges</u>:

First and foremost, the Roma migration in both cities was sudden and initially overwhelmed the education systems creating a great need for cultural brokers, like TESS, that had existed in both cities previously and that still existed in the original form only in City C. Constraints on funding were responsible for difficulties in both cities, but especially in City D, where the wave of Roma migrants came after supplemental central funding was no longer available. Thus, the TESSs that had been so large and that had served a relatively small group in each city (100-300 families) were now reduced in size (City C) or disaggregated and restructured (City D), but challenged, ironically, with reaching a large population of 2,000+ Roma children. And the new group proved to be more complicated to support, as they are even poorer, new to English and new to the UK.

Most unexpected for the present research was the general confusion in both cities about the languages of Central Eastern Europe. In a variety of settings – TESS and schools – staff had expectations that <u>anyone</u> who could speak <u>any</u> Eastern European language could provide support to these children and families. If such logic were applied to the Romance languages it would mean that a French-speaking parent could make use of a Spanish interpreter. Yet, even a Roma Teaching Assistant from a larger town in Slovakia may not speak the same Romanes as children from a rural part of the same country. In City C, two of the liaison officers speak Polish, though they were both born in the UK, and one speaks Czech. On site visits I observed their interactions with families, and communication proceeded through an unusual combination of Slovak, English and some Polish. The Coordinator for the TESS shared his concerns that non-Roma from Central Eastern Europe hired to translate could bring prejudices with them and, if this was the case, it would impede the trust with families. One Head Teacher from City D noted that their school had a wake-up call when the parents let them know that they only understand 'one in seven words' spoken by Polish staff. Desperate, they selected a family advocacy worker immediately; the most active parent at a meeting.

Perhaps because of the ongoing confusion with languages, in both cities the Local Authorities have recognised that schools require Roma bi-lingual staff, and in both cities, programmes were created to encourage this. In City C this is the Roma Trainee Mentors Programme and in City D it was implemented in the form of strategic training and overstaffing of Roma Teaching Assistants across the district. Yet, hiring Roma staff has not been without challenges. The Coordinator of City C's TESS summarised:

> In general, as a movement, we should be getting more Roma individuals employed within the services. To do that, they need a level of qualification to get the jobs…There is a dilemma there. The other side of the coin is that we don't want to have tokenism and set people up to fail. It is patronising.

The Deputy Head in City D reinforced this: 'We're in highly professional environments. You wouldn't be able to walk into a surgical unit on the basis of ethnicity or culture and assume the right, you know what I mean.' The 2014 Ofsted report noted that bi-lingual Teaching Assistants are effective in improving home and school links. Yet, they raised concerns that they are less effective when they are not fully fluent in English and are working in classrooms to support children, where English is not their first language (Office of Her Majesty's Inspector of Education Children's Services and Skills, 2014).

There is an emerging recognition that, in terms of the education system, Roma present a very different set of challenges compared with Gypsy and Travellers. Roma are, in fact, more similar to New Arrivals, needing English as an Additional Language, resettlement support, and help negotiating various services related to housing, employment, health. Many benefits differ considerably with harsher conditions in place for migrants. This has several implications. First, from a sociological perspective there has been little bonding between the Gypsy/Traveller and Roma communities. Indeed, Roma from Central Eastern Europe view the term 'Gypsy' as derogatory; while English Gypsies have held onto this term. This alone reduces the incentive for Roma families to ascribe to the category White Gypsy/Roma. In fact, in the cities I visited I never met a single instance where White

Gypsy/ Roma issues were collectively addressed, except insomuch as it was noted that both groups face inordinate discrimination. Leadership has not yet formed among the Roma community. A Deputy Head in City C commented, 'In terms of cultural brokers, are we able to draw yet on a bank of Roma adults who can contribute to the life of the school? And the answer is not yet.' Several people mentioned that the Department of Education is exploring whether to separate Roma in the education data systems to track progress of this specific group.

5.4   Part IV: Impact and Future

> "I think we needed another ten years to solve the secondary issue, but
> the primary issue was solved. It was done. We had 90% of GT children in
> primary school. That's impressive from virtually 2-3%."

> Arthur Ivatts, Retired Official HMI

On one level, the UK has made exceptional progress in the participation of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children in the education system. From a baseline of almost zero in the 1970s, nearly all now participate in primary education, even though this ethnic population has increased dramatically across the same period. Schools successfully rose to the challenge of reaching out to children not attending. The Deputy Head of a Primary School in City C commented:

> The notion that we will not let them down and we will provide them
> with a real quality deal turns day in, day out to be really, really
> important and the notion that we have the same level of expectation of
> a child from the community turns out to be crucial. So if you don't come
> to school, somebody will go and get you.

Yearly reporting by Ofsted, broken down by ethnicity, on attendance, attainment and progress maintains pressure to improve outcomes. Exploration of these statistics at a granular level reveals astonishing disparities. The tables below show the attainment of English Gypsy and Roma children at Key Stage 1 (age 7) and Key Stage 2 (age 11), compared with those of Irish Traveller and White children in the UK.

Table 5-2: Attainment Rates for Ethnic Groups in the UK for the Academic Year 2015/2016 Key Stage I: Children Ages 5-7
(percentage meeting expected standard)[10]

Subject Area	White	Irish Traveller	White Gypsy/Roma
Phonics	80%	41%	37%
Reading	74%	32%	26%
Writing	65%	25%	20%
Math	73%	33%	29%
Science	83%	47%	39%

Table 5-3: Attainment Rates for Ethnic Groups in the UK for the Academic Year 2015/2016 Key Stage 2: Children Ages 7-11
(percentage meeting expected standard)[11]

Subject Area	White	Irish Traveller	White Gypsy/Roma
Reading, Writing and Maths (combined)	53%	19%	13%

Across the board, White Gypsy/Roma children achieve outcomes that are well below half of those achieved by their White peers. The gaps between average attainment of White children in the UK and those of all other ethnic groups come nowhere near the gaps experienced by Gypsy/Roma children. There has been a push by some education experts to further disaggregate these statistics to show outcomes for Roma separately in acknowledgement of their migration status, which confers additional disadvantages. Such disaggregation of White Gypsy/Roma data

---

[10] Statistics are taken from the gov.uk website https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/education-skills-and-training capturing data from the 2015/2016 school year and published 10 October 2017 (Government of the United Kingdom, 2017)

[11] Statistics are taken from the gov.uk website https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/education-skills-and-training capturing data from the 2015/2016 school year and published 10 October 2017 (Government of the United Kingdom, 2017)

will likely further lower the attainment for Roma children, who are still acquiring English when they enter school.

One factor contributing to the difference in outcomes is, undoubtedly, higher rates of exclusions and absences found in Irish Traveller and White Gypsy/Roma groups. Whereas 5.4% of White children in the UK were excluded from the education system in the 2015/2016 school year, a shocking 22.15% of White Gypsy/Roma children were excluded. Overall attendance follows similar patterns, with attendance of White children exceeding 95%, while only 87% of White Gypsy/Roma children regularly attend school (Government of the United Kingdom, 2017).

What is the future for these children? Only a small percentage (10% of White Gypsy/Roma) achieve A* to C grades in their English and Math GSCE exams, compared with 63% of White children in the UK (Government of the United Kingdom, 2017). Most leave school without basic skills needed to apply for further education or employment. Is anyone paying attention? Arthur Ivatts sums it up:

> I'd say over the last 35 years we've seen a journey from being invisible to being very visible and high profile with a well-structured policy response from both central and local governments. But within the last 10 years or 5-7 years we've seen the return to invisibility. The government doesn't know where these kids are anymore. My hunch is that the majority of secondary aged GRT aren't in school. And nobody knows and nobody cares. They don't want to know.

In both cities, school officials and local authorities stressed that Roma children are making strong progress on a yearly basis, even if their attainment scores are not at the expected levels. They showed me statistics demonstrating that Roma children comparatively achieve more levels of progress on a yearly basis, than children from other ethnic groups. That is, they are acquiring more knowledge and skills each year than other children; they are making up more ground. Yet, this very promising improvement is not enough to address the very large gap that exists when they enter school. Such data suggests that social and economic factors outside of the education system play a decisive role for these children and families.

Studies that have explored why some low SES children, like Roma children, in the UK succeed against the odds, point to a wide range of factors. These include the quality of home learning environment, children's and parents' motivation and determination, and parenting styles. The quality of relationships with parents, teachers and peers appears to serve as a protective factor for these disadvantaged children, and supportive learning environments (formal and informal) outside of the home also play a role (Siraj & Mayo, 2014). One could argue that these relationships and opportunities represent social capital that these families are able to build, despite low incomes.

Earlier and more comprehensive investment in these children and their families is urgently needed. In both cities, school and nursery staff lamented the fact that Roma families are not making use of the free early learning places that are available to all two-year old children in the UK from more disadvantaged backgrounds, and nor are many making use of free provision that is available for three-year old children. According to Ofsted, 113,000 of all eligible two-year old children never opted into free early services in the 2014/2015 academic year (Office of Her Majesty's Inspector of Education Children's Services and Skills, 2015).

This raises questions about the suitability of these services for these families, as noted by one Early Years expert I interviewed in City D.

> I think our role is actually about working with those communities to get the families to see the value in early years education, or possibly the other way you could look at it is for us to think creatively about two-year-old provision and make it appropriate to the needs of those families. I think we need to be more flexible … Like the Eritrean community, the Somali community, it's not just the Roma community that find the idea of two-year-old provision difficult.

The idea of placing very young children in a centre-based programme does not seem to appeal to communities that are new to the UK. Several nursery staff and early years experts noted that the UK's Sure Start Centres, which typically offer a variety of services spanning early learning, health, nutrition, social support, and parenting in informal settings with many activities geared at parents and children

together, are more suited to the needs of migrant and asylum-seeking families. Yet, the availability of Sure Start Centres across the UK has been shrinking rapidly since 2010. Recent data suggest that at least 1,240 centres have closed since 2010, a drop of more than 34% (Morton, 2017). One interviewee in City D noted that despite robust protests, only 11 of 33 Sure Start Centres remain, and those closest to Roma communities have been closed.

Massive cuts to Local Authorities have impacted not only TESSs and Sure Start Centres, but also the extent to which nurseries and schools can continue to hire members of the Roma community to support the integration of children and families into the early education system. These cuts come at a time, ironically, when these school systems are coping with thousands of new Roma migrant children. As one TESS Coordinator in City C put it, 'There is a thing about hard to reach groups. They are easy to reach, but it can be the services that are hard to reach or the schools that are hard to reach.' Successful linkages are so clearly personal, rather than institutional, as one Head from a Nursery and Infant School in City D noted: 'They don't trust the school. It's the people that they trust.'

 The question of accountability of Local Authorities was raised early on by the authors of the Swann Report in response to the allocation of pooled funds to create TESSs.

> Whilst we accept the arguments in favour of a regional approach to provision for travelling children, we were concerned that this scheme might in fact be too large to be manageable and to allow for the most economic use of resources … We were also somewhat concerned that the authorities which were part of the scheme appeared to take little interest in what was happening in their areas and the scheme seemed to have no clear line of accountability.

> (Swann Report, 1985, p. 749)

In fact, TESSs operated with relatively little national interference or attention. Without a central government policy behind them, services were largely ad hoc and dependent on the creativity and enthusiasm of individuals. There were positive aspects to this lax control; TESSs were free to develop a huge base of knowledge

and resources, some of which continues to be shared and disseminated through two national professional associations (National Association of Teachers of Travellers and Other Professionals/NATT+[12] and the Advisory Council for the Education of Romany and other Travellers/ACERT) that have managed to keep alive a healthy commitment to Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children, despite inconsistent central government support. However, intentional national actions to support GRT children in education have been minimal, and the excellent practice that has been developed in the UK by local authorities has not been shared with European colleagues. As Arthur Ivatts put it, 'GRT education (in the UK) is way ahead of the rest of Europe and still is now…Partly it is the reluctance of the UK to address this issue at all publicly… Now there is interest in stopping Romanians and Bulgarians from moving here – anti-immigration.' The UK's superb example of cultural brokering organised at the level of Local Authorities, decentralised to offer the greatest flexibility, remains largely unknown in Europe, under-evaluated and unrecognised.

---

[12] NATT+ has announced that it will close in 2018.

Chapter 6   Discussion – Analysis of Cultural Brokering in Early Childhood Education

6.1   Revisiting the Role of Cultural Brokers in the Bridging and Bonding of Social Capital in an Ecological Framework

This thesis presents two case studies of cultural brokering to support young Roma children in early education: Roma Pedagogic Assistants in Serbia and Traveller Education Support Services in the UK. As illustrated in the case studies, Pedagogic Assistants and Traveller Education Support Service staff interact with preschools, schools, communities, families and children, but occupy very different roles. While both are hired positions within institutional settings, the Pedagogic Assistants work primarily at classroom and school level, building relationships with particular children and families, while TESS staff work towards the same goals but at the municipal level. The Pedagogic Assistants occupy a more proximal position in Bronfenbrenner's model, interacting with children and in the micro-systems that surround children, while TESSs are located within the meso-system, and primarily provide direct support to families and schools.

One interesting finding from this study is that though there is no formal national strategy to hire Roma as assistants in early education in the UK; preschools and schools have been using their own budgets to hire Roma as teaching assistants to improve attendance, achievement and the quality of early education. In the UK Roma teaching assistants function much like the Pedagogic Assistants in Serbia, focusing on Roma pupils in one preschool or school, complementing the more distal linking role that is played out by the TESS, which functions across broader systems. Thus, there are cultural brokers functioning both in schools (teaching assistants) and at the municipal level (TESS) in many locations across the UK.

Likewise, in Serbia, the case study highlights the role of another cultural broker, which complements and enhances the work of Roma Pedagogic Assistants: Roma NGOs, which are active in many cities where Pedagogic Assistants are working. In these instances, the local Roma NGO provides a framework, somewhat like the UK's

TESS, advocating for quality services, including early education, on behalf of all Roma children and families. In one of the two cities studied in Serbia, five Roma Pedagogic Assistants are affiliated with a strong Roma NGO, which has established relationships with municipal and national institutions. In this city, the Roma NGO plays a key role supplementing early education services with informal, community-based early learning options and eliminating structural barriers to education (for instance, distributing free textbooks). Roma NGO staff members are also invited to participate when Roma-related regional and national strategies are under development.

The role played by the Roma NGOs is, however, different from that of the TESS, which also operates primarily at the municipal level and supports families to engage with institutional services. Roma NGOs provide community-based early education and development services and help address an array of housing, welfare and health issues. They are activist, rights-focused organisations that link Roma communities across each municipality as well as nationally. Both services face perpetual funding challenges. Funding for TESSs is currently allocated by Local Education Authorities or participating schools, which has been in decline in recent years. Roma NGOs are, by contrast, reliant on grants and projects for survival, an equally insecure situation.

Thus, in both the UK and Serbia it appears that cultural brokers operate at multiple levels of the system: in classrooms and at the municipal level. A Roma child can only experience the benefits of working with a Roma-speaking assistant in preschool if they are enrolled in pre-primary education. In both Serbia and the UK, securing a place for a specific child requires interactions with the municipality, not only with the preschool. Cultural brokers may well be needed at both levels to ensure Roma children's right to early education. This is consistent with the concept promoted by Bronfenbrenner that children's development is influenced by contextual factors that play out at multiple levels, both proximal and distal.

Significantly, research sponsored by the European Union to better understand the professional competencies required by early educators, emphasises the significance of addressing the early education system holistically. *Competence Requirements in*

Early Childhood Education and Care (CORE) concludes that effective early education systems require coherence and competence, which they define as: knowledge, practices and values, across multiple levels: 1) at the level of individual practitioners; 2) within each institution or pedagogic team; 3) at the inter-institutional level; and, 4) at the level of governance of the early education system. Importantly, they identify a set of values that reinforce the necessity of intentionally addressing issues of diversity, disadvantage and social cohesion at all levels. Applying the CORE framework to this research, the Pedagogic Assistants impact the second level (institutional pedagogic teams) of the ECE system, while TESSs impact the third level, or inter-institutional practices. Significantly, this report along with a recent review of European literature on strategies to support disadvantaged children in Europe highlights the importance of establishing an early childhood workforce that reflects the social and cultural diversity of the community (University of East London & University of Ghent, 2011; Vandenbroeck & Lazzari, 2012). The implication is not only that cultural brokers are needed throughout the system, but that there are advantages to hiring cultural brokers from the community. Significantly, cultural brokers who come from the community (all but the TESS workers) serve, not only as advocates or change agents, but also as role models for the community. Comprehensively addressing diversity in the UK and Serbian systems would also necessitate hiring Roma as ECE staff and including them in governance structures.

