

## Chapter 3

### 3. The Ethnographic fieldwork

#### 3.1 The setting for the Research

The idea for the research was born during the winter of 2005, during my M.A. studies, when I had just bought a house in Casabermeja, Andalusia. The town is situated 17km inland of Málaga on the 'Las Pedrizas' main road. It is a hill town at 537 metres above sea level. Originally a Moorish fortress, Casabermeja takes its name from the Moorish *Q'sar Bermeja*, meaning 'the Red Castle'. The population of the town is just 3000. A large proportion of the people who live there are over 65years old. It is a traditional Andalusian hill town, which in some senses, to the British eye, feels like one has stepped back in time. It is not unusual to see men carrying out their daily business on the back of a mule or donkey. Goat farming is extremely popular in the region, and passing herds of goats are a regular sight. See Figure 3.1 below that shows a map of Casabermeja and the surrounding area.

**Figure 3.1: map of Casabermeja and the surrounding area**



Life in inland Spain in my village, despite fantastic weather by British standards, was often difficult, lonely and in opposition to the lifestyle and culture I was accustomed to in England. The fieldwork lasted for approximately 14 months, during which time I got to know Casabermeja, the people, and the nature of the village quite well. The research was carried out in Mijas Costa, just under an hour's drive away, to the west, along the coast. Barley (1983: 8), pondering upon his decision of whether or not to undertake fieldwork talks of the "fieldwork bore", the colleagues who had undertaken fieldwork, who had "been there" and as a result, felt the need to "enfold their experiences in a rosy glow of romantic adventure" to anyone willing to listen. He talks of those with past fieldwork experiences and stories as having a licence to bore. "One's friends and relatives are a trifle disappointed if every subject from doing the washing to treating the common cold is not larded with a sauce of ethnographic reminiscence. Old stories become old friends ... soon nothing but the good times of fieldwork remain bar a few awkward islands of unreduced misery that cannot be forgotten or submerged in the general euphoria". The fieldwork in the present study lasted for fourteen months. I encountered many different experiences living in Spain that I had not encountered before. Therefore, while the experience is still fresh in my memory, and at the risk of becoming Barley's "fieldwork bore", below is an account of the fieldwork and my time with the children and adolescents of St John's international school.

### **3.2 The idea for the research**

In 2003, towards the end of my M.A, I bought a town house at the top of the village in Casabermeja. I considered the town, in terms of having a small British community living there from all different dialect origins, an interesting place to investigate the consequences of dialect

contact. According to Barley (1983: 11-12), “most research starts off with a vague apprehension of interest in a certain area of study and rare indeed is the man who knows what his thesis is about before he has written it.” Despite this, I knew the main theoretical motivation of this work was to look at dialect contact between Anglophones in a setting where the ambient language was Spanish. I had spoken to friends in Casabermeja and *el campo* (the countryside). Many expressed that since they had lived there, they had noticed that their dialect was changing but they could not express how. Some also commented that when they spent long periods of time with other Britons with regional accents in Spain, they could feel their dialect accommodating to that of the person they were speaking to, perhaps more than it would in the UK, perhaps much more quickly and perhaps for longer. Some people commented that this was not just for the duration of the conversation, but would carry on for days after. The M.A. research (Rigby 2005) showed that the mother of one of the informants could tell which friend she had been with each time she went out socially, because she would come home speaking with features from their dialect. This was commented upon by Debbie from the Isle of Man in the quote below.

**Debbie:** I can only tell if it’s like a really obvious accent, like Scottish or Irish but otherwise no ... we always say to each other “oh what accent, what accent have I got?” and everyone’s like “oh I dunno” ... when I went to the Isle of Man they all said to me “oh what’s *that* accent, where’s *that* coming from?” and I was like “oh I dunno” and they said to me it’s a mixture between loads of different accents so I was like “oh OK”

I was interested in the children of migrants from all different dialect origins coming together, and mixing together in the school environment in a non-native setting. I was curious what the consequences were for the type of English these children were using.

I discussed my thoughts with my supervisor, and we agreed that the village of Casabermeja, with its small population of migrants, may be interesting to study in terms of language contact. We discussed the possibility of creating a sample from the children of migrants, as they came together in a speech community, the school. However, I approached the local primary and secondary schools, but found that they only had 9 British pupils and 3 British pupils respectively. It was clear that this would not be sufficient for the data that I needed. I decided to keep the basic idea of the project, with the environment for study as the school, but to look elsewhere at schools within reach of Casabermeja, that had a high enough proportion of migrant British children to obtain a sample.

The decision for the M.A. research (see Rigby 2005) was based on the fact that the school was in an area that had a reasonably high proportion of migrants. However, the school in Cerrado de Calderón where the M.A. research took place (east of Málaga), was made up of approximately 80% Spanish pupils. It proved difficult to find a sample of Anglophones that were all in the same year group. In addition to this, the distances the kids in the sample travelled from to go to the school had a range of 70km. It was difficult to find kids who socialised with each other at all out of school. Therefore, for the PhD research, I decided to search for a school west of Málaga, on the Costa del Sol, where I knew there would be lots of Anglophones.

### **3.2.1 Approaching the School**

It was evident from my experience during the M.A. research that the best way to approach schools was to set up a meeting with the head teacher by phone. Letters and emails were often unanswered by head teachers in schools in Spain at the time of the M.A. research.

Therefore, for the PhD research I decided that it would be necessary to be in Spain, and approach schools in the first instance by phone with a view to setting up a meeting with the head teacher, where I would have the opportunity to explain in detail the proposed research. Three international schools on the Costa del Sol were approached, in Marbella, Torremolinos and Mijas Costa, along with one Spanish state school in La Cala de Mijas with a very large proportion of migrant students, particularly British. The head of the international school in Marbella originally accepted me in the first instance. He had a Master's degree in linguistics, and was very interested in the study. However, the school governors overturned his decision a few days later, concerned that it would be negative P.R. for the school. The head of the international school in Torremolinos agreed to accept me, after meeting with her, but later declined to participate due to time constraints. The Spanish head of the Spanish state school in La Cala de Mijas agreed to participate at first, but later refused on the grounds that it was illegal to record the children. The head at the international school in Mijas Costa, which I shall refer to as St. John's, agreed to participate after seeing my proposal. I was lucky in that the head was an English specialist and open to the idea of research at the school. Karen O' Reilly had carried out research on migrants there in 2003.

It was necessary, because the setting for the research was an environment in which I would be in contact with children, to show the head teacher the following documentation: an up to date CRB document (to show that I had been police checked and had no criminal record), my qualification certificates and a letter from the head teacher at the last school where I had worked, confirming my position at the school and how long I had worked there.

### 3.2.2 St. John's International School in Context



**Figure 3.2 A map of the Costa del Sol**

The setting for the research is St. John's International School. It is situated just inland of Fuengirola, in Mijas Costa. Figure 3.2 shows Mijas Costa and the surrounding area. The school was established in 1968. The school caters for pupils of all ethnicities and offers an English curriculum from age 3 to GCSE and GCE Advanced level. Post 16 study of the Spanish curriculum may be followed by a two year course of post-compulsory study called *Bachillerato*, a 'Baccalaureate' style qualification. This entails studying nine or ten subjects. If they fail any of

these subjects they must retake or they will leave school without the qualifications corresponding to this level and will not be eligible to do the pre-university entrance examination in six subjects, called *la Selectividad*.

Many Spanish pupils left St. John's after yr 11 to go to Spanish colleges, because Spanish universities did not previously accept AS or A2 qualifications for entrance. However, at the time of the research, this rule had just been changed, and Spanish universities would accept the British AS and A2 qualifications for entrance. This will probably change the make up of the future sixth forms at St. John's. At the time of the research there were only two Spanish pupils in year 12 and three in year 13.

From year 1 (age 5-6) to year 6 (age 10-11) children study all subjects, broadly following the English National Curriculum programmes. At the age of eleven children normally transfer to the senior department (year 7). However, in Spain, children may be required to repeat a year which results in children starting secondary education when they are older. The year group the child enters is determined by where their birthday falls in the year. At St. John's, like in the rest of Spain, children enter the same year groups as others born in the same year, from 1<sup>st</sup> January to 31<sup>st</sup> December. Some pupils are fast tracked at St. John's. At the time of the study, 5 of the pupils in yr 12, the first year of sixth form, were only 15 years old due to being pushed up a year or more at some point of their education.

### **3.2.3 Advantages and disadvantages of collecting data at an international school**

There were several advantages of collecting data at the international school. One advantage was that due to the large proportion of English speaking staff, communication was never an issue. There was also access to lots of migrant children, particularly Anglophones, facilitating observation of linguistic practices in different social networks. The main advantage of this linguistic setting was that kids from a good variety of dialect locations of the UK mixed together here. This was of particular interest, in that it was a speech community with dialect contact and mixing going on that one might struggle to find elsewhere, particularly in the UK. One disadvantage of the international school for me was that there were few Spanish kids in the secondary section of the school, and that the school was in a locale where one could easily get by without speaking Spanish. One thing that I was interested to observe was the impact of the ambient language of Spanish in the community. The majority language in the school was English, and unless one travelled further inland, English was very prevalent outside the school in the local community. The paradox was, if you were to find a school further inland in a more ‘Spanish’ setting, there would only be a handful of Anglophone kids spread across the year groups.

### **3.2.4 Mijas Costa and the surrounding area**

Life in Mijas Costa was in stark contrast to the village of Casabermeja where I lived during the fieldwork. The nearest town to the school was Fuengirola. The next resort on the coastline to the east is Benalmádena. These towns were where the adolescents would generally do their socialising (mainly Fuengirola due to proximity). The Anglos would shorten their names and call



them ‘Fuengi’ and ‘Benal’. I got to know the resorts of Fuengirola and Benalmádena quite well, although not as well as Casabermeja, due to the fact that I lived there and spent more time there.

During the last period of the fieldwork, I rented out my house in Casabermeja and stayed in an apartment for some months in Mijas Costa. I visited the inland towns of Alhaurín el Grande and Coín, although I did not spend much time there so my experience of these towns is limited. I went to a friend’s barbecue in Coín. It was quite a mountainous drive with quite beautiful scenery in parts on the way, including groves of orange and lemon trees. In the past, the area was known as ‘the town of 300 orchards’ (andalucia.com<sup>1</sup>). My other experience of these towns was the day the school flooded and had to be evacuated. The Mijas Golf road as it is known, where the school is, is situated at the bottom of a range of mountains (Alhaurín el Grande is 326 metres above sea level and Coín is 353 metres above sea level). One day at the school there was very heavy rainfall. At the time, I was in a common room carrying out a recording and therefore did not really realise the seriousness of the rainfall until we had to move rooms (as the room became flooded in about 3 inches of water). As we moved to another room, one could see the water gushing down the mountain. It looked like a muddy waterfall, such was the force of the water due to the torrential rain. Some moments later, the whole school was evacuated to the school hall, a separate building next to the school entrance. We were informed that the motorway had been closed and the other route out was through Alhaurín el Grande and Coín. It was quite a long, treacherous journey climbing the mountain which was very misty and the torrential rain

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<sup>1</sup> Last accessed 20/6/12

obscured one's vision. In addition to this, there were rocks falling from the mountain due to the force of the rain and the road was littered with large rocks that had fallen.

The nearest beach to the school is at the small coastal town of La Cala de Mijas (on the coast between Fuengirola to the east and Marbella to the west). I spent quite a lot of time at this small resort. It has a very pleasant beach which was never very overcrowded, even during school holidays. The town is divided into two sides, the beach side which I visited regularly and the mountainous side which is home to La Cala Golf. Like many of the resorts, it was originally a fishing village. If one walks through the town and visits the beach it is evident that it has a large British expatriate community, but unlike some of its neighbouring resorts there are also plenty of Spanish people both resident there and visiting the town.

The town has a mixture of Spanish, English, Irish and Dutch bars and restaurants, mainly along a tree lined avenue of shops and bars in the centre of the town and down side streets. Although the town is largely dedicated to tourism, there are schools, health centres, a library and a house of culture. I was lucky enough to be in La Cala with a friend when they had their *Día del Carmen* fiesta, in honour of *La virgin del Carmen*, patron saint of fisherman. There were bands, processions and festivities. It was good to see another side to La Cala, as I only usually saw the beach and restaurants. My visits to these kinds of places were as a tourist, therefore I usually only got to see the touristic side of such places.

My visits to the main town near the school, Fuengirola, were also as a tourist. I feel I cannot really do justice to the town and in particular the people with a description from a purely

touristic point of view. I am sure there is much more to the town than I have witnessed as a tourist, to use the beach and to go out to eat. Nevertheless, below is an account of the Fuengirola that I got to know. Please forgive the shortcomings of the description.

Fuengirola is a busy seaside resort with a promenade called *el paseo maritime*. There are horse drawn carriages on the street waiting for visitors to take a tour of the promenade. The promenade has numerous European bars and restaurants including a multitude of English bars, all competing to sell the cheapest pints of beer, English breakfasts, roast dinners and fish and chips etc. The bars boast, as part of their entertainment, English TV, English soap operas and international sport. The promenade in the summer is busy with traffic and pedestrians, and like in many towns and cities in Spain, the noise of mopeds is ubiquitous. The beaches are quite beautiful, with yellow sand and bright blue water. In the summer months they are packed with tourists. The sight of *pédalos*, (pedal boats) *hamacas* (sunbeds) and *sardinas al espeto* (skewered sardines) cooking on burning wood, usually in an old boat filled with sand, serve as reminders of the touristic nature of the town. Over the road from the beach, there are high-rise apartments and hotels as far as the eye can see.

There are several English shops in the town, catering for English tastes, such as Iceland and Spainsbury's, and also speciality shops such as card shops, electrical shops and hairdressers that are run by English people and cater for English people. There is a theatre in the town called *Salon Varietes* which attracts lots of English people who enjoy drama production. The town also has a small zoo and a bullring.

### **3.3 Fieldwork at St. John's International School**

#### **3.3.1 Getting Started**

Arrival into the school went smoothly. I typed up a large poster and put it on the staff room wall explaining who I was. As I am a teacher who has worked in many schools, I did not find the environment daunting. I took every opportunity to spend time in the staff room, and get to know staff. There was always something to talk about, how the school compared to a secondary school in the UK, workload, kids, and of course, the weather. I explained to several of them the nature of the research, and this was generally met with interest. I was approached by several teachers who were interested to know more about the study. I used the opportunity to ask members of staff if they were form teachers, and explain the criteria for the informants. In this way staff told me which kids matched my criteria. Because the school is quite small in nature, members of staff were also able to tell me about kids from other year groups who may be of interest.

#### **3.3.2 Getting to Know the Migrant Community**

As part of the research I recorded approximately 30 members of staff at St. John's. I also recorded some members of the migrant community such as shopkeepers and a parent of one of the informants. I asked questions such as why they had decided to move to Spain; how their experience compared with their expectation before migration and to what extent they had integrated into the Spanish community. I did not have a prepared set of questions; each individual had a unique and interesting story to tell, so I let the conversation flow and different topics were discussed each time, which made the experience richer than if I had prepared questions.

### **3.3.3 Becoming Accepted**

As well as hanging out in the staffroom as much as was possible, the recordings definitely allowed me to form friendships with some staff. Topics would often be discussed between me and the teachers at a later date, things we had found interesting from the discussions. They started to ask about my family, about where I owned a house in Spain, about how long I would be at the school and when I would return. I had become part of the community.

### **3.3.4 The Pupils**

At the time of the study, only about 15% of the pupils of the whole school were Spanish. The British made up the highest proportion, but there were several other ethnicities, such as Dutch, Indian, Russian, South American and Italian. It was evident as you walked around the school, that there were a much greater proportion of Spanish children in the primary department than the secondary. In the academic year 2007-8, the entire reception class (3-5 yrs) was Spanish.

### **3.3.5 The Teachers**

Apart from the teachers who teach the elements of the Spanish curriculum, (6 at the time of the study) all the teachers at the school are British. There are currently 50 teachers employed there. During lessons, in the secondary section, the British teachers request that English is spoken by all pupils. Questions must be asked and answers given in English. The levels of the teachers' Spanish varied from virtually nothing to fluent. Usually based on their language competence, levels of mixing with the Spanish community also varied greatly, from having no Spanish friends, to mixing almost entirely with members of the Spanish community.

The British teachers mainly live in the surrounding area of Fuengirola and Málaga. Teachers often socialise together more than in my experience happens in an English school. The British teachers came from all different places in the British Isles. Therefore, one could hear lots of different British Isles accents at the school from locations such as Merseyside, Lancashire, Yorkshire, Manchester and London. This was very relevant to the linguistic study, in that it was clear that there was no English dialectal norm in the school. There were a variety of dialects with no majority. It was of theoretical interest to see what the informants were doing with certain dialect features, given that for some of those who had lived in Spain all their lives, the school was the only domain where they were exposed to English.

### **3.3.6 The School Environment**

The school was unlike a secondary school in Britain. There were approximately 200 pupils in the whole of the secondary section including the sixth form. Class sizes were much smaller than in Britain, some sixth form classes had just one pupil. The classrooms were also comparatively small. Unlike in British secondary schools, pupils are taught for all lessons in their year groups. Relations between students and teachers seemed to be very good, much more relaxed and less authoritarian than I had experienced in Britain.