These findings suggest a revision to the diagram put forwards in Chapter 3. The revised diagram should include two additional types of cultural brokers to complement the Roma Pedagogic Assistants (Serbia) and the Traveller Education Support Services (UK). The additional cultural brokers are: Roma NGOs (Serbia) and Roma Teaching Assistants (UK). The diagram below captures these four types of cultural brokers. Additionally, the revised diagram incorporates a visual representation of the bridging and bonding functions of each of the four cultural brokering roles. In the diagram bridging is represented by green arrows, bonding by red arrows.
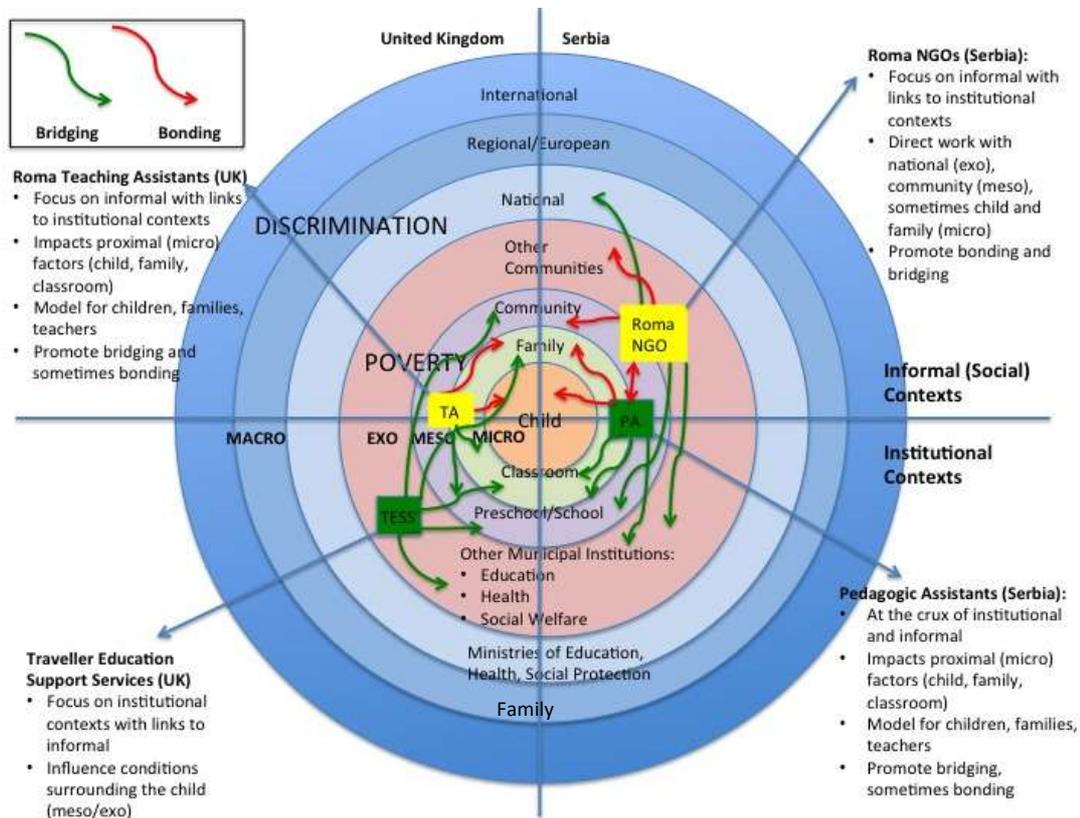
Figure 6-1: Cultural Brokers as Agents of Bridging and Bonding in an Ecological Framework

As illustrated by the red arrows, cultural brokers who come from the community or speak the language of the community (Roma Teaching Assistants in the UK, Pedagogic Assistants and Roma NGO staff in Serbia) promote community bonding. Negative attitudes towards Roma are high in both countries, providing strong motivation for communities to band together (CeSID, 2013; Equality and Rights Commission, 2016). Moreover, as noted by those interviewed for the UK case study, newly migrated Roma communities in the UK, coming from a range of countries, have yet to form strong bonds and leadership within their community, let alone create linkages with the Gypsy and Traveller communities, who have been living in the UK for centuries. Unfortunately, the TESSs in the UK, which are almost exclusively staffed by non-Roma, are not set up to support Roma community bonding, although they are active in promoting Roma as Teaching Assistants in nurseries and schools. In Serbia, the native Roma community has developed strong leadership, has established civil society organisations and political networks, and

has collectively acted to elect Roma representatives into governmental positions. Yet, Roma communities that have migrated to Serbia more recently, remain isolated; in City B in Serbia these migrants lived together in a poorer settlement with fewer amenities.

This raises an interesting point about the additional role that cultural brokers, who are hired in the first place to make linkages or bridges between communities and early education services, might need to play to support the building-up of the communities they serve. Where families are not strongly integrated into a robust local community, such bonding may also be essential to increase the social and cultural capital available to young children and their families. Thus, an additional role for cultural brokers may be to link families with one another. There may be significant benefits to this approach for fragile and migrant communities.

There is a natural tendency to want to compare the Pedagogic Assistants in Serbia and the Roma Teaching Assistants in the UK, which operate at the level of preschools and schools, and, likewise, the TESSs in the UK and the Roma NGOs in Serbia, which operate at the municipal level. The table below draws attention to several similarities and differences.

Table 6-1:   A Comparison of the Features and Roles of Four Types of Cultural Brokers Identified in this Study

Cultural Brokers Operating at the Level of Preschools and Schools		Cultural Brokers Operating at the Municipal Level	
Roma Teaching Assistants (UK)	**Pedagogic Assistants (Serbia)**	**TESS (UK)**	**Roma NGOs (Serbia)**
Provide direct support to children, families and teachers; have just enough training to survive in classrooms	Provide direct support to children, families and teachers; better trained on inclusion than many teachers	Provide direct support to preschools and schools, interact with families around access issues	Provide direct support to education institutions, communities, teachers, families and children
Create liaisons between education institutions and families	Create liaisons between education institutions and families	Create liaisons between education institutions and families	Create liaisons between education institutions and families
Not applicable	Support linkages with other services (health, social welfare etc.)	Support linkages with, and amongst, services (health, social welfare etc.)	Support linkages with other services (health, social welfare etc.)
Serve as role models	Serve as role models, change agents and advocates	Serve as change agents and advocates	Serve as role models, change agents and advocates
Mostly ethnic Roma, speak Romanes or Slavic languages	Majority ethnic Roma, speak Romanes	Some speak Slavic languages, few, if any, speak Romanes	Majority ethnic Roma, speak Romanes
Invisible, not networked	Visible, networked nationally and regionally (in Europe)	Little national visibility, no national network for TESSs (existing networks serve individual professionals)	Visible and networked, nationally and regionally (in Europe)

Interestingly, examining the chart above reveals several advantages shared by the two types of cultural brokers identified in Serbia. First, with command of Romanes and better developed pedagogic skillsets to support social inclusion than many teachers, Pedagogic Assistants in Serbia can offer a wide range of needed support to children and families as well as to teachers and schools. Many are directly involved in the assessment of children, development and implementation of individualised education plans and the curriculum, and in linking families with additional services. I observed their leadership in a variety of areas, for instance: taking teachers to visit Roma communities, taking Roma children and families to visit universities, arranging for donations of trainers or books to support children, arranging intensive summer programmes for children, and leading additional

classes for Roma children. A number are members of violence prevention teams in their schools, and all those I met worked closely with the leadership team - pedagogues, psychologists and principals – in their designated preschools and schools. By contrast, the Roma Teaching Assistants in the UK had minimal training and largely served as classroom aides, supporting teachers and facilitating communication with families and children. In general, they were also less professionally ambitious. In both UK cities, TESS workers struggled to inspire Roma Teaching Assistants to seek further education and advance into permanent positions. This creates a problem, because while TESS workers can serve as change agents and advocates, only the Roma Teaching Assistants can serve as role models, encouraging members of the community to fully integrate into the ECE system and consider professional positions. Hiring in and building capacity of Roma staff in nurseries, schools and TESSs would go a long way to strengthen the UK system and might help to shift the devastating child outcome statistics noted in the UK case study. In contrast, both of Serbia's cultural brokers (Pedagogic Assistants and Roma NGOs) have the full package: they are role models, change agents and advocates and they have created a national association to advance their professional position within the formal education system.

Similarly, the Roma NGO in City A in Serbia is well-networked, interacting not only with a range of NGOs engaged with the Roma cause, but also with municipal authorities and national Ministries as well as European institutions. The TESSs I visited were embedded in their municipal education context but were not formally connected in any way with similar services in other municipalities. Two national professional organisations in the UK – NATT+ and ACERT – offer individuals who work with GRT children professional networks and development, and, thus, they build capacity of TESSs indirectly. They also raise awareness nationally about issues facing GRT children and families. In a few cases, TESSs had linked up with Roma initiatives in another European country; however, these instances seemed to be the exception rather than the rule. The overall result is that the cultural brokers in Serbia – Roma NGOs and Pedagogic Assistants – which respond to a national mandate to promote social inclusion of Roma, are more visible than the TESS and

Roma Teaching Assistants in the UK, which seem to depend on local conditions, rather than national priorities.

6.2 Revisiting the Definition of Cultural Brokering

Looking across the roles of cultural brokers identified in these case studies and summarised in the Table above illustrates several features that may be considered common to cultural brokers in early education. All four types of cultural broker serve as a liaison between education institutions and communities. All four also provide some sort of direct services to education staff and community members, though there are variations that depend on the primary function of each cultural broker. Thus, TESSs are set up to provide frontline services to preschools and schools across the municipality and to help new families enrol children in education provision, while Pedagogic Assistants in Serbia work consistently with individual children and families, based from within a single educational institution. Three of the four cultural brokers (all except the Roma Teaching Assistants in the UK) support linkages with other types of services across a range of sectors, and TESSs even foster linkages amongst these sectors to facilitate more holistic support to Roma children and families. All promote the rights of community members, serving as role models, advocates and change agents.

Revisiting the working definition of cultural broker proposed in Chapter 2, leads to a few suggested refinements, noted in **bold** text below.

> Cultural brokers proactively enable positive, trusting relationships between young minority children, their caregivers, and broader education, health and social protection systems with the aim of increasing opportunities and the quality of, children's formal and informal learning and development, as well as the social capital of the child, their family and community. Cultural brokers achieve this by facilitating communication and information sharing between families and early education settings, by participating in the planning of **educational** services **and linking children and families with additional**

needed services, and through mediation, conflict resolution and problem solving. Cultural brokers also serve as change agents, role models and advocates for both members of minority communities and personnel working in the early childhood sector to counteract social exclusion and to reduce discrimination and ethnic disparities in society. **To enable the most effective delivery of services, cultural brokers should be available for children and families at all points where they interact with formal systems.**

The proposition put forwards in the additional sentence at the end of the definition reflects the findings of this study, that in both countries, cultural brokering positions are required at both classroom and municipal levels.

There are far-reaching implications of the above definition and this research for ECE systems. First, the case studies suggest that cultural brokers should be embedded in preschools and schools, as well as in the municipal institutions that manage access, quality and equity across ECE systems. The CORE research goes further to suggest that cultural brokers be embedded into governance structures. Finally, cultural brokers could play an key role in building social networks within fragile and displaced communities, strengthening the social capital that 'bonds' communities together, to use Putnam's terms. A more active approach to community strengthening may be essential and deserves further study.

The next section takes a deeper look at the findings that can be drawn from these examples regarding policy reform and practice.

6.3   Implementing Policies and Practices that Promote Cultural Brokering

Though on the surface the introduction of cultural brokers into the early education systems in Serbia and the UK appear to have followed very different courses, in fact they share several similarities. First and foremost, both processes took decades to establish. In Serbia, the piloting of Roma Pedagogic Assistants began in the late 1990s and evolved over 20 years, while the formation of the TESS also required

more than two decades, beginning in the 1970s. In both cases, the process of identifying the problem to be solved (low participation of Roma children in early education) and a potential solution (cultural brokers) was initially supported by non-governmental organisations or informal associations with pilot funding provided by foundations. In both countries, a small number of dynamic individuals, including Arthur Ivatts and Tunde Cerovic-Kovacs, who were interviewed for these studies, helped to champion and socialise these reforms.

In both countries good practice pilots provided motivation for a scale-up of cultural brokering initiatives within education systems. It is significant, though, that in both the UK and Serbia, the wider social, political and educational eco-system was geared up for change. In both countries strong anti-discrimination laws played a critical role in propelling this scale-up. In the UK this came in the form of the 1981 Education Act, which guaranteed the provision of education for all children, including GRT, and it was followed by a huge reform of education law in 1988 with the Education Reform Act. Likewise, in Serbia the education reforms of 2009 were implemented in parallel with a significant anti-discrimination act. These laws place an obligation on education systems to reach Roma children in Serbia and GRT children in the UK, putting municipalities as well as individual preschools and schools under pressure to urgently change their practices.

Secondly, funding was available in both countries to promote scale-up. In the UK, this came in the form of the No Area Pool Fund launched in the 1980s, and then through various iterations of ring-fenced funding over two decades. This funding ended in 2004 with the passage of the Children Act, which eliminated ring-fenced funding for specific groups in favour of a broader emphasis on general well-being, but by then the TESS had been established across the UK. In Serbia, initial support for piloting was provided by foundations and the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe and costs of the Pedagogic Assistants have since been absorbed by the national education budget. Significantly, Serbia has recently negotiated a four-year $50 million education loan from the World Bank that is focused on improving early childhood and inclusive education, and though there are

no plans to use funds to hire more cultural brokers, it is anticipated that investments in infrastructure, teacher training and community-based services will reinforce the role of cultural brokers (Pedagogic Assistants and Roma NGOs).

Thus, the broad introduction of cultural brokers required enabling eco-systems, that included:

- Innovative pilots implemented by progressive civil society organisations, initially funded by foundations or international organisations
- Dynamic individuals committed to leading change
- Forward-thinking municipalities, preschools and schools that were ready to try innovative approaches
- Individuals ready to step into the new role of cultural broker
- Anti-discrimination and Education Laws that created motivation for a systemic scale-up
- Availability of national funding to support scale-up

The observation that a number of structural factors needed to be in place to overcome social exclusion in education is consistent with studies conducted by Downes (Downes, 2014), who used Bronfenbrenner's model of ecological development to help understand access of excluded groups to higher education, prison education and non-formal education programmes. In his view, Bronfenbrenner's model anticipates the difficulties that face individuals in transitioning across different contexts (for example, home and preschool), yet it also adopts a strengths-based approach, which gives visibility to individual agency and seeks to learn from examples of resilience. Perhaps most important for this study of cultural brokers, Bronfenbrenner's model recognises that change requires sustained, complex interventions that can address interlinked systems as a whole. Downes proposed a formalisation of a series of structural or access indicators that can be used across European institutions (the European Union, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development etc.) to provide a rapid assessment of the openness of national education systems to marginalised groups. He notes that

structural indicators, such as the anti-discrimination laws described above that mandate the inclusion of marginalised groups, are easier to verify than process and outcome indicators, which require deeper qualitative and quantitative assessment tools. Such an exercise would ensure rapid comparisons between countries and provide a measure of accountability (Downes, 2014). Such an analysis would credit Serbia with adopting new, anti-discrimination and education laws. Likewise, it would draw attention to the new obligation of schools in the UK to promote Fundamental British Values, a nationalistic approach to values and citizenship that undermines the notions of Britain as a diverse society, European integrity and international rights, and no doubt contributes to the further marginalisation of minority communities (Starkey, 2018).

While I find Downes' application of Bronfenbrenner's ecological model to social exclusion in education inspiring, I disagree with the proposal to focus almost exclusively, in the first instance, on structural barriers. Certainly, structural barriers are fundamental in limiting access to early education for many Roma children, as asserted in the World Bank (2012) study discussed in earlier chapters. Yet, the same study also uncovered less visible cultural barriers that appear to keep parents from enrolling in services even though they are accessible. Bronfenbrenner's approach to human development goes beyond the layering of structural relationships in a series of concentric circles arranged to reflect their potential influence. In fact, these structural relationships between families and institutions serve as a background for proximal, human relationships that surround each child and family, creating an environmental niche within which, the quality of interactions and levels of trust deeply matter. The importance of cultural brokers in helping to negotiate these inter-personal contexts is incontestable, as illustrated by the examples that populate the Serbian and UK case studies.

Significantly, the reforms in Serbia were at least in part catalysed by factors that were in the first instance, external or at least top-down. Following the fall of Milosevic's regime, the country entered a period of political instability and a series of rapid education reforms were launched by the central government. The initiative

to create a universal pre-primary programme and later to establish the position of Pedagogic Assistant was driven by central government, not by municipalities, educators or, for that matter, Roma communities. Several of those interviewed for the case study commented on the lack of consultation around the values of inclusion and equity that form the basis of these reforms, and, subsequently, about the lack of debate regarding new policies and programmes.

By contrast, the introduction of the TESS in the UK came about through the grass-roots, bottom-up efforts of activists and educators interested in the cause of Gypsy and Traveller children. That GRT children were not participating in education provision was made visible through the Plowden Report, and Lady Plowden's personal involvement continued to bring credibility and attention to the issue. At the same time, a variety of pilot initiatives were attempted and a number of burning issues were hotly debated, not only within the government, but also by a number of often competing civic associations that were established for the purpose of advancing GRT education. The most significant debates revolved around whether separate education opportunities should be arranged for GRT children to support their unique culture, or whether efforts should focus on integrated, inclusive education with majority populations. Members of the GRT community were included in these discussions, but it is not clear that their voices carried power within the debates. On considering the factors, the central government came down decisively in favour of entirely inclusive education, and a new set of anti-discrimination and education laws put pressure on municipalities to take action to bring GRT children into the education system.

Both cultural brokering systems today bear the traces of their origins. In Serbia, where reforms were centrally initiated and led, municipalities remain largely passive. Several interviewees commented that the municipalities are simply not taking responsibility for Roma education. They either do not recognise their power and responsibility, or they are choosing not to act. In either case, without a strong central inspection service, such as Ofsted in the UK, preschools and schools and the municipal education departments that manage them, face few consequences for

141

inaction. Likewise, in the UK, where it is municipalities that took the lead in creating supportive cultural brokering services (TESS) to achieve full inclusion and positive outcomes for GRT pupils, the central government has remained largely disengaged. This is shocking given the growing numbers of Roma pupils and their astonishingly low levels of attainment. This is consistently the lowest performing population in the UK, yet only a handful of initiatives and studies have emerged over the past ten years, and there is no longer any funding designated to reduce the gaps in attainment that persist between GRT children and all other children in the UK. Thus, the Serbian system continues to suffer from weak municipal engagement and the UK system from a lack of commitment and resources from central government.

In both countries, Roma and GRT communities participated in, but did not lead, these reforms. This raises important questions about the power relations that govern policy development and implementation. In her often-referenced article (Arnstein, 1969), Sherry Arnstein provides a definition of full citizen participation:

> It is the redistribution of power that enables have-not citizens, presently excluded from the political and economic processes, to be deliberately included in the future… In short it is the means by which they can induce significant social reform which enables them to share in the benefits of the affluent society. (Arnstein, 1969, p. 216)

She further describes eight typologies, or 'rungs' in the ladder of citizen participation that span from non-participation (manipulation, therapy), through degrees of tokenism (informing, consulting and placation) and upwards towards citizen power (partnership, delegated power, citizen control). These definitions help to clarify where power is situated in each type of participation.

Applied to the process of establishing cultural brokers in early education systems in Serbia and the UK, the typologies illustrate how little real power Roma and GRT communities have had in determining how education systems are structured. In the UK, though initial actions were taken collectively with the National Gypsy Education Council, one interviewee suggested that the Gypsies and Travellers who participated were largely manipulated by their majority peers and had little say in

terms of outcomes. Looking forwards fifty years to the current context in the UK, this study reveals that there is very little bonding, at least within the newer Roma communities, and certainly almost no bonding of these Roma communities with Gypsy and Traveller communities. As Arnstein (1969) notes, sharing citizen power requires a power base within the community, which undoubtedly requires bonding within the community and the identification of leadership, neither of which appear to be present amongst Roma or Gypsy and Traveller communities with regards to education.

The situation in Serbia is a little brighter. Roma communities are at least to some degree bonded, have leadership and are gradually developing a political power base. Several interviewees noted that various power struggles within the community continue to get in the way of even more concerted action and assertions of power. However, minimally, the Roma population achieved levels of participation that Arnstein would categorise as tokenism (for example, information and consultation). That is, their existence and voice is acknowledged as important. Yet, full participation, such as the sharing of power, is not yet achieved, though it is perhaps within reach.

A recent study used narrative and reflective group approaches in workshops with the Serbian Pedagogic Assistants to gather their perspectives on the context of Roma education in Serbia and their role. The very moving results give visibility to their unique insights regarding the strivings of the Roma community to improve their situation through education, the discrimination they face and the ways in which a deeper understanding of this context and their perspectives could be used to find solutions to some of the barriers that challenge families, preschools and schools alike (Daiute & Kovac-Cerovic, 2017). The establishment of the National Association of Pedagogical Assistants of Serbia is a positive step in this direction.

There are other ways that Roma can assert their voices within the education system. Beyond the political participation described above, they can also embed themselves within the early education workforce, working from within the system. Siraj-Blatchford (1994) makes this recommendation in their early work on

combatting racism through early childhood provision. Similarly, the European quality framework proposed by the *EU Childcare Network* (1996), recognises the importance of hiring employees who reflect the ethnic diversity of the community (NESSE, 2009). Yet nearly two decades later, the need for a more diverse early childhood education staff remains paramount. A recent review of European literature on strategies to support disadvantaged children in Europe highlights the importance of establishing an early education workforce that reflects the social and cultural diversity of the community (Vandenbroeck & Lazzari, 2012). My previously presented institution-focused study establishes that there are far too few Roma in the early education workforce. I suggest that Europe would have to increase its Roma early education workforce 8-10 fold in order to establish a teaching force that reflects the size of the Roma population (Klaus, 2014). Ensuring Roma and GRT communities can assert their power in designing and implementing education systems is critical. The policy implications of this are wide-reaching. Successful interventions would need to go beyond providing better services to Roma and GRT communities, which is already proving to be a challenge. Equally vital, are efforts to build community capacity, hire Roma and GRT into the relevant early education and municipal institutions, and ensure spaces for them within governance structures so that their voices can be heard.

Chapter 7   Conclusion

This thesis attempts to break new ground by exploring the potential of cultural brokering to improve the capability of early education systems to include the hardest to reach groups. Case studies have focused on the inclusion of Roma and GRT children in Serbia and the UK, and offer examples of cultural brokers effectively operating at preschool and primary levels on the one hand, as well as at the municipal level through the work of local education authorities and non-governmental organisations on the other.

Four research questions have guided the methodology used in conducting this research. The methodology was designed to explore why cultural brokering was adopted in each country, to identify key roles or features of cultural brokers, to collect existing evidence related to the impact of cultural brokering strategies and, finally, to explore how the people involved in cultural brokering perceive its impact. To a large extent it has achieved its core aims, and both of the case studies include sub-sections that describe and discuss the motivations for employing cultural brokers, their roles and evidence of impact. The perspectives of those involved in cultural brokering (defined as cultural brokers, parents, teachers, children) are woven across the two cases, through quotations, in order to give texture to the reports.

It is important to note, however, where the study falls short of its initial aims. As described in the methodology chapter, it proved difficult to gain access to parents (Roma and majority parents) who did not have regular contact with cultural brokers. Thus, the parent views reflected in the study are almost exclusively of Roma parents, who have been exposed to cultural brokers. Likewise, though data collection included observations in classrooms and interviews with parents, the study design did not include opportunities to engage with and gather directly the perspectives of children. To do this effectively would have required implementing an additional set of creative research activities, which meaningfully engage children. These approaches can be very time consuming, as they generally require the

researcher to embed into children's natural contexts and build rapport with them. Additionally, it would require the host institutions to obtain parents' and children's permission. During the process of arranging research visits to each city, these logistical aspects were deemed to be too complicated. Obtaining the authentic perspectives of children towards cultural brokering is, thus, an area for future research and one that is supported by the *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC),* which emphasizes the rights of young children to express their views and underlines the responsibility of adults to adopt a child-centred approach to listening (United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child, UNICEF, & Bernard van Leer Foundation, 2006).

The implications of the finding that cultural brokers are effective at linking excluded communities with the education system, goes well beyond these two studies. In conclusion, I outline three broader observations and applications that extend from the presented research.

7.1   The Potential of Implementing Cultural Brokering More Widely in Early Education

This study illustrates the value of embedding cultural brokers in early education systems in Serbia and the UK to support the inclusion of Roma and GRT children. As early as 1985, the authors of the Swann Report, taking into consideration the situation of Travellers, recognised the need to create better links between other ethnic minority groups and education systems:

> In many ways, the situation of travellers' children in Britain today,
> throws into stark relief many of the factors which influence the
> education of children from other ethnic minority groups – racism and
> discrimination, myths, stereotyping and misinformation, the
> inappropriateness and inflexibility of the education system and the need
> for better links between homes and schools and teachers and parents.
> (Department of Education, 1985)

Today, these words still have resonance and similar challenges may respond to similar solutions. The benefits that emerge when cultural brokering is attempted

with Roma and GRT children could potentially be achievable for other marginalised groups if this strategy were applied more widely in early education systems. One very compelling application is the use of cultural brokers to support refugee and migrant children and families, who face similar challenges, including language barriers and discrimination. Further, employing cultural brokers from such communities, many of whom have achieved high-levels of education in their home countries, in these education systems offers a potential pathway towards employment and integration in host communities.

To be effective on a wider scale, the hiring of cultural brokers needs to be responsive to the composition and needs of each community. How can this kind of flexible employment of cultural brokers be achieved? One answer may lie in the approach to allocating resources that is embodied in the concept of *progressive universalism*. Introduced initially in the UK in the context of ending child poverty, the approach gained traction in a number of fields, including in health and education (Gwatkin & Ergo, 2011; UNESCO, 2017). As presented in the UK's report on child poverty, progressive universalism is 'delivering help for all families and more help for those who need it most, when they need it most.' (HM Treasury, Department for Children Schools and Families, & Pensions, 2008). This principle offers a mechanism through which a universal service, such as early education, could allocate supplementary resources to support cultural brokering, if this is what is needed to ensure specific groups, such as Roma, participate more fully. Significantly, the International Commission on Financing Global Education Opportunities' recent report on education financing links these two issues, recommending both a guarantee of a quality preschool place for all children, as well as an application of the concept of progressive universalism to education systems internationally to ensure funds are available (International Commission on Financing Global Education Opportunities, 2016).

7.2   Motivation to Start Interventions Earlier – Nurturing Care

Though cultural brokers are having a robust impact on Roma children's participation in early education in both Serbia and the UK, there are significant gaps in attainment and outcomes. In the UK, where I observed very high-quality settings, TESS workers, head teachers and teachers lamented the need for services that reach families earlier so that children can enter pre-primary programmes at the same developmental level as their peers. Likewise, the MICS household survey results in Serbia illustrates the extent of early deprivation experienced by young Roma children, compared with their majority peers. In addition to health and nutrition challenges, only a fraction grow up in households that have books and toys, and the majority have dramatically fewer opportunities to engage with adults in learning and play activities (Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia & UNICEF, 2014).

Science speaks to the imperative of providing earlier, more intensive and comprehensive interventions with fragile families and young children, like Roma families and children that are the focus of this study. In October 2016, *The Lancet* published its third series of articles focused on early childhood development, defining a new concept: *nurturing care*:

> We define nurturing care as a stable environment that is sensitive to children's health and nutritional needs, with protection from threats, opportunities for early learning, and interactions that are responsive, emotionally supportive, and developmentally stimulating. As an overarching concept, nurturing care is supported by a large array of social contexts – from home to parental work, childcare, schooling the wider community, and policy influences. … The single most powerful context for nurturing care is the immediate home and care settings of young children… (Britto et al., 2016)

Like the present study, the concept of nurturing care adopts an ecological framework of early childhood development, acknowledging that communities, institutions and policies wield great influence on the lives of young children, and that the most proximal influences – the relationships that children build within families and care settings – have the greatest influence. The authors suggest that

the earliest period – the first thousand days following conception – represent a sensitive period during which children's development is particularly vulnerable to adversity and is responsive to supportive environments, undoubtedly because it is during this period that the brain is developing the most rapidly (Black et al., 2016).

The concept of nurturing care has the potential to transform how governments approach young children and families globally. As this chapter is being written, the World Health Organisation (WHO) is leading the international early childhood community in bringing together expertise and gathering political support for a framework for nurturing care that spans action in the areas of health, nutrition, security and safety, responsive caregiving and early learning. In May 2018, a preliminary framework and action agenda was presented to a global gathering of Ministers of Health for endorsement, with the idea that health services will agree to take the lead in securing better contexts for early childhood development for the youngest children (World Health Organization, 2017). Hopefully, this increase in attention to the earliest years at a global level will translate into more comprehensive programming for vulnerable children, like the Roma children in this study.

7.3   Need for Broader Systemic Changes

The concept of intersectionality was raised in earlier chapters as a caution against over-attributing either problems or solutions to complex social issues to single factors, like ethnicity. This was a particular concern of Bronfenbrenner (2005), whose ecological framework has been used to frame this study. This thesis proposes cultural brokers as a remedy to support a freer exchange of social and cultural capital amongst and between the Roma community and early education settings. The focus is solidly on an exploration of the role that ethnicity plays in either promoting or limiting young children's participation. It has not explored in any depth the role that poverty or discrimination play in complicating the relationships between communities and early education institutions. Moreover, Roma in the UK and many in Serbia are also new migrants, who face a different and

unique set of additional challenges. If, for instance, poverty and discrimination were eliminated for these families, would they face the same challenges interacting with early education systems? By focusing on ethnicity, do we divert attention from even more fundamental barriers to social inclusion? Inevitably, the answer is not straight forward. Poverty, discrimination, migration status and socio-economic status undoubtedly play a definitive role, yet education systems have few mechanisms through which they can address these broader social issues. However, what is within their remit, is the potential to reach out to these children and families in more effective ways, to eliminate any barriers and to welcome them into early education settings. Cultural brokers certainly offer an effective way to approach these challenges (Weaver, 1971).

References

Alexander, R. (2000). *Culture and pedagogy: international comparisons in primary education*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.

Arnstein, S. R. (1969). A Ladder Of Citizen Participation. *Journal of the American Institute of Planners, 35*(4), 216-224. doi:10.1080/01944366908977225

Battaglia, M., & Ledinski, L. (2015). Equal access to education: An evaluation of the Roma teacher assistant program in Serbia. *World Development, 76*, 62-81.

BBC. (2004, 16 September 2004). 'Anti-Darwin' Serb minister quits.   Retrieved from http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/3663196.stm

Bennett, J. (2012). *Roma early childhood inclusion: RECI overview report*. Retrieved from Budapest: https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/sites/default/files/Roma-Early-Childhood-Inclusion-Report-20120813.pdf

Binns, D. (1990). History and growth of traveller education. *British Journal of Educational Studies, 38*(3), 251-258. doi:10.1080/00071005.1990.9973853

Black, M. M., Walker, S. P., Fernald, L. C. H., Andersen, C. T., DiGirolamo, A. M., Lu, C., . . . Grantham-McGregor, S. (2016). Early childhood development coming of age: science through the life course. *The Lancet, 389*(10064), 77-90. doi:10.1016/S0140-6736(16)31389-7

Bourdieu, P. (2006). The forms of capital. In H. Lauder, H. L. Brown, J.-A. Dillabough, & A. H. Halsey (Eds.), *Education, globalization & social change* (pp. 105-118). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

British Educational Research Association. (2011). *Ethical guidelines for education research*. London: British Educational Research Association.

Britto, P. R., Lye, S. J., Proulx, K., Yousafzai, A. K., Matthews, S. G., Vaivada, T., . . . Bhutta, Z. A. (2016). Nurturing care: promoting early childhood development. *The Lancet, 389*(10064), 91-102. doi:10.1016/S0140-6736(16)31390-3

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979). *The ecology of human development: experiments by nature and design*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Bronfenbrenner, U. (Ed.) (2005). *Making human beings human: bioecological perspectives on human development*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications.

Brown, P., Scullion, L., & Martin, P. (2013). *Migrant Roma in the United Kingdom: Population size and experiences of local authorities and partners*. Retrieved from Manchester, UK: https://www.salford.ac.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0003/1155666/Migrant_Roma_in_the_UK_final_report_October_2013.pdf

Bruggemann, C. (2012). *Roma education in comparative perspective: findings from the UNDP/World Bank/EC regional Roma survey*. Retrieved from Bratislava: http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/ED/pdf/Roma-Education-Comparative-Perspective-UNDP.pdf

Cannella, G. S. (2005). Reconceptualizing the field (of early care and education): If 'western' child development is a problem, then what do we do? In N. Yelland (Ed.), *Critical issues in early childhood education* (pp. 17-39). Berkshire: Open University Press.

CeSID. (2013). *Public opinion survey report: Public perceptions of discrimination in Serbia*. Retrieved from Belgrade: http://www.undp.org/content/dam/serbia/Publications and reports/English/UNDP_SRB_AD survey_2013.pdf

Coleman, J. S. (1987). Families and schools. *Educational Researcher, 16*(6), 32-38.

Coleman, J. S. (1988). Social Capital in the Creation of Human Capital. *American Journal of Sociology, 94*, S95-S120.

Coleman, J. S. (1990). Social capital *Foundations of social theory* (pp. 300-321). Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.

Craig, G. (2011). *United Kingdom the Roma: A study of national policies*. Retrieved from York: https://www.york.ac.uk/inst/spru/research/pdf/EURoma.pdf

Crenshaw, K. (1989). Demarginalizing the intersection of race and sex: a black feminist critique of antidiscrimination doctrine, feminist theory and antiracist politics. *University of Chicago Legal Forum*, 139-167.

Croll, P. (2004). Families, Social Capital and Educational Outcomes. *British Journal of Educational Studies, 52*(4), 390-416.

Daiute, C., & Kovac-Cerovic, T. (2017). *Minority teachers - Roma in Serbia - narrate education reform*. Kragujevac: Institute of Psychology, Faculty of Philosphy, University of Belgrade

Association of Pedagogical Assistants of Serbia.

Danaher, P. A., Coombes, P., & Kiddle, C. (2007). *Teaching Traveller children: maximising learning outcomes*. Stoke on Trent: Trentham Books.