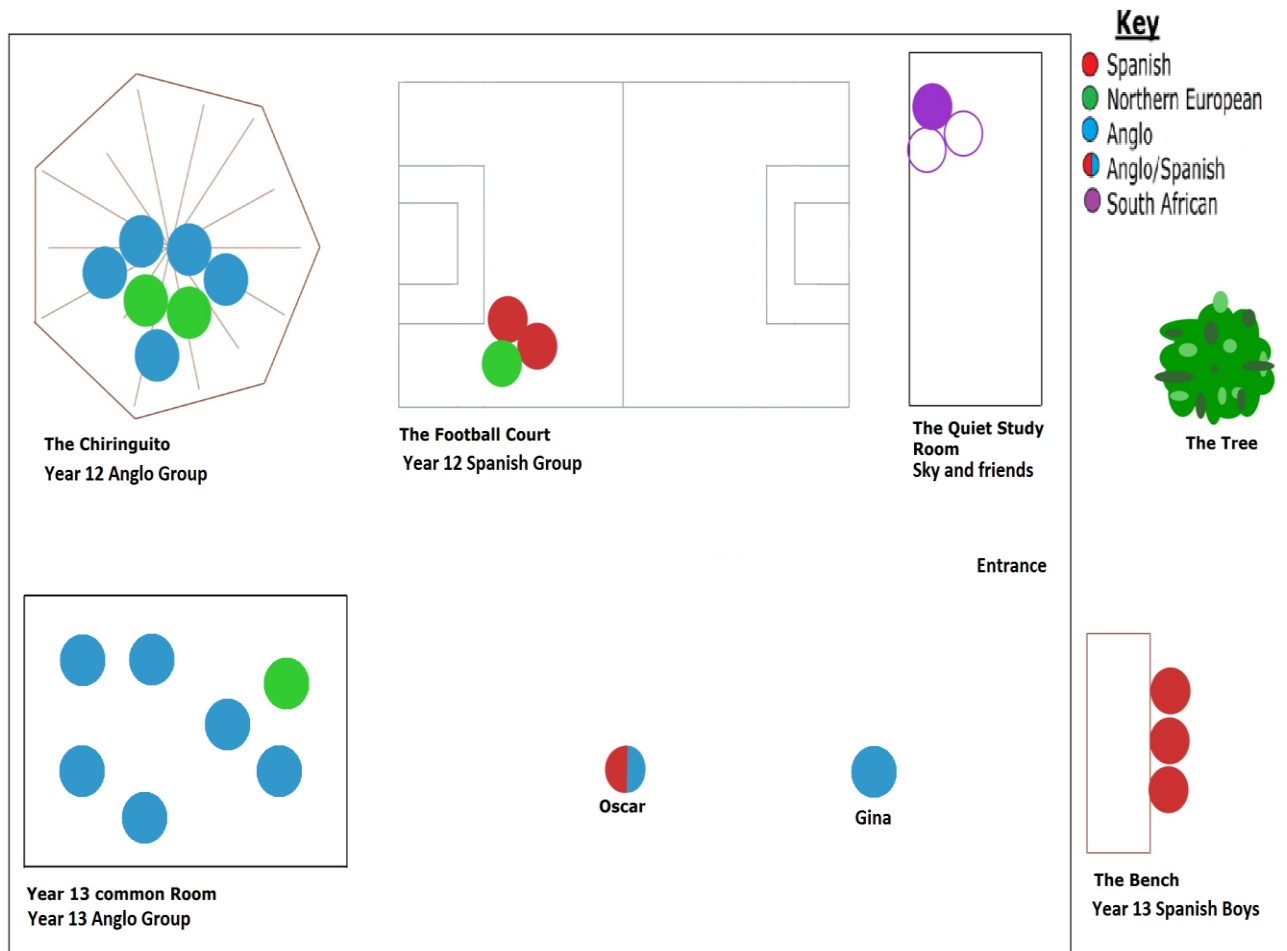
The school seemed to have very much of a family atmosphere. At a staff and sixth form barbecue that I attended, the kids openly smoked and drank alcohol with staff. Sixth formers would smoke outside the school site, sometimes with staff that would go out there for a cigarette. Perhaps the most noticeable difference from a UK school was the turbulence, with pupils leaving

and joining the school constantly. Something else that stood out was the kids' ability to adapt to the changes and find new friends.

### **3.4 The Sixth Form Spaces**

I shall now describe the places where the year 12 and 13 informants spent their time. To exemplify this, see Figure 3.3, the plan of the sixth form spaces.

**Figure 3.3: The Sixth Form Spaces**





There were two sixth form common rooms during the first year of the research, although this situation changed in the second year of the research, which I will discuss below. One was intended for quiet study, and was situated next to a row of classrooms. There was a table and some chairs outside which the sixth formers used as a meeting point. They also used this as a study area in warm weather. The other common room was a hexagonal shaped corrugated iron building, referred to as either the ‘noisy’ common room or *el chiringuito*. (*Chiringuito* actually means refreshment stall or stand, or makeshift bar with a table that is put outside in hot weather, but the metal hut was given this name, probably because of its resemblance to a kiosk). This was situated next to a concrete sports pitch.

I spent some time in both common rooms. Only sixth formers were allowed in both, and there were monitors to ensure that this was not flouted. Some sixth formers did not use the ‘noisy’ common room frequently, although all the informants used it at various times. One could understand why, it could be noisy, and often reverberated with the sound of a ball being kicked with force against it. It was also noisy when it rained. Depending on friendship groups, some sixth formers preferred to meet and congregate elsewhere. There were tea and coffee making facilities, sofas, usually a CD player and often some kids with a laptop watching movies or playing games.

The other common room, or study room more resembled a classroom. It contained classroom tables and chairs, as well as a sofa. Students would use it during free periods and it was usually busy at break and lunchtimes. Again, there was a kettle. The sixth formers often used the room just to store their bags and equipment during breaks, lunch and non- study periods. The room

was next to the school canteen, on a busy walkway. At times, pupils other than sixth formers (Gina's friends) would pop in. Monitors would remind them that they had to leave as it was sixth formers only. Gina seemed to resent this, as she mixed with lower year groups and felt they should be allowed in. Many of the interviews with the informants took place in this room, as there were often difficulties in finding the pupils free and having an empty room at the same time. This caused some students to complain, and to remind me that it was a study room.

In the second year of the research, the new academic year when the old year 13 left and the new year 12 joined the sixth form, (the 2 year groups in the sample) congregating places changed, and with the changes came conflict. There had been some general room changes and building work at the school. For this reason, the old quiet common room became the year 13 only study room. Year 12 and 13 were also allocated a study room each in the main school building. The *chiringuito* was supposed to be a shared common room that both year groups could use. The new year 12 were a much bigger year group than year 13 (25 pupils and 13 pupils respectively). They expressed that the year 13 thought that the *chiringuito* was their space, but the year 12 seemed to claim it as their space. Tensions manifested by acts such as the year 13 taking the T.V. and D.V.D player from the *chiringuito* (but forgetting the leads). The kettle also went back and forth on several occasions. Apart from Sky and her 2 friends, who were by their own admission studious, nobody ever used the new Year 12 and 13 study rooms in the school building while I was there. This worked out to my advantage, because I carried out all the recordings for the final phase at the school in the new Year 13 study room in the school.

I found out about the various groups' spaces. Sky and her two friends would sit under a tree directly outside the front of school during break and lunch. They never used the *chiringuito*, and they, themselves, acknowledged that they were not part of the year 12 group at all. They did not mix with the others, giving some year 12 girls a reason to dislike them. If it rained, Sky and her friends would use the year 12 study room. Similarly, the year 13 Spanish boys had their own space and never used the common rooms. They would sit on the benches on the school porch directly outside the office. They would sit here for all mutual free periods and breaks. A couple of times I saw Álvaro in the year 13 common room, obviously because his 2 friends were in lessons. He looked uncomfortable and not very pleased because he would have to speak English in this environment, which he made clear he didn't like doing. If one of his friends' lessons would end, they would come and join him here, but very swiftly leave to go to their bench.

#### **3.4.1 The Criteria for the informants**

The original criteria for the study was to be that the students' first language was English, English was the language always spoken in the home, and that the students had spent all their educational life (from the age of five) in Spain. Another requirement was originally going to be that the informants were all adolescents. Eckert (2000) comments on the benefits of studying adolescents, a somewhat neglected area of sociolinguistics claiming "We have known for some time that adolescents are the speakers who advance sound change, yet the discussions of class that predominate in the study of variation focus on adults." (Eckert 2000, preface). Kerswill (2000: 67-8), comments upon the importance of the role of children in koinéization claiming that "Adults are thought to have passed a "critical period" for language acquisition...and so are not likely to be able to make major grammatical and phonological changes to their speech after

migration... Contrasted with this is the considerable plasticity of children's phonologies and grammars, up to, approximately, puberty."

I showed my criteria to the head teacher, and using her class lists, she identified 16 pupils who she thought matched the desired criteria, some of whom were siblings. I had found with the M.A research that the kids themselves were very aware who was from where and how long they had been living in Spain. Therefore, once I had obtained the list of possible students that might fit the criteria from the head teacher, I set off to the sixth form common room to meet some pupils.

### **3.4.2 Changing the Focus**

As time elapsed, I realised that the original 'ideal' for the sample was not going to be achievable. Too many factors hampered the original research idea, the main problem being turbulence of migrants. When I went home for Christmas, I returned to Spain to find 3 of the sample of 10 Anglophones that I had selected had left. These 3 were all girls, which left the remaining sample very unequal in terms of gender. I found out that the average turnover for St. John's annually, was a third. That is, each year, a third of the pupils leave and a third of the school's pupils are new. Turbulence within the school was too great to be able to proceed with the original idea for the research which was to focus solely on Anglos. Therefore, I decided to focus on friendship groups, and include different ethnicities. The only criteria were that these kids hung around in a friendship group with some other year 12 or 13 St. John's pupils.

Other linguistic studies using the social network based approach have been very fruitful (e.g. Eckert 2000 Mendoza-Denton 2008; Milroy 1987; Hirano 2011). The impact of peer group for

language in adolescent studies is recognised in sociolinguistics (c.f. Eckert 2000; Fox 2007; Kirkham forthcoming). Fox (2007) states that during adolescence, young people tend to become less influenced by their immediate family circle and become more exposed to a wider circle of acquaintances. In her study of adolescents in Tower Hamlets, Fox recognised the value of including non-Anglos as well as Anglos. I felt that the new focus, with the social network aspect, would make for a better study. Rather than focussing solely on Anglophone kids, the new focus of the study, focussing on friendship groups, enabled me to include all ethnicities in the sample. I was interested to see what impact age had upon the variables for examination in this speech community. I therefore included some young children in the study. The young children were all year 3, 8 years old at the time of the study. In the same way as the teenage sample, I included children of different ethnicities in the young children's sample.

### **3.4.3 Getting to Know the Informants**

The pupils were friendly and willing to tell me how long they had lived in Spain and how long other pupils had been there. I made notes on aspects such as where pupils lived, where they hung around, who were their friendship groups and whether these were made up of English kids, Spanish kids, other migrants or a mixture. I created consent forms with a brief description of the study attached in Spanish and in English.