Demeuse, M., Frandji, D., Greger, D., & Rochex, J.-Y. (Eds.). (2012). *Education policies and inequalities in Europe*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Department of Education. (1985). *Education for All: the report of the committee of inquiry into the education of children from ethnic minority groups* (9453). Retrieved from London:
http://www.educationengland.org.uk/documents/swann/swann1985.html

Department of Education and Science. (1967). *Children and their primary schools: a report of the central advisory council for education*. Retrieved from London:
http://www.educationengland.org.uk/documents/plowden/plowden1967-2.html

Diversity in Early Childhood Education and Training, & International Step by Step Association. (2012). *Diversity and social inclusion: exploring competences for professional practice for early childhood education and care*. Retrieved from Ireland:
https://www.issa.nl/sites/default/files/pdf/Publications/equity/Diversity-and-Social-Inclusion_0.pdf

Downes, P. (2014). *Access to education in Europe: a framework and agenda for system change* (Vol. 21). Dordrecht: Springer.

Duvnjak, N., Mihajlovic, M., Skarep, A., Stojanovic, J., & Trikic, Z. (2010). *Roma pedagogic assistants as agents of change: The importance and meaning of their role, fields of activity and influence on the changes in schools and in the Roma community* (J. Bajic, Trans.). Belgrade: OSCE Mission to Serbia.

Entwisle, D. R., & Alexander, K. L. (1989). Early schooling as a 'criticla period' phenomenon. *Research in the Sociology of Education and Socialization, 8*, 27-55.

Equality and Rights Commission. (2016). *England's most disadvantaged groups: Gypsies, Travellers and Roma*. Retrieved from London:
https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/search?text=Roma&f%5B0%5D=node%3Afield_discrimination%3A9

European Commission. (2011). *An EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies up to 2020* (COM(2011) 173). Retrieved from Brussels: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1444910104414&uri=CELEX:52011DC0173

European Commission. (2013a). *Barcelona objectives: The development of childcare facilities for young children in Europe with a view to sustainable and inclusive growth*. Retrieved from Belgium:

European Commission. (2013b). *Investing in children: breaking the cycle of disadvantage*. Retrieved from Brussels: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:32013H0112&from=EN

European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights. (2016). *Second European Union minorities and discrimination survey: Roma - selected findings*. Retrieved from Luxembourg: http://fra.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/publications/annual-reports/fundamental-rights-2016s

European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, & UNDP. (2012). *The situation of Roma and Travellers in the European Union: comparative report*. Retrieved from Luxembourg: http://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2012/situation-roma-11-eu-member-states-survey-results-glance

Freire, P. (1993). *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (M. B. Ramos, Trans.). London: Penguin Books.

Fremlova, L. (2009). *The movement of Roma from new member states: A mapping survey of A2 and A8 Roma in England*. Retrieved from http://www.luciefremlova.co.uk/.../The-Movement-of-Roma-From-New-EU-Member-States..

Friedman, E., Pavlovic Babic, D., & Simic, N. (2015). *Inclusive education in Serbia: Policies, practice and recommendations*. Retrieved from Belgrade:

Fundacio Secretariado Gitano et al. (2009). *Health and the Roma community, analysis of the situation in Europe: Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Greece, Portugal, Romania. Slovakia and Spain*. Retrieved from Madrid: http://www.gitanos.org/upload/07/81/memoria_gral_fin.pdf

Fundamental Rights Agency. (2018). *Second European Union minorities and discrimination survey: Roma - selected findings*. Retrieved from Luxembourg: http://fra.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/publications/annual-reports/fundamental-rights-2018

Gay, G. (1993). Building Cultural Bridges: A Bold Proposal for Teacher Education. *Education and Urban Society, 25*(3), 285-299. doi:10.1177/0013124593025003006

Gentemann, K. M., & Whitehead, T. L. (1983). The cultural broker concept in bicultural education. *The Journal of Negro Education, 52*(2 (Spring 1983)), 118-129.

Government of the United Kingdom. (2017). Ethnicity facts and figures website. Retrieved from https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/education-skills-and-training

Gwatkin, D. R., & Ergo, A. (2011). Universal health coverage: friend or foe of health equity? *The Lancet, 377*(9784), 2160-2161. doi:https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(10)62058-2

Heckman, J. J. (2006). Skill formation and the economics of investing in disadvantaged children. *Science, 312*, 1901.

Heckman, J. J., Moon, S. H., Pinto, R., Savelyev, P. A., & Yavitz, A. (2010). The Rate of Return to the High/Scope Perry Preschool Program. *Journal of public economics, 94*(1-2), 114-128.

Herzog, J. D. (1972). The Anthropologist as Broker in Community Education: A Case Study and Some General Propositions. *Council on Anthropology and Education Newsletter, 3*(3), 9-14.

HM Treasury, Department for Children Schools and Families, & Pensions, D. f. W. a. (2008). *Ending child poverty: everyone's business*. (PU314). Norwich: HM Treasury.

Institute for the Evaluation of Education Quality. (2009). *Evaluation study: The role of pedagogical assistants for the support of Roma students as a systemic measure for improving the education of Roma*. Retrieved from Belgrade:

International Commission on Financing Global Education Opportunities. (2016). *The learning generation: Investing in education for a changing world*. Retrieved from New York: http://report.educationcommission.org/report/

Ivatts, A., & Day, J. (2014). 'Ministers like it that way': Developing education services for Gypsies and Travellers. In A. Ryder, S. Cemlyn, & T. Acton (Eds.), *Hearing the voices of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities: Inclusive community development* (pp. 49-65). Bristol: Policy Press, University of Bristol.

Ivic, I., & Pesikan, A. (2012). Education system reforms in an unstable political situation: The case of serbia in the first decade of the 21st century. *CEPS Journal : Center for Educational Policy Studies Journal, 2*(2), 31-53.

Jezewski, A. (1995). Evolution of a grounded theory: Conflict resolution through culture brokering. *Advances in Nursing Science, 17*(3), 14-30.

Klaus, S. (2004). Stepping into the future: the history of the Step by Step program. *Educating children for democracy, 8*(10th Anniversary Issue), 3-13.

Klaus, S. (2014). *Straggling behind: participation of Roma children and employment of Roma staff in early childhood education in Europe.* (Doctorate in Education), Institute of Education, University of London,, London.

La Paro, K. M., & Pianta, R. C. (2000). Predicting children's competence in the early school years: a meta-analytic review. *Review of Educational Research, Winter 2000*(70), 443-484.

Lane, P., Spencer, S., & Jones, A. (2014). *Gypsy, Traveller and Roma: Experts by experience: Reviewing UK progress on the European Union Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies*. Retrieved from UK: https://www.birmingham.ac.uk/Documents/college-social-sciences/social-policy/iris/2014/Experts-by-Experience--JRTF-Report-Oct-2014.pdf

Liegeois, J.-P. (2013). *Developments in mediation, current challenges and the role of ROMED training programme for Roma mediators*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe Publishing.

Martinez-Cosio, M., & Iannacone, R. M. (2007). The Tenuous Role of Institutional Agents: Parent Liaisons as Cultural Brokers. *Education and Urban Society, 39*(3), 349-369. doi:10.1177/0013124506298165

McCall, L. (2005). The complexity of intersectionality. *The University of Chicago Press, 30*(3), 1771-1800.

McDonald, C., & Negrin, K. (2010). *No Data - No Progress*. Retrieved from New York: https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/sites/default/files/no-data-no-progress-20100628.pdf

McGonigal, J., Doherty, R., Allan, J., Sarah, M., Ralph, C., Morag, R., . . . Buckley, C. (2007). Social Capital, Social Inclusion and Changing School Contexts: A Scottish Perspective. *British Journal of Educational Studies, 55*(1), 77-94.

Merton, R. K. (1972). Insiders and outsiders: a chapter in the sociology of knowledge. *American Journal of Sociology, 78*(1), 9-47.

Milivojevic, Z. (2015). *Analysis of the legal framework, status and practice of pedagogic assistants*. Retrieved from Belgrade: https://nccc.georgetown.edu/culturalbroker/

Morton, K. (2017, 04 April 2017). One third of Sure Start children's centres have closed since 2010. *Nursery World*. Retrieved from https://www.nurseryworld.co.uk/nursery-world/news/1160806/one-third-of-sure-start-children-s-centres-have-closed-since-2010

National Center for Cultural Competence. (2004). *Bridging the cultural divide in health care settings: The essential role of cultural broker programs*. Retrieved from Washington, DC: https://nccc.georgetown.edu/culturalbroker/

NESSE. (2009). *Early childhood education and care: lessons from research for policy makers*. Retrieved from

http://www.nesse.fr/nesse/activities/reports/activities/reports/ecec-report-pdf

Office of Her Majesty's Inspector of Education Children's Services and Skills. (2014). *Overcoming barriers: Ensuring that Roma children are fully engaged and achieving in education*. (140195). Manchester: Ofsted.

Office of Her Majesty's Inspector of Education Children's Services and Skills. (2015). *Early Years: the report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of education, children's services and skills*. Retrieved from Manchester: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/445730/Early_years_report_2015.pdf

Organization for Security and Co-Operation in Europe Mission to Serbia. (2008). *Ethnic minorities in Serbia: An overview*. Retrieved from Belgrade: http://www.osce.org/serbia/30908?download=true

Peeters, J., Sharmahd, N., & Budginaite, I. (2016). *Professionalisation of childcare assistants in early childhood education and care (ECEC): Pathways towards qualification*. Retrieved from Luxembourg: https://publications.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/c15d6c71-9a82-11e6-9bca-01aa75ed71a1/language-en

Peeters, J., Sharmahd, N., & Budginaité, I. (2018). Early childhood education and care (ECEC) assistants in Europe: Pathways towards continuous professional development (CPD) and qualification. *European Journal of Education, 53*(1), 46-57.

Penfold, M. (2015). *Improving education outcomes for pupils from the new Roma communities*. Retrieved from Leicester: https://ealresources.bell-foundation.org.uk/sites/default/files/document-files/Roma research revised July 2016 %285%29.pdf

Pew Research Center. (2015). *Faith in European project reviving*. Retrieved from http://assets.pewresearch.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2015/06/Pew-Research-Center-European-Union-Report-FINAL-June-2-20151.pdf

Phillips, D., & Crowell, N. (1994). *Cultural diversity and early education: Report of a workshop*. Retrieved from Washington, DC: http://www.nap.edu/readingroom/books/earled

Putnam, R. D. (2000). *Bowling alone: the collapse and revival of American community*. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster.

Richter, L. M., Daelmans, B., Lombardi, J., Heymann, J., Boo, F. L., Behrman, J. R., . . . Darmstadt, G. L. (2016). Investing in the foundation of sustainable development: pathways to scale up for early childhood development. *The Lancet, 389*(10064), 103-118. doi:10.1016/S0140-6736(16)31698-1

Rimm-Kaufman, S. E., & Pianta, R. C. (2000). An ecological perspective on the transition to kindergarten: a theoretical framework to guide empirical research. *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology, 21*(5), 491-511.

Robson, C. (2002). *Real World Research* (Second Edition ed.). Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.

Rus, C. (2006). *The situation of Roma school mediators and assistants in Europe* (DGIV/EDU/ROM(2006)3). Retrieved from Strasbourg: https://www.coe.int/t/dg4/education/roma/Source/Mediators_Analyse_EN.pdf

Schoon, I. (2006). *Risk and resilience: Adaptations in changing times*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Schweinhart, L. J. (2005). *The High/Scope Perry preschool study through age 40: summary, conclusions and frequently asked questions*. Retrieved from Ypsilanti, MI: http://nieer.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/specialsummary_rev2011_02_2.pdf

Siraj, I., & Mayo, A. (2014). *Social Class and Educational Inequality: The Impact of Parents and Schools*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Stake, R. (2000). Case Studies. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research: Second edition* (Second ed., pp. 435-454). Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications, Inc.

Starkey, H. (2018). Fundamental British Values and citizenship education: tensions between national and global perspectives. *Geografiska Annaler: Series B, Human Geography*, 1-14. doi:10.1080/04353684.2018.1434420

Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia, & UNICEF. (2014). *Serbia multiple indicator cluster survey and Serbia Roma settlments multiple indicator cluster survey, 2014, Final Reports*. Retrieved from Belgrade, Serbia: http://www.unicef.org/serbia/Serbia_2014_MICS_National_and_Roma_Settlements_Eng_20141218.pdf

Stevens, K., & English, E. (2016). *Does pre-K work?: The research on ten early childhood programs - and what it tells us*. Retrieved from Washington, DC: http://www.aei.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/Does-Pre-K-Work.pdf

Stojanovic, J. (2000). Impact of Step by Step preschool experience on Roma children's educational success. *Educating children for democracy, Summer/Fall 2000*, 22.

Support Team of the Special Representative of the Secretary General of the Council of Europe for Roma Issues. (2012). Estimates on Roma population in European countries. Retrieved 04/07/2016, from Council of Europe http://www.coe.int/en/web/portal/roma

Sylva, K., Melhuish, E., Sammons, P., Siraj-Blatchford, I., & Taggart, B. (2010). *Early Childhood Matters*. London: Routledge.

Sylva, K., Melhuish, E. C., Sammons, P., Siraj-Blatchford, I., & Taggart, B. (2008). *Final report from the primary phase: pre-school, school and family influences on children-s development during Key Stage 2 (Age 7-11)*. Retrieved from London: http://ro.uow.edu.au/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2806&context=sspapers

Sylva, K., Siraj-Blatchford, I., & Taggart, B. (2006). *Assessing quality in the early years: early childhood environmental rating scale extension (ECERS-E): Four curricular subscales* (revised ed.). Stoke on Trent: Trentham Books.

Szasz, M. C. (1988). *Indian education in the American colonies, 1607-1783*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press.

UNESCO. (2017). Towards progressive universalism: getting all children in school and learning. Retrieved from http://www.iiep.unesco.org/en/towards-progressive-universalism-getting-all-children-school-and-learning-3992

UNESCO, & Council of Europe. (2014). *Inclusion from the start: Guidelines on inclusive early childhood care and education for Roma children*. Retrieved from Strasbourg: http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0022/002275/227503e.pdf

United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child, UNICEF, & Bernard van Leer Foundation. (2006). *A guide to General Comment 7: Implementing child rights in early childhood*. The Hague: Bernard van Leer Foundation.

University of East London, & University of Ghent. (2011). *Competence requirements in early childhood education and care: final report*. Retrieved from London and Ghent: https://publications.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/fc7e05f4-30b9-480a-82a7-8afd99b7a723/language-en

Vandenbroeck, M., & Lazzari, A. (2012). *Appendix 1 Literature Review: Early childhood education and care (ECEC) in promoting educational attainment including social development of children from disadvantaged backgrounds and in fostering social inclusion*. Retrieved from Paris: https://www.fruehe-chancen.de/fileadmin/PDF/Archiv/ec_lazzari_2012_appendix_i_en.pdf

Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind and society: The development of higher psychological processes*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Weaver, K. D. (1971). *Lenin's grandchildren: Preschool educaiton in the Soviet Union*. New York: Simon and Schuster.

Wolf, E. R. (1956). Aspects of Group Relations in a Complex Society: Mexico. *American Anthropologist, 58*(6), 1065-1078.

World Bank. (2010). *Economic costs of Roma exclusion*. Retrieved from Washington, DC: http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EXTROMA/Resources/Economic_Costs_Roma_Exclusion_Note_Final.pdf

World Bank. (2012). *Toward an equal start: Closing the early learning gap for Roma children in Eastern Europe*. Retrieved from Washington: http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/843991468251107542/Toward-an-equal-start-closing-the-early-learning-gap-for-Roma-children-in-Eastern-Europe

World Health Organization. (2017). Nurturing care for early childhood development: a framework for action and results.   Retrieved from http://www.who.int/maternal_child_adolescent/child/nurturing-care-framework/en/

Wyatt, J. D. (1978-79). Native involvement in curriculum development: The native teacher as cultural broker. *Interchange, 9*(1), 17-28. doi:10.1007/bf01807734

Appendices

Appendix 1: Research Design

Regional (European Level)

Document analysis

UK

- Interviews with 1 policy maker/change agent

- document analysis

Serbia

- interviews with 1 policy maker and 1 NGO leader, 2 professors

- document analysis

- attended national workshop on inclusive education

City C

- Notes from following 2 TESS workers and sitting in TESS office

- Interviews (4) with local authority, educators at one preschool and school and other key identified staff

- Interviews with 3 Roma Trainee Mentors

- Interviews with 4 Roma parents

- observations in 1 school, 1 preschool

- visit to Roma family

City D

- Notes from following TESS worker

- Interviews (6) with local authority, educators at one preschool and school and other key identified staff

- Interviews with 3 Roma Teacher Assistants

- Interviews with 2 Roma parents

- observations in 1 preschool, 2 schools

- Attended local education authority workshop on Roma education

City A

- Notes from following 2 Pedagogical Assistants and sitting in NGO office

- focus group with 4 Pedagogic Assistants

- Interviews (6) with local Roma authority, local education authority, educators at one preschool and school and other key identified staff

- focus group with 4 Roma and majority parents

- observations in 2 schools

- visit to Roma village

City B

- Notes from following 2 Pedagogical Assistants

- interviews with 2 Pedagogical Assistants

- Interviews (6) with local authority, educators at one preschool and school and other key identified staff

- focus group with 11Roma and majority parents

- observations in 1 preschool and 1 school

Appendix 2: Table of Interview/Focus Group Questions

Research Questions	Parents	Teachers	Principals	LEA	Pedagogic Assistants	NGO
1. Why was the position of PA introduced?	- What was education like before (for you or another child) without PA? - Is it harder for Roma to participate in KG, PPP, 1? - What are the barriers? - Opinion of PPP, PA	- What was education like before without PA? - Is it harder for Roma to participate in KG, PPP, 1? - What are the barriers? - Opinion of PPP, PA	- What was education like before without PA? - Is it harder for Roma to participate in KG, PPP, 1? - What are the barriers? - Are there other solutions needed? - Opinion of PPP, PA	- What was education like before without PA? - Is it harder for Roma to participate in KG, PPP, 1? - What are the barriers? - Are other solutions needed? - Opinion of PPP, PA - How do these strategies fit with wider picture of IE? - Are PA sustainable?	- What was education like before without PA? - Is it harder for Roma to participate in KG, PPP, 1? - What are the barriers? - Are other solutions needed? - Opinion of PPP, PA	- What was education like before without PA? - Is it harder for Roma to participate in KG, PPP, 1? - What are the barriers? - are other solutions needed? - Opinion of PPP, PA - How do these strategies fit with wider picture of IE? - Are PA sustainable?
2. What are the main features of these strategies and roles of PA in each system?	- What kind of contact do you have with PA? - What is their main job (R/nR)? - What problems do they solve? Example? - Is the ethnicity of PA important?	- What kind of contact do you have with PA? - What is their main job (R/nR)? - What problems do they solve? Example? - What is your relationship with PA? - Is the ethnicity of PA important?	- What kind of contact do you have with PA? - What is their main job (R/nR)? - What problems do they solve? Example? - What is your relationship with PA? - Is the ethnicity of PA important?	- What kind of contact do you have with PA? - What is their main job (R/nR)? - What problems do they solve? Example? - What is your relationship with PA? - Is the ethnicity of PA important?	- What is your main role? (R/nR) - How do you spend a day/week? - What is an example of a problem you solve? - What is your relationship like with Teachers, Principals, LEA, Parents? - What challenges do you face? - Is the ethnicity of PA important?	- What is the role of the NGO regarding PA? - What kind of contact do you have with PA? - What is their main job (R/nR)? - What problems do they solve? Example? - What challenges do they face? - Is the ethnicity of PA important?

Research Questions	Parents	Teachers	Principals	LEA	Pedagogic Assistants	NGO
What evidence is there that PAs increase: a) Participation b) quality c) outcomes especially of Roma?	- Have you seen any change in school/KG? - In children: a) participation b) results Do you think the strategy is successful?	- Have you seen any change in school/KG? - In children: a) participation b) results - In parents? (R/nR)? - Do you think the strategy is successful?	- Have you seen any change in school/KG? - In children: a) participation b) results - In parents? (R/nR)? - In teachers? - In LEA? - Do you think the strategy is successful?	- Have you seen any change in school/KG? - In children: a) participation b) results - In teachers? - In Principals? - In MoE? - Do you think the strategy is successful?	- Have you seen any change in school/KG? - In children: a) participation b) results - In parents? (R/nR)? - In teachers? Principals? LEA? - Do you think the strategy is successful?	- Have you seen any change in school/KG? - In children: a) participation b) results - In parents? (R/nR)? - - In teachers? Principals? LEA? - Do you think the strategy is successful?
4. How do people involved experience PAs?	- How does your child react? - What would you like to see change?	- What is it like to work with a PA? - What would you like to see change?	- What is it like to work with a PA? - What would you like to see change?	- What is it like to have PA in the system? - What would you like to see change?	- How do children react to you? Parents? Teachers? Principals? - What changes would you like to see?	- What changes would you like to see?

Appendix 3: Analysis of an interview

Key points from this interview:

- Roma education is influenced by poverty and discrimination (intersectionality)
- NGO fills a gap (provides ECE services, capacity building of Roma individuals and NGOs, promotes cross-sectoral collaboration), and promotes Pedagogic Assistants professionally (professional rights, quality)
  - Difficult environment for them to assert themselves as many teachers are losing their jobs
  - Few opportunities for Roma to be hired in the education system aside from Pedagogic Assistant because of this
- Pedagogic Assistants training and role are focused on child, family, community (bonding)
  - Catalytic in promoting inclusive education, but can't replace teachers' responsibility
  - NGO Director is also a Pedagogic Assistant; he works at the planning level in his chool
  - Works to change teacher attitudes
- Sees impact on children and attendance
- Vision: Roma to be seen (visible) as all other children, appreciates the value of social inclusion
- Local Education Authority doesn't have capacity to take action; no one is taking responsibility
- Need: accountability, better inclusive methodology across the education system, funds

See analysis of interview below. Text that is called out is highlighted in yellow and analytic comments follow in BLUE. Q1 refers to research question 1; Q2 to research question 2 etc.. PA refers to Pedagogical Assistants.

English translation - Interview: Head of NGO in City A and Director of Association of Pedagogic Assistants 2015-05-28

Sarah: So I want to ask, my first question is what was education like before there were pedagogic assistants?

NGO Director: In the context of inclusive education, the inclusive education support approach, individual support to children, before introducing the new law, our system is rigid now, let alone back then. It was based on ==frontal teaching==, on average achievement of the group… So, average achievements, the individual achievements were disregarded, the focus was not on the child and the student, but it was on the group. The group, the class, the school, that's the way that achievements were measured which of course ==didn't leave much space for developing the potentials of the students, especially of students coming from different cultures and minorities==

Analysis: Inclusive Education Quality: Frontal Teaching

Sarah: Do you think it's harder for Roma to participate in preschools and in… what do you call it? Kindergarten and PPP and primary school?

NGO Director: ==Every research study, international and national confirm that, in the time before 2009 when the law on inclusive education was officially passed, Roma children were excluded from the education system, that they attended irregularly, and the idea of that approach was to help the most vulnerable groups, to make the educational system more accessible for them so they could finish their education==

Analysis: Q1: Why Pedagogic Assistants were introduced

Sarah: And what are the main barriers do you think, for Roma?

NGO Director: In an educational system… ==I mean, not only in education, but the main barrier is poverty. Then an insufficient support from the family and their lack of understanding of the importance of education. A poverty that is passed from generation to generation, so it produced a string of generations that come from that context, they didn't understand the importance of education. When it started, that long process, we cannot expect that it would get solved over night, it takes time, a long-term plan for 10-20 years so that generations who would bring the education level higher in Roma population would come. One of the important barriers also is discrimination, not only in education, but also through the==

accessibility of a lot of things in the field of social participation, employment, health services, all of those are significant barriers that make the Roma children stay on the margin, they don't want to be a part of the groups in the educational system and they are simply not recognized as an important part of the society

Analysis: Intersectionality – poverty and discrimination

Sarah: So I wanted to ask 2 questions, related to NGO, because you have 2 NGOs, so I'm curious what the main role of the NGO *vis-a-vis* the pedagogic assistants in the City A, that's the first question. And then I'll ask you about other NGOs (pedagogic assistant association), but let's say the NGO

NGO Director: Well you know, we are mostly present in the field of education in a way, I mean The NGO, and we have started really early on, in 2005-2006 and we managed to create our role as an important social factor and partner of the institutions, educational institutions and social institutions of this city as a service for the minority community, above all the Roma community in the sense that we develop different alternative support programs through our projects made for children in the educational system at the primary school, and when the inclusion of Roma children into the PPP started, we joined the programs quickly and actively and for the last 2 years we have been focusing on supporting children in the early development and education as one of the important parts of the children's development so they can complete their education on the highest level possible. That is our role during... Two years ago when we joined a program (...) regarding the development of the resources and capacities in the Roma NGO for access to the funding of the European Union, that's the Generation Facility project within the MtM program, that's where we focused the mission of our organization to... becoming a resource of the Center for capacity development of individuals, Roma individuals, Roma organizations so they can be empowered to contribute one day to solving some crucial questions for Roma community. And in that context, we have a segment that is not related to education. And the rest... And we managed somehow to get recognized, not only locally, we started building our capacities locally and partnerships locally, and after 8-9 years since foundation, we managed

to become a nationally recognized organization, especially in the field of early development and education, and we managed to be a support system for the community, wider community and to develop services like giving out service information to kids, students and parents regarding different needs, not only in the field of education, but also legal support, social support, health support and so on. So that is a kind of a wider…

Analysis: Q2: Role and features of the NGO as a cultural broker. Also bridging/bonding

Sarah: That's what NGO does. And regarding the pedagogic assistants, what does the NGO do exactly?

NGO Director: The NGO was founded by pedagogic assistants. Five pedagogic assistants from City A founded The NGO. Before we founded the Association. But they are on the national level. But yes, we widened our interest and that's why we focused on education, and thorough the Association last year, we want to become the partners of the Ministry and the national institutions for development and improvement of the quality of the pedagogic assistance and we want to put the status of the pedagogic assistants to a higher level as an educational profession that has an important role in the education system, in the area of student support in the context of inclusive approach.

Analysis: Q2: Role of the NGO as cultural broker

That's our mission as an organization and we want to protect our rights because a number of our colleagues are victims of discrimination on their jobs so we want to protect our rights somehow…

Analysis: Rights

Sarah: The job of pedagogic assistant in Serbia

NGO Director: Yeah, right, protect the job of pedagogical assistants, those are some of our… and to work on promoting an educational approach as a social value locally,

nationally, and to try to provide some resources in an environment like Serbia, like in the field of education where we unfortunately have little resources to solve some of the problems, to provide some resources for some initiatives and provide support to children from minority population, especially Roma children

Analysis: Q2: role of NGO as CB

Sarah: And regarding the pedagogic assistants, does The NGO also have a contract with the pedagogic assistants? Or their contracts are with the schools and…

NGO Director: Schools give contracts to pedagogical assistants, as job. No, we have…

Sarah: Do you have like with them for example for… If they do another project with you, like for example "Starting strong" or REF project or like this…

NGO Director: Yes, they have the contracts for working on projects that The NGO organizes, those are mostly author contracts that are related to doing work-shops with children, they are hired in that context and for those activates… Given that they already are working with the families, children, we find a correlation there. Because the wage of pedagogic assistants is really low, we are trying to provide them with a chance to earn some extra fees through project activities.

Analysis: Q4 – problems with PA role, mainly low salaries; Q2 – NGO involves PA in additional paid projects

Sarah: Would you like to see the contracts with the Ministry become permanent for pedagogic assistants? Or just continue yearly?

NGO Director: No, unfortunately we have a yearly contract, and that's a precedent in the law, any law in Serbia, that a pedagogic assistant can work only one year, as defined in the Education Bill. With a contract that gets renewed

Analysis: Q2: feature of the PA role

Sarah: Yeah, that can only be one year. Elena told me that's because the position is seen as temporary until inclusion is achieved and in the region, and yeah…

NGO Director: It's seen that way, but we have big social issues in Serbia, poverty is getting worse, there is no more money, a reduction of the number of employees in education is announced and a large number of our colleagues are afraid that… That's the Government plan for lowering the number of employees in the public sector, it's started officially a few days ago, it's announced for the educational sector only… there are 17000 redundant employees in the field of education. From September they can start. So we are not, for political reasons it won't affect the positions of pedagogic assistants, that's simply something that they can't mess with because we are… Europe has done it through their programs… And no political sides should remove it. But the pressure in the educational sector is big regarding our position because we are… And people just can't accept that the teachers are loosing their jobs, and… So that's a problem we are facing right now in the educational system and that's why we as an organization managed to create a network with the national stakeholders like SIPRU, like UNICEF, like the Ministry of Education, to work together on improving the quality of pedagogic assistance and establishing that profession, writing regulations, so that our position becomes more stable in the educational system so we don't find ourselves in a position that someone… a new Government that can come in 5-6 years simply announces that there's no need for that anymore, for that position

Analysis: Q2 – features of PA role; Q4 – perspective of PA about this position

Sarah: And what kind of training is officially for pedagogic assistants, like if you have a new 20 that come next year?

NGO Director: Well for example, what was set by law first… When we started in 2009 we had an obligation, 6 obligatory modules of training, plus 2 elective and within those modules were trainings for working with children from vulnerable groups, children with special needs, methodology, pedagogic methodology, methods of working in school, we had training related to communication, communication skills, that was also an important training, than a training for tolerance development, that's the "Not black or white" SIPRU training, so that's a set of trainings that should have developed skills and capacities of the assistants so

they can do their job well in the class by supporting the child, and their colleagues - teachers who conduct the inclusive educational program

Analysis: Q2 feature of PA role (training)

Sarah: And then, for the pedagogic assistant if you were to describe their job, how much of their time do you think is focused on the work in the school on academic, in classroom on academics, and how much do you think is focused on work within the field, with families, or linking with local authority, etc.?

NGO Director: It's in the law that everyone working in the educational system has 40 working hours a week and we have the obligation to spend 25 hours in class. Working directly with children. That's something we started through a CIP project. "For equal chances" project. Ten years ago. And that's a model that the Ministry used for the job description, and then the schools got some flexibility in organizing the work of assistants. Schools and preschools got some flexibility to adjust depending on the needs the amount of time that the assistant spends in class, with the families on the field, working with institutions, that's a really important component, they work with national institutions and that's an important factor because we… We come from the civil sector. Most of the assistants are in NGOs. They have the connection with… they have the connection to the civil organizations and that's the way to create a network of outside partners of schools and institutions, and to get some means for realization of some ideas, initiatives that are really important so the school can open to the local community. So besides the component of giving support in class, in planning educational activates with the staff, we have a component of direct cooperation with the family, and the component that has to do with cooperating with institutions, local institutions, European matters office, Center for social work, hospitals… All that plus or for example national institutions where we have contacts so we can apply for some funding, that's all a part of the job, but working in class is where we spend most of the time. In some communities the assistants have showed that they have good planning, organizing and managerial skills, so their principals let them contribute to the development of the quality of the institution. Because a lot of assistants have

higher education. They had a lot of training, and we have developed a lot of skills in different areas – management, organizational skills, so my role for example has shifted over time from focusing mostly on directly working with children to planning, creating plans, adequate plans of support for children.

Analysis: Q2 – job requirements, flexibility, role (students, family, community)

I think that's good because inclusion is not based on one person, the pedagogic assistant, but on the whole school staff, on professionals, teachers. My role is to empower them to create an adequate plan, to participate in classes, to help with individual support to children and they can continue doing that. Because there is one assistant working in a school. He can't do… There are a lot of children that need help. And if they would rely for support on the assistant only, we would have a problem. Naturally, the child won't progress if the assistant isn't there. But if they develop… that's how it's done. Teachers, plans are created in cooperation with them, we plan out a good support program.

Analysis: Inclusive Education – PAs play a critical role (Q2)

We analyze the abilities of the child and we build up on that in class. But they have to rely not only on the pedagogic assistant, but also on the teacher working with the child through individualization, which in my opinion gives results. And then it was imposed to me at my school that… And unfortunately I think that, I'm sorry I have to say, but a lot of my colleagues are not involved in organization, in management activities of the school. I create the yearly school plan, I work on really important documents, strategic documents, information systems in school, I'm a member of 5 teams – team for inclusion, team for violence prevention, self-evaluation team, a really important team that does the strategic planning, so that's the team that works on developing the whole thing, and creates instruments for self-evaluation of a school, conducts that whole process in the team and many more activates that are not listed in the job description – I work in the organization part because my principal recognized my abilities, my skills, that enable me to be someone who helps around the school. I think that's an additional value, because

that's good, that's the way that stereotypes and prejudice are being fought against, that a pedagogic assistant who is Roma is just someone who can go on field and work with the family to… To understand policies, 90% of my colleagues don't know what a national conference looks like, and I try to share with my colleagues what I learned when I get back from a conference like that

Sarah: And what do you think are the biggest challenges facing pedagogic assistants in your association?

NGO Director: That's the problem of the pressure of losing jobs. At least in the educational professions. A large number of teachers lose their jobs each year. And that creates a frustration towards us who are protected in the sense that we don't depend on the number of enrolled students, we don't have, we are not… Within the 40 working hours a week a teacher, especially a subject teacher usually has to work in two schools

Analysis: Q4 – perspective of PA and of teachers

Sarah: Oh, I see. Is that because the population is falling? So the teachers are worried about their jobs.

NGO Director: Yes, they see the problem in us, like we are protected, and our status is not regulated well enough and then… We feel the pressure and so the challenges are that we don't have stability, we don't have a generally organized achievement tracking system, quality of work tracking system. There's no such system even for teachers yet, let alone us, so we try to create our own mechanisms, instruments for evaluation of the quality of the work of pedagogic assistants so we can improve. We want to have a self-evaluation process, just like the school has one, so we can give our contribution and be recognized as a relevant, crucial part of the system.