Several of the kids were interested to know more about the thesis. Without revealing the linguistic focus of the research, I talked to them at length about the previous M.A. research, what I would be doing at this school, how I would be giving them all pseudonyms, but that they would recognise themselves in the "book", as I referred to the thesis. This seemed to appeal to several

of the kids, and was I believe an initial factor for kids being willing to participate, although enthusiasm for the study did wane later on with some of them. Any time I had free, I would go and spend in one of the sixth form common rooms, in order to get to know the kids better.

I started recording straight away due to the time constraints of my visit. I first interviewed a year 12 boy (at the beginning of the study, Oscar now works in the school office) who had attended the school since it opened. The interview was very interesting. His father was Spanish and it emerged that he mixed with both Spanish and English kids. The consent form was not a problem as his mother was the assistant head teacher, and therefore she returned it to me straight away. However, this was not the case for all the prospective informants that matched the criteria. I distributed consent forms to the form teachers of the relevant pupils.

#### **3.4.4 Choosing the Informants for the Sample**

At St. John's, after meeting the head, two factors really moved the study forward in determining the sample selection. One was spending time talking to teachers in the staff room about pupils, and the other, which proved the most useful when it was decided that the sample would be sixth formers, was hanging out and talking to kids in the sixth form common rooms.

Getting to know the dynamics of the friendship groups, who hung around with who and who disliked who was vital. Mendoza-Denton (2008) used this approach by hanging around spaces where kids would congregate such as hallways and cafeterias, as did Eckert (2000:73) who comments that the ethnographic research required "sitting around a lot, waiting for something to happen, patience with empty spaces when one could be back in the office writing something."

Eckert (2000:73) claims that observation and interview have their place, “but if used alone they have serious limitations for one who must know what to watch for, and what questions to ask.” For this reason, when I was not recording informants, I would spend the full school day in school, looking for pupils who were on free periods, going around spaces on break and lunchtimes and observing and chatting to kids whenever possible.

In order to get the best possible data, and not to miss any potential informants, I included more informants than I needed. It was necessary for me to bear in mind that I was in Spain for a limited period, so it was important not to miss opportunities. Therefore, I recorded 31 sixth formers, which I later whittled down to 23 informants. My decisions for the final selection were based upon allegiance to the friendship groups that I was studying and whether I thought members were core or peripheral to the groups, selecting core members over peripheral. I also decided to exclude some kids who had just joined the school. In some cases, such as with Sky and her 2 friends, I decided to include all girls in the description of the group, but exclude Kay and Lucette from the analysis, as Kay had just joined the school in the final phase of the research and Lucette had been there less than 2 years. They are however mentioned here due to their friendship with Sky.

### **3.4.5 Ethical Issues**

It was important that the work carried out was ethically acceptable. This involved preserving anonymity of speakers, gaining permission to carry out the interviews from the head teacher, class teachers, the informants themselves (if they were 18 years old) and parents of the under 18s. Before any recordings took place, the head teacher, class teachers and informants were

made aware of how the recordings would be used. Consent forms explaining how the data would be used and also explaining that the anonymity of the pupils would be preserved were given to the informants to sign, if they agreed to the guidelines. The consent forms granted permission for the data to be used for this research, any future research I may undertake and also for the University of Essex to archive the data to maybe be used by academics in the future. The consent forms were signed by each informant. I also signed them. It was pointed out to the informants that they would be given pseudonyms in the study for reasons of confidentiality. Consent forms for the younger children were written in English and overleaf in Spanish, as only one Spanish parent could speak English.

### **3.5 Collection of the Data**

#### **3.5.1 The Recordings**

The recordings were carried out using the following equipment:

Sony Minidisc recorder, HI-MD Walkman MZ-NH900

Sony stereo condenser microphone

Sony Premium minidisk 80 mins.

The data was later digitized on a computer using 'Sonic Stage 3.1' programme, and converted into 'WAV format' and saved electronically.

#### **3.5.2 Storing, saving and making the data secure**

It was important to convert the data from minidisk format to a WAV format as soon as possible in that it would then exist in two places. Each evening after fieldwork at the school I would digitize the individual recordings onto my laptop and save them electronically as WAV files.



Sound recordings are large, so at the earliest available opportunity I transferred them onto an external hard drive. I also burnt them to disc to have an additional back up.

### **3.5.3 The recording process and format of the teenagers' recordings**

Most of the time I used spare classrooms that were not being used for that particular period for carrying out the recordings. I also used common rooms and study rooms where possible.

Sometimes, a room I thought was available turned out not to be available for the whole period. Therefore, the recordings were paused while we would find another room. On one occasion, the school flooded and was eventually evacuated. However, I was in the middle of recording a quite reluctant boy who was opening up on this occasion. It was quite amusing to see us change rooms three times, each time finding ourselves in a room filled with two inches of water.

I did not create a questionnaire for the teen data collection, as I wanted ideally for conversation to flow as naturally as possible in order to elicit the informants' vernacular. However, I did have certain questions that I wanted all of them to answer. These were:

- Length of time they had lived in Spain.
- Language and dialect origins.
- How well they Spoke Spanish/English/Other languages
- Who they socialised with both in and out of school, Spanish, English, other ethnicities or a mixture.
- Whether their network of friends revolved around the school or outside school.
- Who their parents socialised with, Spanish, English, other ethnicities or a mixture.

- If they have English television and if so, how many hours a week they watch it.
- What accents they found attractive/ unattractive.

These questions were interspersed in between general chatting. It was important that they felt at ease in order for the interview to flow smoothly. In some cases I was fortunate enough to have met and chatted to the informants prior to the interview. However, this wasn't possible in all cases. Therefore, some of the interviews were a first time meeting. Putting the informants at ease was paramount. Fortunately, I found out the above information about all the informants, sometimes in the actual recordings and sometimes chatting to them unrecorded. From every teenager I collected between 50 minutes to 2 hours of individual and peer data.

#### **3.5.4 Format of the young informants' recordings**

It is not really suitable to use the same techniques for recording young children as adolescents. For the young children's recording I created some games and a picture story to elicit tokens. I discuss this in more detail in chapters 5 and 6, the analysis chapters. As well as the games, I asked the young children questions about issues such as where they lived, how long they had lived in Spain, what languages they spoke, what animals they liked and what hobbies they had. Whenever I talked about toys, the conversation usually turned to computers and computer games, a topic which the young children seemed to love to talk about. From each young informant I collected between 30 and 35 minutes of data.

### **3.5.5 Issues Surrounding the Recording Process**

It was of the utmost importance that the kids did not view me as a figure of authority. Eckert (2000: 71) comments upon the oppressive institution of school and figures of authority creating an atmosphere of rebellion, a hindrance for eliciting ‘the vernacular’ (See Eckert 2000). This factor is paradoxically coupled with the factor that the school as a place of kids’ daily social interactions with their age matched peers is the perfect situation in which to observe ‘the vernacular’. Eckert claims that the very things that kids find oppressive about school and talk about, such as boredom, hatred of teachers and injustice, makes the school an interesting setting for the researcher. “Thus while the school poses powerful deterrents for the sociolinguist, it also poses unequalled opportunities for the sociolinguist who gains access to these impassioned discussions.” (Eckert 2000: 71).

It is difficult in the secondary school context *not* to be viewed as a figure of authority. All adults that the kids come into contact with on a daily basis have an asymmetrical relationship with them. I wanted to reduce this asymmetry within their relationships with me as much as possible. Age can be a barrier regarding status relationships with kids. As Eckert found “Working with kids, age presents a status difference that is potentially far more powerful than differences in occupational status among adults, posing a potentially enormous barrier to the establishment of engagement and trust between a researcher and an adolescent population.” (Eckert 2000: 71).

Eckert (2000) claims that the asymmetry of age can be reduced by the researcher appearing young and in a similar life stage as that of the informants. Mendoza-Denton (2008) found herself in a conflict when she began her fieldwork between dressing and looking like a professional

academic at the risk of fearing the kids may have thought that she was a narcotics officer or a cop. She was torn between trying to find a way in to get to know the kids. For this purpose she became a homework tutor at the high school. She shunned having lunch with the teachers in the staffroom, opting to spend time in the hallways and cafeteria with the students.

Mendoza-Denton was 23 years old at the time she carried out her project. This was an advantage for her as a researcher in that she was not too distant in age from the students. I was old enough to be the students' mother. Mendoza-Denton received invitations from the Mexican girl gangs to become part of their gangs, offers of being taught to fight or to become a mascot who didn't fight. As a compromise to being accepted she gradually changed the way that she dressed and how she ironed her clothes. She let the students do her hair and makeup. She started to look like a member of the gang that she was observing. This kind of behaviour was never an option for me with the difference of age between the students and myself. However, shared stories of life in Spain, particularly with the Anglo informants helped break barriers between us.

The confusion about what was permissible to be said on the recordings was evident when I started to set up the group recordings. Some group members expressed concern that they had nearly used swear words while the minidisk player was recording. I explained that swearing was acceptable, and that anything such as gossip, talking about teachers, talking about other group members and anything else that they wanted to discuss was acceptable. I feel because of the sustained period that I spent with this upper sixth form group, I developed a good relationship with several of them and was privy to quite intimate information which may have not been forthcoming, had we not built up a good relationship.

From some kids there was a real eagerness to share experiences with me of their transition to Spain, and in particular of their experience of Spanish state school. As a researcher, I realised that sometimes I became a “sounding board” for the teenagers. Eckert (2000: 71-2) claims that “An ethnographer has the opportunity to offer another kind of relationship, as someone who is interested in kids on their own terms, wants to listen to them, does not want to change them, and is not part of the local authority structure. The ethnographer also has the potential to present kids’ point of view, to be a potential advocate to the world at large.”