Analysis: Q4 – perspective of PA and teachers

Sarah: Do you think that the fact that there are program assistant… pedagogic assistants means that if you are a Roma person, Roma nationality in Serbia, and you get a teaching certificate, than you are more likely to be hired as a pedagogic

assistant, which is irregular and pays less then you are likely to be hired as a teacher?

NGO Director: Well unfortunately, there are not a lot of Roma people with University degrees who could apply for positions in education, so that is a problem currently. Secondly, it's a problem that one can't enter the system, you can't become a pedagogic assistant that easily because the training is paid through a project, the state doesn't have the money to keep paying for it so, because that is a requirement, to go through 7 modules of training to become an assistant, it's a closed circle, without a possibility of letting anyone else in. The Association and the Ministry are planning on writing a project for the European Union to get funding for training. That is the only source we can find because the state can't provide enough money to hire more assistants. And we are really pressured by the schools that want pedagogic assistants and see their relevance.

Analysis: Q1/Q4 – demand for PA and lack of funds

They see that one person can help by supporting a student or a group of students in learning, but the reality of it is that we have no possibility of hiring more people. And so we again try to develop that through projects, to build it up until we can go through a year, year by year, step by step to increase the number of pedagogic assistants. Because pedagogic assistance is really the underground of quality of an institution, educational institution, a view of the cooperation between colleagues as an important factor, team work as really important, I don't know, that this cannot be based on an individual and his willingness to work or not, there has to be a team work and a team analysis of the problem and creating a support plan for the child. It should not depend on an individual, there should be a professional attitude towards inclusion and inclusive education. Then we have a really obstructive approach to inclusion from a big number of teachers.

Analysis: Context, Inclusive Education

Sarah: So at the heart of the research that I'm doing is also a very important question do you see changes in children, in their participation in school and

preschool or in their results like grades or other factors – their self-esteem, let's say hard results, hard outcomes, or grades or…

NGO Director: The most colorful one, that any of our colleagues can experience is that the child gets used to you and knows that in the morning in the classroom a pedagogic assistant is waiting for him, who is dedicated to him and has empathy for his needs, because when that child smiles and you can sense that it's important to him that you are there.

Analysis: Q3 - impact

What once happened to me 5 years ago, before the law, a parent, a non-Roma parent came to the principal asking to enroll his child into my class. He didn't know that I was a pedagogic assistant, he thought I was a teacher. And he wanted to enroll his child in my class. That was the biggest satisfaction for me and appreciation of my work because not only Roma children saw me as supportive, but all the kids in the class because I expressed so much empathy towards their needs that they understood that and the kids appreciate it most when they see…

Analysis: Q4 – personal story about job satisfaction

And of course that the attendance was higher because they felt that they had someone there who supported them and who understood their need, a kind of a social need. Continuously working with the family, directly with the family, insisting that the parent's obligations are fulfilled the right way and that the Roma parents understand the importance of education and we are really pressuring them nonstop and reminding them that kids have to be in the school and that we all work as a system and as individuals to help the family provide everything necessary for the child, but they have to give much more on their side so they can support their child through it.

Analysis: Q3 – impact – on family

Sarah: Do you think it has changed at all, the… How children succeed in school? If so, in what way?

NGO Director: Yes, regarding the achievements in a sense that… The outcome is that they somehow… expectations from the students, especially Roma students are higher now. Because they get, they feel a little more courageous now, they are motivated to answer questions, before they were withdrawn, they didn't have the… They weren't encouraged to speak up, answer questions, participate in class, and be active like they are when they have someone for support. I for example insisted with the teacher several times for the child to answer a question, so I prepare him for the class well enough so he can get a higher grade then before and advance as much as he can. We want to see the maximum of his capacities, we didn't want the expectations of the Roma students to stay much lower than they should, of course they never reach their full potential, but it's enough for them to reach an average level, so it can be…

Analysis: Q3 impact on students

That's sort of our mission, we want change the prejudice in our schools, we want to show that Roma students are just like all other students and they too have different abilities and we just have to recognize those abilities and support them in achieving their full potential

Analysis: Rights

Sarah: Mhm, and do you see any changes in the schools and kindergartens themselves? Like how teaching happens that way?

NGO Director: I think much better achievements because the sensitivity of the preschool teachers comparing to school teachers, especially subject teachers is much higher. Because the children are younger, the children that grow up with those people. The children get attached and they have more space to develop in that younger age when they have that stimulating environment and a supportive person who creates an atmosphere for that child to feel comfortable in that group, so it can rise above their average. So the achievements are better there, especially regarding accessibility. Some studies say that before 2007 the involvement of Roma children in PPP was really low, and then the programs of REF and USF have raised

that number significantly. For example in City A we have 90 percent of kids enrolled in PPP, we work on the issue of irregular attendance from time to time. Those times come when they don't have enough clothes, where there is poverty, so they don't attend regularly because they don't have… they are not dressed properly and not prepared enough to come to… that's something that's becoming an issue. We try to provide the necessary things so they can normally… Yes, I think that the achievement is a lot higher in the preschool. But I'm not sure if the quality of work in general, not just with Roma students in preschool is really good, the contents are inadequate

Analysis: Q3 – impact (attendance); Q2 – role of PA and NGO on eliminating barriers and raising awareness

Sarah: I… I agree, I mean… I think there's big financing, so the financing doesn't follow the needs of children, and with the… Generally with the ability off the system of education here to individualize, or to have a kind of quality education. If you want inclusion, you need individualization, and then you need teachers who can do that, and if the teachers can't do that, then the teaching assistant, and the parent, you know… They can, they also, it's like a…Not the whole picture you know. This is the whole thing, if the school doesn't have the money to buy extra books for the kids who don't have the books, whoever they are, and if the teachers can't individualize for a child, a Roma child, the child from Italy who comes and speaks Italian, or you know, whatever, then…

NGO Director: Very different problems on different levels, so…

Sarah: You see any changes in the local education authority, they were just here and…

NGO Director: Special authority, the school board? M. worked at the school board, Ministry of education. Educational advisor. But that's the school board, that's a Department of the national Ministry of Education. And a local one, which doesn't exist here, should be concerned with the quality. We don't have a person for that. We have a City board for social activities

Sarah: And R.? He is…

NGO Director: R. is a chief of the school board. For the Šumadija region, that's on the regional level. And on the local level, in City A, we have City boards that combine social activities and we don't have a person there whose job is specifically improvement of local policies

Sarah: Aha, so do you see any changes in the local education authority since pedagogic assistants come in, in terms of how they see the issue of Roma education, how they…

NGO Director: We managed somehow to impose the question of Roma into the agenda of the local authority and to start action plans for education, all of that is done so we can get funding for conducting some activities locally and we have been doing that since 2005, but the problem is we don't have the staff in the local authority that is sensitized enough and professional enough and that thinks about relevant referent policies - how to improve not only Roma education, but education in general. There is a position in the City, a member of City board for education, informing and culture, 3 areas. All 3 of those areas are covered by one man. And he was also a principal of a primary school. That's a political function that has little to do with what he thinks it should be, how the local education policy… he follows the political directions… So we never, none of the cities in Serbia have an internally built local policy, educational policy. The educational system in Serbia is open, flexible, every local authority can build their own policies and give support to their local school institutions, preschool institutions through subsidiary legislations, especially the preschool institutions because they are under the jurisdiction of the City so they can develop quality educational contents. But we don't have staff sensitized enough and with the adequate capacity because those are political functions. Politicians hold those positions

Analysis: Context - role of Local government and education authority – very weak

Sarah: Politicians, why is he a politician?

NGO Director: Yes, he was a principal of a primary school, he is a math teacher, he was an associate of CIP for a few years, a trainer, and he is empowered enough to understand the national policies and can understand what is necessary… What that is on the level of everyday school practice. But that is R's, his capacity because… and unfortunately we don't have people like that in the local authority in the city of City A. That's why we cooperate best with M and R

Sarah: No staff? What do you mean, there is no local staff for that…

NGO Director: We have one person for the areas of education, information and social policy

Sarah: Who is in charge of Roma or?

NGO Director: No, all. So no one wants to deal with education. Especially because the teacher, the curriculum, main things are dealt with on a national level. They don't understand that they have space to influence local policy through school boards, through other stuff. They do purely administrative work, they give support to our local authority, they give funding to schools, provide water, electricity, utilities, that's what they provide. They don't participate at all in creating programs, contents, and they don't understand that they can influence through school boards and local authority. Through the Parents council they can influence things that have to do with specific school policy. People don't understand that, they don't understand the flexibility and the possibilities of building a specific school policy, to recognize and analyze the school's situation, the environment it works in. for example the school "Treći kragujevački bataljon" where E. works has about a 100 Roma students. They have been failing to recognize for years, they have a problem with drop-out, they have a problem with irregular attendance. They have different social problems. And they fail to recognize their role in changing the situation so that the school becomes acceptable for Roma students, but they look for excuses in parents, that they didn't give them enough support… and they always look for excuses in the environmental factors, and they haven't tried developing an atmosphere inside the school that will be supportive for the environment. And they

have a problem of redundant employees. And they don't understand the connection, if they manage to keep the Roma students in the education system, they increase the number of students

Analysis: Context – schools and local government don't take responsibility

Sarah: So it's in the interest of teachers to keep Roma kids in classrooms? Aha

NGO Director: A lot of schools don't understand that, principals of schools, they don't understand the connection that if you want to live in an environment where there are Roma people, you have to find a way to make the school appealing to them. So it doesn't happen to you that in September when they send in… the yearly plans, a number of classes can downsize and you could lose teachers. And they don't put enough effort to increase the number of students so that they… to market, to make the contents better and adjust the program to the vulnerable population so that the children and parents, they should first of all include parents more and give them space to think of how can they… That's what's wrong with our system regarding the minority community, they think that the responsibility is on the parents, they shift the responsibility to the parents and they don't see the responsibility of the system for the policies, official policies. Why are the teams for drop-out prevention being developed on a national level? Then there's a team for social inclusion. We don't have the educational inclusion as a term any more, it's social inclusion instead, and the state has recognized that when we say educational inclusion people think that the educational system is the only system dealing with inclusion. And the people who work in the educational system.

Analysis: Lack of involvement of schools and local government

Then the term has changed and we got a team within the Ministry of education that is called social inclusion team. Why? They named it "social" so that people would understand the connection between the local educational and social institutions, that they have to cooperate so that the process of inclusion of children into the educational system and in the society in general is done the right way. Inclusion is not meant to be done only in the school, all social institutions should do it, the City

is thinking about a social inclusive approach, about the policy that should influence connecting of all of the local stakeholders.

Analysis: Inclusive education, social inclusion

And from my experience, because I'm involved in all of those processes, the teachers, schools, principals, don't see how important that connection is. The social institutions fail to recognize it too. The hospitals also don't see their role in that. They have special education teachers that can solve some of the problems of certain groups. And they fail to see that everyone can contribute from their own professional perspective to solve a problem of a child and a family.

Sarah: What would you like to see change for the pedagogic assistant position?

NGO Director: What would I like to see change? First of all, I would like our positions to become permanent job positions so we can avoid the pressure at the beginning of every year… a lot depends on the principal. I have mediated as a representative of the Association in solving a problem for one colleague that lost her job. She worked at a preschool. While she was pregnant and had a baby and was on the maternity leave, she lost her job. That's… And it happened a few times to me that the principals asked me how to hire a teacher instead of a pedagogic assistant. That's a huge amount of pressure. You know that the contracts for pedagogic assistants expire every 31st of August, and you know that every September there's a job competition which is usually open just formally. And they should hire you again. But if someone shows up, and anybody can apply, the principal can think of a way to hire someone else, he can say that the pedagogic assistant disregarded different job obligations, that the disciplinary process has been started…

Analysis: Vision for future; Q2 role/conditions of PA

Sarah: Yeah, you don't have any social protection. And do you have any benefits? Like does the time (…) towards your pension or…

NGO Director: Yes, yearly, that's true, but we don't have the right to take bank loans because of the yearly contracts. That means that we can never be equal in the system because every year the tables turn and everybody depends on the principals. The principal makes the decision

Analysis: Q2 - Conditions for PA

Sarah: Could you get your kids into kindergarten?

NGO Director: It's not a problem for us. You mean Roma children?

Sarah: No, this is a different question. So pretend that you had a child who is 3 years old and you want them to go to a kindergarten in City A. And you're a teaching assistant, a pedagogic assistant, and you have a job that has a contract by the year. Is that enough proof?

NGO Director: Yes, yes, yes. That's not a problem because there is even a regulation of the Ministry of Education on a national level that says that the kindergartens have to keep a certain number of spots for children from minority groups or vulnerable groups, even if their parents are not working. But that is on stand-by because… And we use that, we know that information and we use it to help some families, we mediate as an organization to get their children enrolled in… So they can be in the daycare and have continuance

Sarah: Ok, in addition to pedagogic assistants, what other solution do you think are needed to support Roma children in education?

NGO Director: In education system, right? I think that the staff should be changed first of all

Sarah: There are attitudes, yeah? Of teachers you mean, and principals?

NGO Director: That's really… Today we talked about the Fund, when we talked about what are we going to talk about in the conference and we mentioned how important it is for the people who work in schools to do their jobs professionally. To put the professionalism in front of the child and not mind… They have to see the

differences between the children. They have to notice that the child comes from a different cultural, social environment and support them as an individual based on that. And they should understand that it's their job to secure a certain level of quality in the class, with or without a pedagogic assistant. The context is like that, we don't have the means to hire, it would be good if every school had not one, but ten pedagogic assistants, but it doesn't. So we must not cry about it and say that we don't have pedagogic assistants so we won't deal with inclusive education. The number of children with very specific disabilities is rising everywhere. So they have to be prepared that an autistic child will come to their class, or a child with Down syndrome, disabilities, some complex disabilities that can be really difficult. And a special education teacher can't help you there, no one can, but you can help yourself by thinking about it and observing the child, identifying what social skills are important for him, but not in the cases when children have lower mental abilities and they can't, the assessment is that they can't make progress in that field. But he can be recognized for his social skills in his environment, children can accept him, so he doesn't spend his life in his room at home, but spend time with his peers. They can't seem to recognize the difference between the inclusion of… I said one time in a public speech that unfortunately I have an impression that people are unable to see things through the eyes of the parents of those children. Because if they would look at things that way, if they had a child of their own which they love and would give anything in the world just so that the child can be a part of a peer group, they would realize how important it is for the inclusion to be a widely accepted social value. It shouldn't be a matter of personal preference. Especially regarding Roma children, Roma children are like creatures from a different planet for them in the sense that… They don't see what they can achieve, they only say that the parents don't have some basic skills developed because of the families they come from. But every system is a disciplinary and educational system. it Influences the education and the discipline of the child, especially of the younger children. We can influence the child even if it doesn't have the appropriate support in his family, we can help him develop some skills and help the child grow as well as the family. I think that's a matter of perception, instead of complaining they need specialists for solving problems, they should try to think of a way to help the child, focus on the

child's needs and stop thinking of the curriculum that is imposed from the top. They should see it as flexible and realize that it can lead them to satisfying the needs of the environment and community they are working in. They should create an acceptable atmosphere for every child that enters the class. Even if it's a child coming from a different culture background, social environment, a child who doesn't speak the language, a child from abroad, I don't know, a child that never heard Serbian language and the poor child will sit in the back of the class and not understand a word. They will just nod, and not make a real effort to find a way, there's a network of outside associates they could ask for help. Everything is already there, but the point is in the way that a school perceives the possibility of cooperation. I once recognized that a student had dyslexia, she didn't pronounce the letters properly. And the teacher couldn't be bothered with that, she was indifferent if the child would learn or not. I took the child to a speech therapist myself and then I told the teacher "It would be good if you practiced this, those exercises, so that her speech would develop properly. The child is still young enough, it can be resolved". And I think that's really… If someone chooses teaching as a profession, he is aware that he is going to work with children and… Imagine standing in front of someone who perceives you as his role model, a person that shows the way in life. So if you don't have that kind of an attitude towards the child… that you really open horizons for the child, especially for the one that comes from a vulnerable group, that is not in an equal position with the child who has the support of his family and parents, I think it's the biggest satisfaction a teacher can get, when you get a child like that back in track. That's real success for me. It's not success having a good grade average in the class, and helping the ones that are doing fine to get even better and having a class with a grade average of 4.5 and brag about that class. No, success is when we have 2 students, or even one student with whom we have started from the bottom and got to a level that's maybe not the highest possible, but it is the best that that child can do. That's what I think success is, and everyone who perceives inclusive education the right way shares that opinion. That would raise the quality. And it should be a puzzle from this teacher to that one, from this parent to school policy for all children. Quality of education.

Analysis: Lack of understanding and attitudes for inclusive education; poor methodology in schools; Q4 perspective of PA

Sarah: Thank you!

NGO Director: Thank you!