I tried to explain to the teens in simple terms that I was writing a thesis, a book that was ultimately about what was happening to English in the language contact situation of the school, but would also contain their accounts of life in Spain. Before commencing the fieldwork I had read Eckert and other researchers’ accounts of how the kids often see the ethnographer as a conduit to tell their stories. Despite this, I was still surprised at the level of honesty and how much personal information, particularly year 13 (the kids who I knew best and had the best relationships with), confided in me. Here are some extracts from the recordings about informants’ experiences of Spanish school.

### **Shane**

AR: What was Spanish primary school like? (He started at 11 years old)

Shane: That was excellent, very good, I made Spanish friend ... but em ... yea I learnt the basics ... I passed, I passed my first year ... I didn’t know any Spanish and managed to pass at Spanish school ... and I went to secondary school, it was hell ... the attitudes of the Spanish, as soon as they hit secondary school there’s so much violence, bullying

AR: Really, what against the Brits

Shane: Yea, it's quite amazing

AR: How long did you last?

Shane: Three quarters (of a year) ... the teachers were different as well ... I think ... maybe they'd seen it all ... and they were like ... that I didn't wanna learn ... and they were like "go to the back of the class and write ... copy out this page" and I was like "OK" ... at the primary school there was only two (Brits) in my class ... they were more forthcoming they didn't mind teaching us but when it came to Secondary school there were 6 or 7 of us ... they didn't really wanna know, they put all the English at the back of the class ... we all talked to ourselves ... we didn't get a chance to join in with the Spanish lesson

### **Debbie**

Debbie: We all went to state school ... I hated it, the rest of them didn't mind it that much but I hated it, I didn't speak Spanish, I didn't like associating with Spanish people, I don't know why, I just didn't like it

AR: Was that tough going into a Spanish school at 11 years old and speaking no Spanish?

Debbie: Yea ... my mum said to me "just say *hola* and *no comprendo* and you'll get by" so that's all I knew, I just went in there and just didn't understand anything and I like mixed with the English people so there was a huge thing between English people and like Spanish people

### **Helena**

AR: so what was it like going into a Spanish school at 10 or 11 years of age?

Helena: I dunno, I cried for the first two days ... I hated it and my mum had to get like a Spanish woman to come with us and translate ... I dunno, it was horrible ... it was like thrown in at the deep end it was horrible ... in my class there were like 3 Brits and one Belgian ... In my Spanish school I found comfort hanging around with my brothers ... the Spanish didn't really accept the English and the English people there were like ... rough ... not very nice, like I had a lot of problems in Spanish school I was bullied by the English and the Spanish .... my boyfriend, he's been at Spanish school since he was like 3, me and him we've talked about this, and he's not had any problems 'cos from a young age he's gone in and the Spanish have just seen him as an

equal... It got better when I got to Secondary school ... a girl came into my class who spoke English and Spanish, before it had been all boys so I sort of ... was with her so it got better ... for my whole time in Spanish school I just played dumb ... I just pretended I didn't speak Spanish because ... I didn't really wanna speak. ... I had nothing to say ... like ... my sentences in Spanish I couldn't put 'em together ... so I suppose for all the Spanish like people ... not liking the English ... it sort of destroys your self confidence ... so I didn't even try

AR: Did you understand the teachers?

Helena: Sometimes, sometimes I just pretended I did and nodded ... In Spanish school my grades were really low 'cos I just didn't do anything ... like my English teacher could understand what I was saying so I would play up in the lesson ... just 'cos she could understand me ... I didn't do any work for 3 years but somehow I kept going up ... I don't know how I got away with it but they just kept putting me up so ... I think they felt sorry for me ... they didn't set me any work. ... at the start at Secondary school one of the teachers would give me some work but then he stopped so ... My parents had had to come in numerous times about the bullied ... but they never really mentioned the schoolwork so my parents just assumed that the work was Ok ... My dad didn't wanna send us here, (international school) because like ... my dad's got a house in England and a house in Spain to maintain so it was like a lot of money to be spending on schooling for 3 children, they'd never had to do that before ... and so he was like "they'll pick something up eventually", (laughing) ... it's easy for the parents, they're not the ones who've gotta do it and be thrown in at the deep end ... my mum started up her own business here renting apartments so she could pay for it.

I felt quite privileged that the teenagers confided in me. It was quite obvious that the experience for some kids had been quite traumatic. I also realised that for some kids I may have been the first person that they confided in fully. Some issues, by their own admission, had been repressed, for fear of letting their parents know how bad things were. Several of the informants expressed a real sense of duty and a desire to protect their parents. Often parents for whatever reason, sometimes badly advised, had decided on arrival in Spain that the Spanish state school system was the best education system for their child at that time. Finances were often a big factor. On arrival in Spain lots of parents were not yet established financially and therefore could not afford private education. This often resulted in the child enduring bullying, not understanding what was

going on at all in the class, not learning anything for a year and sitting at the back of a class without any differentiated tasks, but keeping the majority of this secret from their parents for fear of not being seen to be ‘giving it a go’. Several informants told me their Spanish state school education came to an end when they literally walked out during the school day, unable to suppress their unhappiness any longer. Informants often talked of their parents saying things such as “stick it out, it will get better”. The Anglophone adolescents who ‘gave it a go’ were all entered into Spanish school at around 10-11 years of age.

As a migrant myself, with a child of my own who was attending a Spanish state school, which wasn’t without its problems, I could empathise with these kids and have some understanding of what they were going through. I felt that they could tell me exactly how it was, without feeling a failure. Most still felt ‘at least I gave it a go’. Over and over again kids told me how bad they felt when proud parents would tell friends and relatives how well they were doing at Spanish school, and how good their Spanish was. Apart from 2 anomalies, where 2 mothers were linguists, all the kids that I interviewed for both the M.A. research and this thesis spoke Spanish to a much higher level than their parents. Therefore, parents often had no idea how fluent their kids’ Spanish was, and due to having limited communication skills in Spanish often had no idea how their education in Spanish school was going. This topic, and other experiences of migration, I feel minimised the distance between myself and some informants.

I never felt that I gained the same level of trust and had such a good relationship with the year 12 kids, the lower sixth form. Time was certainly a factor; I only had 5 weeks to carry out the data collection and try to build up a relationship with them. I no longer felt comfortable just going



into the *chiringuito* and hanging out with the kids. Several of the kids in year 12 had been fast tracked and were only 15 at the time of the research. I feel that the lack of maturity, coupled with me not having the time to get to know them as I had the year 13 hampered relationships. Several of them could not think of what to say on group recordings. On one occasion, during a peer recording, data was sabotaged by a group, who got quite silly and played an MP3 player close to the microphone. As a result, although I was still privy to some quite intimate information, the content of the interviews was different and sometimes more superficial than the year 13 recordings. In addition to this, because there were divisions between yr 12 I felt that I was associated with the ‘rival’ group, and therefore maybe a person whom they did not fully trust.

There was certainly a sense of ‘what’s in it for us’ by some pupils of yr 12, which hadn’t been present to such an extent with yr 13. For both year groups every few weeks I would buy cookies, cakes and chocolates as a token of the researcher ‘giving something back’. I still felt that there was a feeling of mistrust from year 12. I also felt from both year groups at times that I was considered ‘a pain’. Kids would tease each other when they saw me coming that I was coming for them. On one occasion the year 12 pupils locked the *chiringuito* door when they saw me coming.

### **3.5.6 Topic to Promote Talk During the Recordings**

The topics that I introduced to promote talk differed, depending on the interests of the individuals. In the first individual recordings I undertook with all informants, it was essential that I gained some insight into their hobbies, interests and likes and dislikes. It was noticeable that in some cases it was easier to talk to the girls. This was particularly evident with 2 girls of the year

13 sample, Helena from Essex and Chantelle from Bootle. After mixing with them for a sustained period, it became evident that we were friends. Talk flowed easily, and we had shared interests. We would talk about the other informants, and behaviour of other groups. Favourite topics included experiences of living in Spain, contact, or lack of contact with the Spanish community, and general observations about the community of the school and of Fuengirola.

It was similarly effortless with some of the year 13 boys, particularly Shane. He seemed keen to share his migration experiences with me. He had had quite a rough time, living in the town of Alhaurín. He had been in the Spanish state school system and although unhappy, coped with it for more than a year. He felt that he had never gained acceptance by the Spanish community in Alhaurín, and had to be careful where he went, because he had suffered incidences of bullying and violence by the Spanish community during his time in Spain. For him, the recordings seemed like a cathartic process.

Eckert (2000) talks about the quality of the last recording that she undertook being so different to the first in that by talking amongst themselves, the kids had ascertained that she wasn't sensitive about issues such as drugs, crime or truancy. For that reason she made sure that the recording was never the first interaction with the individual. However, I had barely met Shane when I realised that he was eager to talk to someone about how he had tried so hard, in his opinion, to integrate in Spain. I think there was a certain feeling of failure, unjustified, on his part.

Eckert (2000) reflects upon her 'interviews' with the kids of Belten High, as a snapshot in time for the growing and maturing informants. "And in the context of this ethnography, the interview

was the beginning of the rest of our relationship as well. Frequently, months after an interview, someone would refer back to something they'd said in their interview, to joke about it or correct it, or to comment on how much things had changed since then." (Eckert 2000:81-2). I hoped that this would happen with Shane, and that his opportunities to integrate as he would have liked would improve. However, when I returned for the second academic year at St. John's, he had left to complete his AS and A2 level qualifications in England.

Some of the other year 13 boys were equally easy to speak to when the recordings were taking place. However, with most of them, once they had done the process once, it was much harder to request another recording from them. Many of them, naturally, preferred to keep their free time for pursuits such as football and hanging out with others in the common rooms. It was noticeable that the year 13 Anglo girls were much more willing in this sense, and volunteered to participate in group and individual data whenever they could.

As I mentioned earlier in the chapter, it was harder to promote talk from the year 12 kids. It was easier with the Anglo girls and boys, with the topic of experiences of migration being the main focus of the recordings. I found it particularly difficult with the 2 year 12 Northern European boys. Of the 2 boys, Sam's command of English was superior to Nick's. Sam spoke 6 languages to a good level. There were a few incidences when Sam didn't quite understand fully what I was asking him, but he felt confident enough to ask me to repeat myself. Nick was more difficult to elicit talk from, probably the most difficult of all the informants. He was the last person of the 2 samples to return their consent form. It was quite obvious that he was quite a reluctant

participant. He seemed to find the process quite uncomfortable. I feel that his limited command of English contributed to this.

Whilst recording the boys of both year groups, sport had been a popular topic, particularly football. Also at the time of the study, the rugby world cup was taking place. Nick played football during all his breaks, so I felt sure that for the final recording, international football and rugby would be a good topic to promote talk. However, I found that he did not follow international football, and had no interest in rugby at all. Because I had been sure that these topics would be of interest to him, the first ten minutes of the recording were quite awkward, and I struggled to elicit talk. However, in typical British style, I resorted to talking about the weather, and his preferences of the climate in Spain and Holland. This fortunately revealed the fact that he was a keen snowboarder, and most family holidays centred on this sport. The rest of the recording flowed from there.

Two of the Spanish boys were also quite difficult to obtain data from, in comparison to the rest of the informants. It was impossible to obtain group data from these 2 boys, due to the fact that in their daily interactions they would never normally speak English. They admitted that if they were left alone with the recording equipment, the language that would emerge would immediately be Spanish. Both boys had a good command of English. I sat in on a 'group' recording with them, and managed to prevent them going into Spanish, although Álvaro did flout this occasionally. A topic that seemed to emerge was their dislike of the fact that many British migrants did not learn Spanish to a level of competence, or use Spanish in their interactions. As a

result of this, I used this topic in subsequent recordings, because I knew that it was a topic that they both felt strongly about and it would therefore promote talk.

### **3.6 The Informants:**

#### **3.6.1 What is Life Like for an Adolescent on the Costa del Sol?**

Spending time with the kids from the sample at St. John's, I gained an insight into what life is like for a teenager there. I found that the way in which the kids identified themselves, in terms of ethnicity, had a bearing upon lifestyle and pastimes. For example, the Spanish teenagers participated in quite different activities to the Anglo or other migrant kids. The Spanish boys (see 'The Groups' below), usually had different mealtimes to migrant kids. They would generally eat lunch later, between 2 and 3pm, and go out to socialise in the evening in a different way. Most Spanish kids told me that they never went out in the evening at the weekend before midnight. Spanish clubs sometimes started as late as 3 a.m. Also, some Spanish kids would do a physical activity such as football or volley ball on the beach before going out. They often criticised migrants for going out early and drinking early, resulting in drunkenness.

Many Spanish kids said that they drank sensibly and slowly, and their night out would last until about 6.30 a.m. Some Spanish kids said that their night out would differ from that of migrants, in that it would be more 'open air'. Some said that they would join Spanish friends at the *Paseo Marítimo* (promenade) in Fuengirola, where there would be what they referred to as the *Botellón*, a large gathering of other Spanish kids drinking in the open air. All migrants in the sample claimed that they wouldn't join the Spanish kids at the *Botellón*, and some migrant kids,

particularly girls would feel quite uncomfortable walking past. For most of the Spanish members of the sample, a meal out or *tapas*, (little snacks) would be part of a night out.

Life for migrant kids living on the Costa del Sol was quite different compared to the lives of kids growing up in Britain. All of them commented that there were more freedoms than they had experienced in their country of origin. All of them commented that they were allowed to stay out late, from an early age, usually about 13, and go to bars. They all claimed that their parents considered this safe in Spain, and it was commented several times that in Spanish communities, Spanish neighbours would be vigilant of all children living in the community. All the Anglo kids claimed that this freedom was not permissible in England, and trips home to England meant not being able to go out late to pubs and clubs, or indeed anywhere unsupervised.

All of the kids in the teenage sample, apart from one, claimed to have drunk alcohol. Most kids had drunk alcohol from the age of about 13, and never had any problem being served. The migrant kids from the sample, who were all between 15 and 18, all claimed that they had not known how to drink sensibly when they first started going out, but they now drank more moderately (apart from Sam, the German migrant boy, the only member of the migrant sample who didn't drink). Many of the members of the migrant sample had mopeds. Many of them had had them since the age of 13. The migrant members of the sample generally went out earlier than the Spanish. Similarly, they would go home or to friends houses before their Spanish counterparts. The migrant kids generally went to bars and clubs, almost exclusively frequented by migrants. (Some Spanish kids claimed that they would not be allowed in the migrant clubs,

unless they were in the migrant kids' company). Food was not usually a feature of the night out, unless they were out with their parents.

### **3.6.2 The Impact of Turbulence**

One must take into account the turbulent nature of the situation with children of British migrants in Spain. People come and go on a regular basis, the biggest factor often financial. Some people find that they do not fully settle in Spain and return to England, often within a year. According to Johnson (2005), the challenge of settling down in another country can often prove to be too difficult, and although it is impossible to produce statistics regarding how many British residents give up and return to the UK, each school has at least one case per year, more if the British intake is higher.

It proved difficult for me as a researcher to find areas with high proportions of British migrants, but with the high numbers inevitably increased turbulence was a consequence. Compounded with this, children change school much more frequently than in the UK. The international school for this research encountered approximately a third turnover of pupils each year. Both this study and the M.A research (Rigby 2005) found that nearly every child in each sample had attended either another international school or a Spanish state school. Moving house was not the reason for the majority of cases of moving school. Problems with accessing the Spanish curriculum and problems of bullying and dissatisfaction with the education provided from the previous school were the main reasons, along with parents putting migrant kids into Spanish state schools late. (Some migrants claimed over 8 years of age was too late for a child to gain full competence of

Spanish, and access the curriculum fully, but many kids in the sample had attended Spanish state school for the first time as late as 11 years old).

### **3.6.3 To Mix or Not to Mix**

Britons in Spain are accused of not mixing with the Spanish, nor learning the language or making any attempts to integrate. (O'Reilly 2000). This was certainly not the case at the international school where I carried out the M.A research (Rigby 2005). The 2005 study in Cerrado de Calderón found that some of the pupils mixed more with Spanish than English both in and out of school. Some Anglo kids had Spanish girlfriends or boyfriends. However, in the environment for study, Mijas Costa, there was much less mixing between migrants and Spanish, and according to the kids and some adult migrants, rivalries between the ethnicities.

### **3.6.4 Spanish State School or International School**

According to Turell (1998), the linguistic attitudes of the British in Spain vary from generation to generation. She claims that first generation migrants generally keep English as their most usual language except if they are part of mixed families. English is also the usual language at school for many who send their children to international schools in Spain. She claims that some families who wish to integrate more fully send their children to Spanish schools. In my experience this is not the only factor. Finance features prominently. The head teacher of St. John's also claimed that money was the biggest factor for going back, and for the turbulent nature of the migrant pupils of both the international school and state schools.



Many parents opt for an international school education if they can afford it. Nearly all of the migrant informants in the sample from the international school went to state schools initially when their parents first moved to Spain. This ranged from one day to 5 years across the sample. Many cited money while their parents became established with employment as the reason for attending state schools. A desire to integrate more fully and to learn the language quicker was also mentioned as reasons. The age of the child is also a big factor. Some kids said that their parents just wanted them to “give it a go”, and some said that their parents didn’t realise that they were too old.

According to Turell (1998), in most of the cases where the children do go to Spanish schools English is reduced to the family domain. However, one must not make generalisations as there is no ‘typical migrant’, nor is there a ‘typical migrant’s child’. At the international school for the M.A research (Rigby 2005) several of the kids were bilingual Spanish and English, hung around with the Spanish kids and spoke English virtually only to the teachers in lessons in English during their school day. Where there was one Spanish parent, Spanish was often spoken at home too.

Some of the informants in the sample from St. John’s never spoke Spanish at all. As they were year 12 it was no longer a compulsory element of the curriculum. Despite this fact, they all condemned British migrants who never attempted to learn or speak Spanish on a day to day basis.

All of the kids in the Anglophone sample at St. John's claimed that they wouldn't date a Spaniard. However, the M.A. research (Rigby 2005) did find that at the international school in Cerrado de Calderón, pupils had Spanish boyfriends and girlfriends. Factors such as the area of the school, numbers and ethnicities of migrants attending the school, children's sense of identity and friendship groups all play a part in the level of integration for the kids into the Spanish community. Most migrants and teachers I spoke to from Mijas Costa, and Cerrado de Calderón (Rigby 2005) agreed that there is better integration between Spanish and migrants in non-resort areas.

### **3.6.5 We're Kids, Not Adults, We're not the Same**

Studies of migrant British on the Costa del Sol have until now mainly focussed on adults and pensioners. (However, O'Reilly did include six pupils aged between 12 and 16 from the international school in this study in her 2003 report). One must consider that whatever has been previously written about migrant Britons in Spain may not represent the behaviour of adolescents living in the areas where my research took place.

Johnson (2005: 37), in her report on the presence of British immigrants in the Axarquía, (a region of Andalusia east of Málaga) with children at state schools Johnson states "The Spanish observe that the British live in "ghettoes" and have minimum contact with the surrounding Spanish community. The conclusion that they draw is that the British have no desire to integrate, especially as they rarely achieve a good enough command of the Spanish language to hold a conversation".