Analysis: Lack of understanding and attitudes for inclusive education; poor methodology in schools; Q4 perspective of PA

Appendix 4: Analysis of Data (City A)

Cultural Brokers: Summary of Key Data (City A)

Country: City	Data/idea	Source: interview (i), focus group (fg), observation (o), notes (n), conference	Date	Q1: Why were CB strategies introduced?	Q2: What are the main features/roles of CB?	Q3: Evidence it increases participation, quality?	Q4: How do those involved perceive impact	Context	Bridging bonding	Bronfenbrenner system	Intersectionality	future hopes	IE quality accountability	Rights	Methodology
Serbia: City A	Roma education heavily influenced by poverty (passed generation to generation) and discrimination (also in health, social participation, employment); will take 10-20 years to change	i - NGO Director	28.05.2015					c			i	f			
Serbia: City A	Romanipen fills a gap - providing cross-sectoral collaboration (main areas of work are ECE/Ed, Roma CB, Cross sectoral); Roma Ped Association promotes a profession (protects prof rights, quality thru self assessment); also Romanipen supplements RPA salary with project work; network with national stakeholders	i - NGO Director	28.05.2015		Q2				BB	system				R	
Serbia: City A	Hard for RPAs in environment where teachers are losing jobs, few opportunities for RPAs to be hired into the system	i - NGO Director	28.05.2015				Q4	c		system		f			
Serbia: City A	RPA TT topics and role: child, family, community; 'neither black nor white', communication	i - NGO Director	28.05.2015		Q2					system					
Serbia: City A	RPA are catalytic in IE, BUT can't replace teacher's responsibility	i - NGO Director	28.05.2015		Q2								IE		
Serbia: City A	Boze works at planning level in his school	i - NGO Director	28.05.2015		Q2										
Serbia: City A	RPA change teacher attitudes, children's attendance (90% in PPP)	i - NGO Director	28.05.2015			Q3									
Serbia: City A	Vision: Roma need to be seen (visible) as other children and be encouraged to develop to full potential; society needs to appreciate the value of social inclusion	i - NGO Director	28.05.2015						BB			f		R	
Serbia: City A	LA doesn't have capacity to take action, noone is taking responsibility (neither school nor LA); shift responsibility to parents, cite environmental factors	i - NGO Director	28.05.2015							system			IE		
Serbia: City A	Need: accountability, more $, better methodology to make IE work	i - NGO Director	28.05.2015					c					IE		
Serbia: City A	RPA spend 25 hours in classroom, flexibility in tasks, many on violence prevention teams	i - NGO Director	28.05.2015		Q2									R	
Serbia: City A	Biggest satisfaction when a non-Roma parent wanted his child in Boze's class - thought he was a teacher	i - NGO Director	28.05.2015					c	BB						
Serbia: City A	Would like RPA positions to be permanent (can't take bank loans), KG access, change attitutes/quality of teaching	i - NGO Director	28.05.2015												
Serbia: City A	examples of discrimination: Roma in PPP vs. KG (4	fg - RPA	27.05.2015					c		system				R	

Country: City	Data/idea	Source: interview (i), focus group (fg), observation (o), notes (n), conference	Date	Q1: Why were CB strategies introduced?	Q2: What are the main features/roles of CB?	Q3: Evidence it increases participation, quality?	Q4: How do those involved perceive impact	Context	Bridging bonding	Bronfenbrenner system	Intersectionality	future hopes	IE quality accountability	Rights	Methodology
	of 1700), there are invisible children in eyes of policy makers (without docs); system doesn't recognize need to include them														
Serbia: City A	Migration - there are more kids not in school; 30 of 130 families in one project migrated to EU	fg - RPA	27.05.2015					c							
Serbia: City A	waves of RPA - CIP started in 2002 in Nis/Krag with 18 RPA including Emina and Boze; 2005 another project; 2007 another intake; 2009 RPA changed to PA, now around 180 (165 in association) 1 finished univ; around 40 in KG	fg - RPA	27.05.2015	Q1				c							
Serbia: City A	Some PA didn't work out	fg - RPA	27.05.2015				Q4								
Serbia: City A	Before being PA those in Krag. Were sellers, activitist (univ. degree), reporter, found identity thru Romanipen	fg - RPA	27.05.2015				Q4								
Serbia: City A	RPA entered field because part of a democratic movement (active political inclusion of Roma), love of children, response to discrimination, a real job open to Roma with education	fg - RPA	27.05.2015				Q4	c						R	
Serbia: City A	KG RPA spends more time in field than primary RPAs; he's paid by municipality rather than school (paid by MoE)	fg - RPA	27.05.2015		Q2										
Serbia: City A	RPA need to change t. and p. attitudes (show teachers how parents live; raise expectations for children; protect children ('a gypsy telling a teacher…')	fg - RPA	27.05.2015		Q2		Q4								
Serbia: City A	RPA interact with foster/social services, members of safety teams, work also with SEN children, non-Roma ask for help	fg - RPA	27.05.2015		Q2		Q4			system					
Serbia: City A	Bane - focuses in preschool on socialization early in the year, then, later, on families	fg - RPA	27.05.2015		Q2										
Serbia: City A	NGO unites and helps RPA coordinate	fg - RPA	27.05.2015				Q4			system					
Serbia: City A	Serbian reform was a waste of $, not enough participation of Roma	fg - RPA	27.05.2015					c					IE		
Serbia: City A	Boze and Emina are leaders	fg - RPA	27.05.2015				Q4	c							
Serbia: City A	There are improvements (cumulative) over time in Roma education - all children in PPP, better material support, better scores, more finish primary and enrol in secondary, need career planning, better methodology and TT, need to integrate Roma culture better into curriculum	fg - RPA	27.05.2015			Q3							IE		
Serbia: City A	RPA are role models for other kids (story of present for Elmina)	fg - RPA	27.05.2015		Q2		Q4								
Serbia: City A	RPA - a challenge not to judge parents; harder to work with subject teachers	fg - RPA	27.05.2015				Q4								
Serbia: City A	City A as a particularly democratic city, leader in Serbia, also of Roma movements	fg - RPA	27.05.2015					c							

Country: City	Data/idea	Source: interview (i), focus group (fg), observation (o), notes (n), conference	Date	Q1: Why were CB strategies introduced?	Q2: What are the main features/roles of CB?	Q3: Evidence it increases participation, quality?	Q4: How do those involved perceive impact	Context	Bridging bonding	Bronfenbrenner system	Intersectionality	future hopes	IE quality accountability	Rights	Methodology
Serbia: City A	RPA works with 4 Roma children 1 SEN; substitute teacher now and then; in field 1@week; centre for social work; Romanipen office	fg - RPA	27.05.2015		Q2		Q4			system			IE		
Serbia: City A	migration - many kids enrolled, don't come to school; then if don't take exams when back in 3-4 months, behind one year	fg - RPA	27.05.2015					c		system	i			R	
Serbia: City A	the worst people get the best positions (political). There is no space for young leaders and women in politics	fg - RPA	27.05.2015					c							
Serbia: City A	future: need permanent PA position, IT/multi-media	fg - RPA	27.05.2015									f			
Serbia: City A	Romanipen has 3 rooms in a ground floor shop under a set of apartments near a Roma settlement; hosts a number of projects (MtM, REF Toy Liberary, OSF/CIP Starting Strong, Roma PA Association)	n	25.05.2015		Q2					system					
Serbia: City A	Preschool fees used to be 12000 RSD@month now 2700-3000; trying to get up to 20 Roma into preschool (from 4)	n	25.05.2015	Q1				c							
Serbia: City A	Visit to Korman: winging it with methodology - interviewed individual parents in the settlement as they requested, rather than through focus group	n	26.05.2015												M
Serbia: City A	RPA is present during interviews with parents - might influence responses; might be essential for trust	n	26.05.2015												M
Serbia: City A	rural schools are very poor - need wood stoves as back-up; the most rural one doesn't have running water or toilet in the building	n	27.05.2015					c		system					
Serbia: City A	RPA has her own office and has created a celebration of Roma day and Roma history week	n	27.05.2015				Q4		BB					R	
Serbia: City A	Stuck in a 5th grade classroom for observations! Only had a fleeting chance to visit PPP, to give a toy and introduce it.	n	27.05.2015												M
Serbia: City A	Roma foster child who is way behind has an IEP and support from teachers, principal, RPA and students	n	27.05.2015				Q4						IE		
Serbia: City A	Teachers support IE, but have different perspectives on potential of Roma child who is very behind and whether the system will facilitate her recovery	n	27.05.2015										IE		
Serbia: City A	Translator in City A is not so strong	n	28.05.2015												M
Serbia: City A	officially there are 1,147 Roma in KG of 179,437; unofficially 10,000 of which 8,000 housed, integrated with fewer children; and 2,000 refugees largely from Kosovo who are mobile	n	28.05.2015					c			i				
Serbia: City A	1-2 incidents @ year of discrimination; but there is hidden discrimination	n	28.05.2015					c						R	

Country: City	Data/idea	Source: interview (i), focus group (fg), observation (o), notes (n), conference	Date	Q1: Why were CB strategies introduced?	Q2: What are the main features/roles of CB?	Q3: Evidence it increases participation, quality?	Q4: How do those involved perceive impact	Context	Bridging bonding	Bronfenbrenner system	Intersectionality	future hopes	IE quality accountability	Rights	Methodology
Serbia: City A	RPAs are active all the time - meeting parents here and there to resolve problems, pick up applications, submit them	n	28.05.2015		Q2		Q4								
Serbia: City A	IE policies are good - PPP, PA, IE - but no help to implement them	n	29.05.2015										IE		
Serbia: City A	Teacher worries talented young Roma girl won't make it past 8th grade - noone to look after her, has too many responsibilities	n	29.05.2015				Q4	c			i				
Serbia: City A	RPA (Emina) writes reports for the principal and corresponds regularly with social services; school inspector praised these	n	29.05.2015		Q2		Q4			system					
Serbia: City A	RPA responsible for 100-110 children who attend school; at any one time 50-55 don't attend regularly (1/2 abroad, half don't attend)	n	29.05.2015		Q2			c							
Serbia: City A	social services don't care about these children (RPA)	n	29.05.2015					c		system					
Serbia: City A	RPA faces discrimination at work (Emina) - puts principal on notice (references to 'gypsies' at staff meetings)	n	29.05.2015				Q4							R	
Serbia: City A	RPA (Emina) ilked best running 2 hour preschool for Starting Strong project	n	29.05.2015					c	BB	system					
Serbia: City A	Emina organized donations of books and provides these on loan to children; should be govl't responsibilities	n	29.05.2015		Q2		Q4			system	i		IE		
Serbia: City A	bus station was closed when arrived (noone had paid electric bill) and open when I left	n	29.05.2015					c							
Serbia: City A	Problems that arose with IE all week: lack of premises for PPP (overcrowded); mixed perspectives that preschools were in charge of PPP; lack of TT on IE; low inconsistent salary of RPA; need more RPA; no financing reform	n	29.05.2015					c		system			IE		
Serbia: City A	Barriers to attending KG (parents): too far, requires clothes, no regular employment (ineligible)	fg - Roma parents	25.05.2015					c		system	i		IE		
Serbia: City A	Parents think the RPA is better than the teacher at Korman, who doesn't show up on time; RPA is more reliable and more respected	fg - Roma parents	25.05.2015				Q4								
Serbia: City A	Kids were surprised there was a Roma person in the school	fg - Roma parents	25.05.2015				Q4		BB						
Serbia: City A	RPA helped parents get clothes, shoes, mother's literacy groups	fg - Roma parents	25.05.2015		Q2		Q4						IE		
Serbia: City A	Families speak Serbian at home with their kids, Romanes amongst adults	fg - Roma parents	25.05.2015					c	BB						
Serbia: City A	Parents attach importance to ethnicity of RPA	fg - Roma parents	25.05.2015				Q4		BB						
Serbia: City A	Parents keen to advocate for a better school: running water, toilets indoors, heat/wood	fg - Roma parents	25.05.2015					c			i				

Country: City	Data/idea	Source: interview (i), focus group (fg), observation (o), notes (n), conference	Date	Q1: Why were CB strategies introduced?	Q2: What are the main features/roles of CB?	Q3: Evidence it increases participation, quality?	Q4: How do those involved perceive impact	Context	Bridging bonding	Bronfenbrenner system	Intersectionality	future hopes	IE quality accountability	Rights	Methodology
Serbia: City A	Parents belive Romanipen should advocate for transport, renovation of Korman, food for kids	fg - Roma parents	25.05.2015				Q4			system					
Serbia: City A	LEA in Krag = Krag + 6 municipalities (7 total); scope of work is ped supervision, counseling, supporting schools. 64 primary schools, 19 high schools, around 70 in total as some primary are also high schools. Every local authority has a preschool except Krag which has 2; preschools linked to LEA more than primary or high schools; 25000 students	i - 2 LEA: M and R	28.05.2015					c							
Serbia: City A	would like zero year to be in primary in future	i - 2 LEA: M and R	28.05.2015					c		system					
Serbia: City A	NGOs have more data (precious data) on ethnicity and special needs, as MoE/LEA don't collect this; LEA doesn't have data on which children are old enough to start school, which have started, which haven't, which never start or drop out; migration complicates this	i - 2 LEA: M and R	28.05.2015				Q4	c		system			IE		
Serbia: City A	Method of reform of education was down to up from pilot programs; first phase = projects (esp. CIP), unconnected, then more connected up, then made into law and regulations	i - 2 LEA: M and R	28.05.2015	Q1						system					
Serbia: City A	Krag. LEA has unusual excellent cooperation with NGOs and people to support IE, especially because teacher doesn't have prof. competency; NGOs are serious partners (sorted out, selected best);	i - 2 LEA: M and R	28.05.2015				Q4			system			IE		
Serbia: City A	LEA has wanted, but not been able, to form a regional level network with NGOs	i - 2 LEA: M and R	28.05.2015					c		system					
Serbia: City A	5 RPA in Krag - 4 in schools, 1 in preschool, give immediate support in classroom; problems in each school are different (one has transport problems; another has social problems/living conditions; a third they don't declare selves Roma); different circumstances influence role of RPAs, a complex job; they are on their own.	i - 2 LEA: M and R	28.05.2015		Q2			c							
Serbia: City A	RPAs overcome formalism of education system; also interested in family life - life outside of schools, schools are still 'closed up in their own world' and don't recognize enough RPA as resource	i - 2 LEA: M and R	28.05.2015		Q2					system					
Serbia: City A	Teachers have less competencies than RPA (Elmina) in pedagogic sense - applauds reports from Elmina; useful for teachers; the school expects Elmina to solve problems, never get involved.	i - 2 LEA: M and R	28.05.2015				Q4						IE		
Serbia: City A	Role is 2/3 school, 1/3 family (according to LEA); they have multiple jobs in school; also with SEN;	i - 2 LEA: M and R	28.05.2015		Q2								IE		

Country: City	Data/idea	Source: interview (i), focus group (fg), observation (o), notes (n), conference	Date	Q1: Why were CB strategies introduced?	Q2: What are the main features/roles of CB?	Q3: Evidence it increases participation, quality?	Q4: How do those involved perceive impact	Context	Bridging bonding	Bronfenbrenner system	Intersectionality	future hopes	IE quality accountability	Rights	Methodology
Serbia: City A	RPA interact with social services system	i - 2 LEA: M and R	28.05.2015		Q2					system	i				
Serbia: City A	Migration - one settlement in Krag - families seek asylum in EU then come back with education gap	i - 2 LEA: M and R	28.05.2015					c			i				
Serbia: City A	No longer situations where Roma are referred to special schools - it wasn't a big practice and now doesn't exist; inter committee; affirmative actions related to enrolment in high school - nursing grammar, vocational;	i - 2 LEA: M and R	28.05.2015											R	
Serbia: City A	More continuity (preschool - school)	i - 2 LEA: M and R	28.05.2015					c		system					
Serbia: City A	3 level system: MoE legal frame, regulations, finance, support/evaluation; LEA regional; school	i - 2 LEA: M and R	28.05.2015					c		system					
Serbia: City A	Finland has praised Serbia's IE law, but implementation is a challenge	i - 2 LEA: M and R	28.05.2015					c					IE		
Serbia: City A	RPA contribute to quality of schools (external evaluation shows this)	i - 2 LEA: M and R	28.05.2015			Q3									
Serbia: City A	MoE hasn't resolved permanently role of RPA	i - 2 LEA: M and R	28.05.2015	Q1											
Serbia: City A	reform hasn't gone always at the same pace; ed policy isn't stable; at one moment focus is on pedagogy, then data, then admin	i - 2 LEA: M and R	28.05.2015	Q1				c		system			IE		
Serbia: City A	LEA doesn't have a service to work with school development. LEA needs to define outcomes and goals; school depends more on State than LEA; school board elected, but principal is appointed; LEA needs to play a bigger role - they don't change as much as central MoE, but MoE fails to see its possibilities	i - 2 LEA: M and R	28.05.2015					c		system					
Serbia: City A	Need more RPA - one per school at least; need to see IE as relevant for every child, not just those with a medical certificate; notes that 20% of children in Finland are SEN	i - 2 LEA: M and R	28.05.2015				Q4					f	IE		
Serbia: City A	Need for more cooperation - committees provide that; need cooperation of RPA and teacher, which doesn't always happen	i - 2 LEA: M and R	28.05.2015				Q4					f			
Serbia: City A	Impact of IE law locally: only some things have changed, imposed top down, wasn't well prepared and led to problems, classes too big to accommodate kids esp with SEN - supposed to be 25, but actually 28-35; no ramps	I - J IE advisor KG	28.05.2015					c					IE		
Serbia: City A	SEN children and Roma ethnicity aren't always acknowledged by parents who enrol children; many families are disorganized	I - J IE advisor KG	28.05.2015					c					IE		
Serbia: City A	Prejudice related to Roma, need to empower parents	I - J IE advisor KG	28.05.2015									R			