Children who move to Spain and attend either Spanish state schools or international schools inevitably learn Spanish to some degree. The teenage migrant informants in the sample from the international school varied in terms of the amount of years that they had lived in Spain. Three years was the minimum amount of time. However, they all spoke Spanish to some degree. Several of the informants moved quite late. Many were already secondary school pupils under the Spanish system (at least 12 years old) when they moved. However, although some informants felt that their Spanish could be better, and complained about the lack of opportunity to speak Spanish in this coastal area, they all spoke enough Spanish to 'get by'.

O'Reilly (2003), in her ethnographic research of the Costa del Sol, found that just 20% of her sample could hold a conversation in Spanish. This certainly was not the case with the sample from the international school. All of the informants had had formal Spanish lessons at school, part of the curriculum in international schools in Spain. All of them could hold a conversation in Spanish with some degree of competence. All but two of the migrant informants' level of Spanish exceeded that of their parents.

The M.A. research (Rigby 2005) sample found all informants' Spanish language skills were superior to those of their parents. In both studies, the adolescents were often called upon to do such tasks as answer the phone in Spanish, sort out bills, order gas and in some cases order supplies for their parents' businesses. Johnson (2005: 33) points out the problems that can arise where this is the case. "It can be a very positive experience for a child to master a skill that his/her parents do not possess, but there is great difference between the situation of a child who can

show off his language skills on a family holiday abroad and the one who knows that he/ she is the sole conduit of information that his parents have with their surrounding community”.

The amount of years that a child has lived in Spain does not always account for their level of Spanish. The M.A. research (Rigby 2005) found a girl who was born in Málaga and lived in Spain all her life had very little confidence in her Spanish. In contrast, a girl who had lived in Spain since the age of 5 and spent one year at a Spanish state school and the rest of her academic life at an international school was constantly mistaken for being Spanish. Her boyfriend was Spanish, as were most of her friendship group outside school. Her pale skin was the only clue that she was in fact English. Similarly, having one English speaking and one Spanish speaking parent did not guarantee competence in English. For example, Isaac seems fully competent in English and has an English mother. However, he claims that he sometimes struggles to understand fast spoken English, and seems to have a very slight non-native English accent. He prefers the Spanish language to the English language by his own admission. It may be plausible to suggest that attitudinal factors play a part in language competence in this speech community.

### **3.6.6 Levels of Mixing Between Spanish and Migrant Kids**

O'Reilly (2003) claims that there are low levels of social integration between British migrants and Spanish in the Fuengirola area. She claims that not enough effort on both sides is given to forging friendships, and that British migrants mix with their compatriots so much that it leaves little time for relationships with the Spanish. She also states that the Spanish view the British migrants as ‘residential tourists’, people who came for a holiday and stayed. She claims the Spanish have little expectation that the migrants will mix and so no effort is made to do so. I

observed that there were low levels of integration in the Mijas Costa area, compared with integration in the area for the M.A. research, east of Málaga.

O'Reilly found that British migrants, even those who spoke Spanish well, expected to integrate much more than they had. Comments such as 'they don't like us' and 'they don't want us to integrate' were common. A 13 year old boy from O'Reilly's interviews, also from St. John's, claimed that he and his family wanted to become much more integrated and make friends with the Spanish, but they gave up in the end because they realised it wasn't going to happen. He claimed that 'the Spanish don't want to know'. The overall feeling from the migrant informants from the international school was similar to this. Many claimed that there exists a conflict between Spanish and English in the Fuengirola area. Many claimed that they would go out on a Friday rather than a Saturday night as Friday was 'English night' and Saturday was 'Spanish night'. They stated that there were often fights if they went out on the wrong night. However, most claimed they would go on a Saturday if they had other plans on the Friday and their friends went with them. They also all claimed that they don't really mix with Spanish either in or out of school. Here are some extracts from the recordings which demonstrate the divide.

**Debbie:** (on Friday "English night" in Fuengirola):

We always go out on a Friday ... it's just like a thing that everyone does ... and it's all Spanish on a Saturday ... I actually went on a Saturday night once ... it was quite boring actually 'cos hardly like any people that I knew were out ... we were meeting all these *new* Spanish people and I was just trying to get away from them really ... everyone was introducing me to everyone, and then you're just like "go away" ... the two kisses thing and then you're like "oh, seeya later" and then you don't

**Debbie:** (on migrants of other ethnicities)

It depends where they live like, the Germans at this school they all live like down Marbella so they like go down Puerto Banus all the time ... but like, Norwegians like and that, they come down Fuengi sometimes and we mix with them ... Trude ... she's quite like ... she likes the

Spanish people and everything, she mixes with them and that, she gets on with lots of people, she doesn't really see any difference between people and that.

**Debbie:** (on wanting to learn Spanish)

I think that we've like kind of ... at the same time we like *want* to like learn Spanish but at the same time we don't ... if you get what I mean ... and we wanna like stick to like ... *our thing* ... 'cos it was our parents that like wanted to move out here, not us if you get what I mean ... we wanted to like stay with the English thing, we didn't want the Spanish thing ... I would have stayed in England if I had the choice, my older brother, before we were like moving he was literally refusing to go.

**Shane:** (on how he feels British migrants are perceived in Alhaurín)

I just don't think they like us ... I think they feel we're taking over ... which I guess in a way we are ... Alhaurín the town I lived in ... it's so English now it's unbelievable

**AR:** is that a good thing or a bad thing in your opinion?

**Shane:** Erm..what that there is more English? No it's making us English hard to go anywhere ... 'cos they're so anti, it's violent in the town, in Alhaurín now ... I *used* to have Spanish friends, I *used* to socialise with them but ... it's for the *bad* English that are also so violent ... it's abuse with like alcohol, you see English drunk because of how cheap the alcohol is

**Isaac:** (on making friends with English people)

**AR:** So what do you think has inhibited you from making English friends?

**Isaac:** The fact that I don't like speaking English

**AR:** you mix with English people who speak the language perfectly and have lived here all their lives?

**Isaac:** No

**AR:** so you still feel different to *them*, even if their Spanish is as good as yours?

**Isaac:** Yea

Gina, an Anglo girl who had previously attended a Spanish state school had hung around with Spanish kids while she was there, in and out of school. However, after joining the international school she said that she now considers herself very 'British' and would no longer hang around with the Spanish.

**Gina:** I used to hang round more with Spanish people when I was in Spanish school and then I met loads of English, I sort of lost contact with my Spanish friends, and then I became...I dunno.... more English.

Johnson (2005: 30) comments on the tendency of secondary school British children to clan together. “At some secondary schools, even Spanish-speaking British children who have moved up from the primary school with their year group tend to socialise more with other British children than with their Spanish classmates. This can be clearly observed in the playground, as well as out of school and has been commented on by teachers, children and parents. Perhaps the teenager’s need to create a personal identity founded on peer group acceptance leads him/ her to identify with other English-speakers, a process that often leads British children apparently to imitate their parents’ patterns of behaviour”.

Some Anglophone informants said that there was no opportunity to make Spanish friends in the Mijas Costa area because there were so many British people there. Some said they had Spanish acquaintances more than friends, who they would talk to if they were out, but not go to their houses or call each other. All the informants claimed that they got on reasonably well with the Spanish people that they knew. Both samples all claimed that Spanish people respect and like you if you make the effort to speak Spanish. They also all said that it is the fault of some groups of English and Spanish male youths in the area who want to fight that the conflict exists. They said in the case of the English youths, that drinking and vandalism were more prevalent.

The boys in the sample from the international school all said that if you ever get into any ‘bother’ with a Spanish boy, there will be a gang of Spanish out to get you each time you go out.

The boys were all happy that they got on well enough with the Spanish in and out of school for this not to happen. They felt that they shared a mutual respect, even if that may not be extended to friendship.

The fact that the informants from the international school may not all mix with Spanish does not mean that they are isolated. They all expressed that they have several friends that they mix with in their villages and communities who are British or other generally European ethnicities.

Several also said that they would associate with some Spanish acquaintances if they bumped into them while they were out, although they all said they never planned to go out or do activities with Spanish kids. Some boys in the sample played football for local teams with some Spanish boys. For the boys in the sample who spoke Spanish for a very limited period of their week, this was the place where they would speak it. Similarly, some girls spoke Spanish through going to horse riding clubs in Mijas. Nobody from this sample complained of feeling lonely and all had several friends both in and out of school. Some informants did express that their friendship group would change very often because people would leave to go back to England so often, so the nature of friendships was often turbulent.

### **3.6.7 Spicks and Stones**

Most of the informants from the sample, both migrant and Spanish, said that they had experienced conflict between the ethnicities. However, conversely, most of the teachers at St. John's denied that this was the case at all, and claimed that the kids mixed well. Some teachers pointed out that the current sixth form at St. John's had so few Spanish pupils that this had led to



clustering amongst Anglo and other migrant kids. They claimed that had the study taken place 2 years previously, I would have observed a very mixed and integrated sixth form.

Some teachers felt that there was conflict, not only between migrant and Spanish kids, but also with adults, and that local Spanish were racist towards migrants, particularly disliking the British. This was also the view of all the Anglo kids in the sample. Many claimed that they had encountered racism and verbal and physical bullying. Name calling often included the word “Guiri” for English and other migrants, a term that meant foreigner, but depending on the context, could be offensive. Anglo migrants in the sample often used the term “Spick” when talking about the Spanish. This term was also offensive. I tried to deduce a definition of “Spick” from the migrant kids. They claimed it typically described a local Spaniard, often male, of gypsy type complexion (there was much prejudice towards the local gypsy community, from both migrants and Spaniards), riding a moped and wearing an earring. However, they explained that it could also describe Spanish girls, who were noticeably different from migrant girls, not just by skin colour, but by hair style and dress.