Country: City	Data/idea	Source: interview (i), focus group (fg), observation (o), notes (n), conference	Date	Q1: Why were CB strategies introduced?	Q2: What are the main features/roles of CB?	Q3: Evidence it increases participation, quality?	Q4: How do those involved perceive impact	Context	Bridging bonding	Bronfenbrenner system	Intersectionality	future hopes	IE quality accountability	Rights	Methodology
Serbia: City A	Over time more Roma in ed - 40-60 chidren now in PPP, 25 years ago finishing primary was hard, now more finish high school and college	I - J IE advisor KG	28.05.2015			Q3									
Serbia: City A	Extreme poverty, SES are the main problem and not only for Roma children	I - J IE advisor KG	28.05.2015					c			i				
Serbia: City A	Preschool has 4500 children 6 months to 7 years, now in 2 institutions (36 buildings, 16 KG); about 1000 in PPP. There is a full day program (parents pay second half of day) and PPP; children start at age of 5 if born in Jan or February.	I - J IE advisor KG	28.05.2015					c							
Serbia: City A	Thinks PPP should be in schools; all children should start at 5, would adapt more to teachers; Bane, too, as they lose track of children in the transition between PPP to school	I - J IE advisor KG	28.05.2015				Q4	c		system					
Serbia: City A	Need more PA for disabilities and for Roma, anyone can be RPA, not enough to even look at every child; we have to joke here because we can't solve even 5% of the problems	I - J IE advisor KG	28.05.2015				Q4						IE		
Serbia: City A	Problem of 2 KG and 1 Bane….	I - J IE advisor KG	28.05.2015				Q4			system					
Serbia: City A	PPP should be a permanent part of the system	I - J IE advisor KG	28.05.2015	Q1						system			IE		
Serbia: City A	We piloted and landed nowhere' - there aren't enough PA	I - J IE advisor KG	28.05.2015	Q1			Q4								
Serbia: City A	60 kids in PPP, 1/3 will be in high school, some go abroad, some drop out. Lose about 30% of kids between 5-7th grades.	I - J IE advisor KG	28.05.2015			Q3									
Serbia: City A	Some SEN children are invisible to the system	I - J IE advisor KG	28.05.2015					c					IE		
Serbia: City A	Ped and Bane talk 2 x week, go to field, great cooperation, exchange information all the time	I - J IE advisor KG	28.05.2015		Q2		Q4								
Serbia: City A	Majority of families are on record at Center for Social work, receive social welfare	I - J IE advisor KG	28.05.2015					c		system	i				
Serbia: City A	Bane spends more time in field; works like a visiting nurse	I - J IE advisor KG	28.05.2015		Q2										
Serbia: City A	Have to try to put SEN kids with teachers that can help them; make IEP with inter-disciplinary committee, when child goes from PPP or preschool to school IEP goes to the school pedagogue and psychologist	I - J IE advisor KG	28.05.2015										IE		
Serbia: City A	Made a really good network, considering they have no support, but can't manage to get to everyone; created own protocol for things	I - J IE advisor KG	28.05.2015					c		system			IE		
Serbia: City A	Teachers aren't sensitized, they don't know how to individualise; also parents aren't sensitized	I - J IE advisor KG	28.05.2015					c					IE		
Serbia: City A	Need to empower parents, just one Bane isn't enough; parents call him all the time; Bane calls Ped	I - J IE advisor KG	28.05.2015				Q4								

Country: City	Data/idea	Source: interview (i), focus group (fg), observation (o), notes (n), conference	Date	Q1: Why were CB strategies introduced?	Q2: What are the main features/roles of CB?	Q3: Evidence it increases participation, quality?	Q4: How do those involved perceive impact	Context	Bridging bonding	Bronfenbrenner system	Intersectionality	future hopes	IE quality accountability	Rights	Methodology
Serbia: City A	Want to work with kids before PPP, include them in nursery (5 or 6 many more are interested), but there is no money set aside for this. Supposed to be a priority. If it were possible for them to enrol, they would learn how to use toilet paper, wash hands, have 3 meals, socialise	I - J IE advisor KG	28.05.2015					c				f			
Serbia: City A	Work with parents in workshops and parent/teacher meetings	I - J IE advisor KG	28.05.2015		Q2			c							
Serbia: City A	Living hell' when a group of IDPs come and live in a carton city (migration)	I - J IE advisor KG	28.05.2015								i				
Serbia: City A	cost is 30 EUR (3500 - 4000 per day) now at lowest level and 7/7000 hightest; used to be 100 EUR; both parents have to work for child to be enroled	I - J IE advisor KG	28.05.2015					c							
Serbia: City A	show fantastico! The Ministry!' 'Do they blindly follow every order from Belgrade or do they have a possibility of doing something on their own? They claim that they have some autonomy on the local level, but they everything by default.	I - J IE advisor KG	28.05.2015				Q4			system					
Serbia: City A	I think we have highly educated and skilled staff, mainly colleagues pedagogues, psychologists, sociologists, social workers, but we are in this crowd completely; we are really invisible because the politics are more important here than the emotion. And I'm really tired. I'm tired of 'that's not possibel, you know we have no money, you know that...' Projects are good, but what after the project, a pilot can only start something.	I - J IE advisor KG	28.05.2015				Q4						IE		
Serbia: City A	Financing is the problem now. Everything stays in Belgrade in most cases; and that's why we don't like Belgrade. Krag was the first democratic city and Nis and that's why they got the first RPA.	I - J IE advisor KG	28.05.2015	Q1				c		system					
Serbia: City A	Rural school in Krag: 5 buildings, 240 students, >5 preschoolers require pre-K teacher; don't have data on number of kids participating in KG before PPP	I - S, primary princ	29.05.2015					c							
Serbia: City A	Roma children - have illiterate parents, some with special needs, don't work, poverty, violent environments, parent pressure to get married	I - S, primary princ	29.05.2015					c			i				
Serbia: City A	RPA for 5 years, relationship is 'full of empathy from the beginning'; fought prejudice from the beginning - did plays to explain to the kids; workshop big with parents/teachers about fighting prejudice; people (non-Roma parents) were looking at PA with suspicion; principal did this as a result of 2 x 3 day seminars for RPA schools; fought for an RPA	I - S, primary princ	29.05.2015				Q4		BB					R	

Country: City	Data/idea	Source: interview (i), focus group (fg), observation (o), notes (n), conference	Date	Q1: Why were CB strategies introduced?	Q2: What are the main features/roles of CB?	Q3: Evidence it increases participation, quality?	Q4: How do those involved perceive impact	Context	Bridging bonding	Bronfenbrenner system	Intersectionality	future hopes	IE quality accountability	Rights	Methodology
Serbia: City A	RPA communicates with parents, technical details; principal deals with center for social work; RPA is a bigger job than personal assistant; 1/3 of time on field	I - S, primary princ	29.05.2015		Q2										
Serbia: City A	Krag PPP 46 students in 1 preschool institution; 6 in the other	I - S, primary princ	29.05.2015					c							
Serbia: City A	non-Roma with college degrees interested in RPA position; need Romanes	I - S, primary princ	29.05.2015				Q4								
Serbia: City A	IE with SEN, noone wants to be a personal assistant because of low salary and parents end up paying;	I - S, primary princ	29.05.2015										IE		
Serbia: City A	RPA (Tanja) supports children that might otherwise drop out of school; less absent when someone works with them, better grades; communication with foster families; they are close to her and they open up to her; also influences personal hygiene, bathing, washing hands, lice removal; celebrated Roma Day	I - S, primary princ	29.05.2015		Q2										
Serbia: City A	Parents are satisfied, never had a complaint from a parent; teachers rely on Tanja more especially to work with children who have slow progress; Tanja is closer with the children, younger, different.	I - S, primary princ	29.05.2015				Q4								
Serbia: City A	Atmosphere in the school is open, pleasant kind; we built that for years; work is taken seriously but without pressure	I - S, primary princ	29.05.2015					c							
Serbia: City A	LEA understand, but provide no support at all because of financial situation of the city; only get salaries from MoE and sometimes a seminar; Ministry is doing a project of free books; teachers were great and gathered all documentation; Tanja helped; 50 or 100% financing; about 1/3 in rural school get free books.	I - S, primary princ	29.05.2015							system	i		IE		
Serbia: City A	school has a social map, knows every child/family, but there's no money.	I - S, primary princ	29.05.2015					c		system					
Serbia: City A	Has some money from Roma organization for books, renovations	I - S, primary princ	29.05.2015		Q2					system					
Serbia: City A	Not enough seminars on working with SEN, gifted, Roma	I - S, primary princ	29.05.2015										IE		
Serbia: City A	Would like to see more work done with Roma families; parents understand importance of education	I - S, primary princ	29.05.2015									f			
Serbia: City A	Mario - smart child from 'carton city' wants to enroll in baker course, 'because they always have food'	I - S, primary princ	29.05.2015								i				
Serbia: City A	Need mentor for high school	I - S, primary princ	29.05.2015									f			

Country: City	Data/idea	Source: interview (i), focus group (fg), observation (o), notes (n), conference	Date	Q1: Why were CB strategies introduced?	Q2: What are the main features/roles of CB?	Q3: Evidence it increases participation, quality?	Q4: How do those involved perceive impact	Context	Bridging bonding	Bronfenbrenner system	Intersectionality	future hopes	IE quality accountability	Rights	Methodology
Serbia: City A	Violence prevention teams from UNICEF/Djokovic; teachers in school fight prejudice through class meetings civic education, religious education	I - S, primary princ	29.05.2015							system					
Serbia: City A	Local Roma Gov Rep works under authority of non-economic activities, dept of human and minority rights; started as a project of OSCE, an infrastructure project related to housing/flooding for Licika and Korman (most vulnerable settlements)	i-Z, Roma gov rep	28.05.2015					c							
Serbia: City A	created local action plan for 2015-2018 partly as a result of engagement with Women's network (Elmina); great coordination and communication with Romanipen, RPA, health mediators	i-Z, Roma gov rep	28.05.2015					c		system					
Serbia: City A	officially 1147 Roma of 179437, 0.83% of population, but actually nearer to 10,000 = 2,000 IDP or Kosovo and 8,000 domaci (2011 census); high level of migration to Europe	i-Z, Roma gov rep	28.05.2015					c							
Serbia: City A	Discrimination - not overt (1-2 @ year), but passive	i-Z, Roma gov rep	28.05.2015											R	
Serbia: City A	I have a comon human vision of a more human society so that in future descendants and all of us have equal opportunities'; as domiciled Roma I couldn't believe there could be so many legally invisible persons and because of that they cannot practice their personal basic rights let alone have access to water, living conditions. Of course, I have a wish, and a vision, because I think that not only Roma children, but every child deserves a better future, we are here in this moment to do something significant and enable our descendants to live in a more human society	i-Z, Roma gov rep	28.05.2015								i	f		R	
Serbia: City A	Empathy is something that lifts us up, and the sense of community gives us strength and engergy, it enables us to fight evil. And the other phenomenon the negative one is that some react negatively to all the discussion about Roma because of their ethnocentrism. Someon actually verbalise it, many don't, but they still think that way. We, the Roma, have to be careful when we are the majority population somewhere that we don't treat others the way we are treated when we are the minority.	i-Z, Roma gov rep	28.05.2015						BB					R	
Serbia: City A	primay school is more attainable, college is what high school used to be. First barriers are transition from 4 to 5th grade, then to high school. In Krag much attention to early development,	i-Z, Roma gov rep	28.05.2015					c	BB						

Country: City	Data/idea	Source: interview (i), focus group (fg), observation (o), notes (n), conference	Date	Q1: Why were CB strategies introduced?	Q2: What are the main features/roles of CB?	Q3: Evidence it increases participation, quality?	Q4: How do those involved perceive impact	Context	Bridging bonding	Bronfenbrenner system	Intersectionality	future hopes	IE quality accountability	Rights	Methodology
Serbia: City A	Important to turn dysfunctional families into functional families, working on their complete integration. That means providing them with basic living conditions, enabling families to get stronger financially, to fight poverty.	i-Z, Roma gov rep	28.05.2015								i				
Serbia: City A	With Romanipen, do parent forums together, communicate unofficially, share information, act fast, write local action plan	i-Z, Roma gov rep	28.05.2015							system					
Serbia: City A	Would like to see more Roma people in positions: police officer, LEA; now have clearer picture of needs of Roma and are getting first results especially in field of education; need to strengthen Roma in private sector	i-Z, Roma gov rep	28.05.2015						BB	system				R	
Serbia: City A	If RPA more permanent position, have job security, can say more	i-Z, Roma gov rep	28.05.2015		Q2									R	
Serbia: City A	Eventually we get active members of society who will pay taxes and that's in all of our best interests	i-Z, Roma gov rep	28.05.2015						BB	system					
Serbia: City A	Teacher concerned parents don't take good enough care of children, all speak Serbian, one speaks Romanes	i-PPP teacher	29.05.2015					c							
Serbia: City A	Bane helps when there are problems with specific children, most frequent problem is that parents don't collect children; he works mostly with parents, when she calls him; he works with families that have very difficult situations	i-PPP teacher	29.05.2015				Q4								
Serbia: City A	children who don't get enough attention at home seek out Bane	i-PPP teacher	29.05.2015				Q4								
Serbia: City A	Government decision to start PPP was excellent; role really needed	i-PPP teacher	29.05.2015				Q4						IE		
Serbia: City A	Need more workshops for families to gain more skills	i-PPP teacher	29.05.2015									f			
Serbia: City A	In past teachers were stricter, children better behaved	i- Roma mom Korman	26.05.2015					c							
Serbia: City A	Tanja PA provided books, clothes, shoes, brought R Health Mediator when children had lice, literacy lessons (which parents miss), organized health workshops, social services; helps kids so they don't drop out; this makes a big difference; helps children with studies	i- Roma mom Korman	26.05.2015		Q2		Q4			system					
Serbia: City A	Korman doesn't have food, running water	i- Roma mom Korman	26.05.2015					c			i				
Serbia: City A	Community is so poor, they fight about who gets what kind of aid.	i- Roma mom Korman	26.05.2015					c			i				
Serbia: City A	Romanipen organizes some donations; school suppies, books, backpacks	i- Roma mom Korman	26.05.2015		Q2					system	i				
Serbia: City A	Most important thing RPA does is help kids study (Parent 2)	i- Roma mom Korman	26.05.2015				Q4								

Country: City	Data/idea	Source: interview (i), focus group (fg), observation (o), notes (n), conference	Date	Q1: Why were CB strategies introduced?	Q2: What are the main features/roles of CB?	Q3: Evidence it increases participation, quality?	Q4: How do those involved perceive impact	Context	Bridging bonding	Bronfenbrenner system	Intersectionality	future hopes	IE quality accountability	Rights	Methodology
Serbia: City A	Roma child with IEP (Lilia) - made IEP together with Tanja, child is making progress, plan with Tanja before each class	i-primary teacher	27.05.2015				Q4						IE		
Serbia: City A	RPA can individualize, helps children especially after school; 50% in school, 50% home visits	i-primary teacher	27.05.2015		Q2		Q4								
Serbia: City A	Children do homework, get better grades, RPA pushes children to be responsible; communicates with parents	i-primary teacher	27.05.2015			Q3									
Serbia: City A	IE is hard for the school	i-primary teacher	27.05.2015										IE		
Serbia: City A	school is very poor - wood stove - but friendly atmosphere amongst teachers	o	27.05.2015					c							
Serbia: City A	Roma child is more focused on emotional support and companionship Tanja (RPA) provides, than on academic support; has trouble concentrating	o	27.05.2015				Q4								
Serbia: City A	non Roma children are very respectful, even when Roma child with difficulties reads haltingly	o	27.05.2015					c						R	
Serbia: City A	When teacher works with Lilia, she expresses interest in trying to work at home on problems without help	o	27.05.2015				Q4						IE		
Serbia: City A	RPA help with enrolment, papers, documents; these things are more complicated now; RPA is better with moms than dads, also with Muslims and mixed families	fg-Roma/non-R parents	27.05.2015				Q4								
Serbia: City A	children come to Romanipen to play	fg-Roma/non-R parents	27.05.2015				Q4								
Serbia: City A	Parents perceive RPA works 50% school and home (Bane thinks more - 60% - with families)	fg-Roma/non-R parents	27.05.2015				Q4								
Serbia: City A	Can't remember a time before Bane - he helps them so much; brings candies, doesn't yell. Explains and listens to children; they like him; behave better	fg-Roma/non-R parents	27.05.2015				Q4								
Serbia: City A	Two of five parents think children should spend first years at home	fg-Roma/non-R parents	27.05.2015					c							
Serbia: City A	Teachers need more rights; parents should push for changes; 'we are living in the dark'; have only started IE over last 5/6 years	fg-Roma/non-R parents	27.05.2015									f	IE		