I tried to discover if the term could be used to describe the older Spanish population. The kids felt that it was a youth term, which usually described young Spanish people of up to about 25 years old. However, when I interviewed one of the parents of an Anglo migrant informant, she claimed that she would mutter “bloody Spick”, if for example, a Spanish person of any age might pull out on her in the car. Therefore, to some it is a general racist term for Spaniard.

Migrants I asked were not certain whether the word “Spick” is solely used in this community, or in the rest of Spain. The word ‘Cateto’ or ‘Cateta’ was also frequently used by migrant kids and adults, including the teachers. I was informed that the term described a local Andalusian, of very low educational level, illiterate, with a very thick local dialect. Collins Spanish Dictionary translates the term as ‘yokel’. However, I noticed that the term was used more generally, to include gypsies and local Spaniards with very broad accents.

### **3.7 The Groups**

Through being at St. John’s for a sustained period, and mixing with staff and students, the dynamics of the different friendship groups became apparent. Previously, in linguistic studies of the high school as a speech community, researchers have focussed on pro-school and anti-school subcultures. (See Cheshire 1982; Eckert 2000; Mendoza-Denton 2008; Kirkham 2013). With St. John’s being a private school, where parents paid a substantial sum for their kids to go, most kids were quite motivated, so the pro-school/anti-school approach did not lend itself to this setting.

I talked at length with the kids about this issue, and for those who had been to a secondary school in the UK, how they expected the school to comprise of different groups, such as the Boffs, the Geeks, the Druggies, the Populars and the Girly Girls, to give a few examples of the classifications that were discussed. The entire sixth form had only 38 pupils on roll, therefore it did not lend itself to the emergence of the above type of groups.

Turbulence had an impact on friendship groups. People would leave, sometimes with very little warning, and new friendships would have to be formed quite quickly to compensate. Several kids expressed that their friendships were sometimes based on hanging out with a fellow compatriot, who they may have little in common with and maybe would not have socialised with if they were in their native country, where one can choose one's friendships from an abundance of compatriots. In addition to this, with such small classes at sixth form, sometimes just one to an AS or A2 level group, the kids did not hang out in their groups if they did not have mutual subjects other than at break times and lunch.

In my experience as a secondary school teacher, I found that the aforementioned type of groups generally dispersed by sixth form, when pupils enter adulthood. Also, in a setting such as St. John's, the status of characteristics of groups takes on a new meaning. For example, Tom and Will would probably be considered 'the Boffs' in an English secondary school setting. They are studious, mix with adults and feel very comfortable talking with them, they often dominate the discussion during lessons, making some members of the group feel inferior and reluctant to ask questions, and are often seen during breaks and free periods in some type of academic debate with teachers.

I discussed with other members of the sixth form how they think Will and Tom might have been perceived in an English secondary school setting, and the consensus was that they would have been stigmatised due to their pro-school attitudes, probably teased and labelled with some type of categorisation such as 'the Boffs'. However, at St. John's, even though there was some unspoken resentment towards the pair, they were generally well respected.

### **3.7.1 Mixing With Our Own Type**

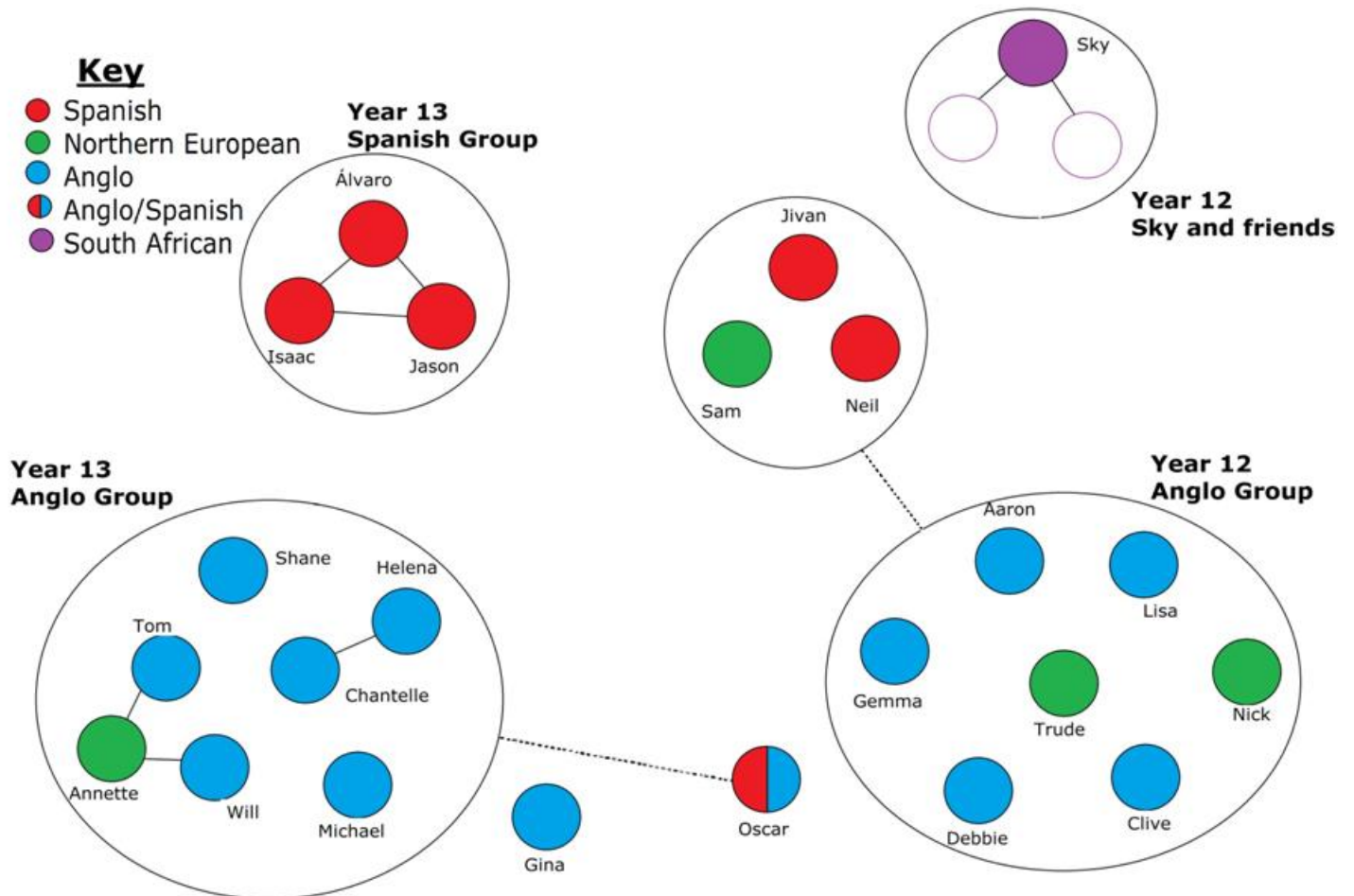
The present study employs the community of practice approach as an analytical tool. Several previous linguistic studies have used this method which has resulted in fruitful and interesting outcomes (see Eckert 2000; Mendoza-Denton 2008). The fieldwork is vital for exploring group membership and practices. Mendoza Denton (2008: 239) defines community of practice in the following way: " ... These categories have something in common: they represent people engaged in common pursuits that are meaningful to them and texture their lives. Not every community of practice may be the repository of linguistic difference, and yet communities of practice are the building blocks of our social, and thus linguistic, interactions". The present study embraces Mendoza-Denton's ideas.

The community of practice approach, as an analytical tool, is a useful tool for sociolinguistics. Through ethnographic fieldwork and an in depth observational study of the speech community, one can discover that certain informants may be linked to other informants in various ways. In this way, finding social groupings and exploring them linguistically, one may find a correlation between social practices and linguistic variation.

For the purposes of analysis, categorisation is necessary, despite the fact that categories are false and inadequate and group membership is transient and changes frequently. However, for the purposes of the study, I have grouped the kids of the sixth form at St. John's in the following way. This follows extensive fieldwork and observation of the kids, and also asking them how they viewed themselves in terms of group membership.

Most kids agreed that in the absence of the usual aforementioned groups, groups are generally determined by ethnicity, identity, or allegiance to certain groups or individuals in this setting. Many kids expressed that in this type of setting, there was an absence of groups and gangs, but the same type of rivalries and feelings of individuality and separateness existed. Ethnicity and group membership seemed a perfect replacement for creating divisions, individuality and separateness. Therefore, these are the groups I observed at St. John's. Figure 3.4 represents this information in the form of a sociogram.

**Figure 3.4: Year 12 and 13 friendship groups**



### **3.7.2 The Year 12 Spanish Group**

It was not immediately evident that the 2 Spanish boys, Jivan and Neil, were in fact Spanish.

Jivan's mother and father are Sindi and Hindi and Neil's mother and father are Portuguese Goan.

Jivan had lived in Spain all his life and attended St. John's since year 1. Neil had been in Spain for 11 years and attended St. John's for 8 years. Both boys were identifiably Spanish, in that they spoke Spanish during break and lunchtimes. The only time that they would speak English, was during lessons and when migrant pupils whose command of Spanish was not good enough to keep up were around. The majority of their free time in school was spent playing football.

Outside of school, both boys hung around in all Spanish networks, and spoke virtually no English. Neil socialised at the weekend in Fuengirola, and would go out with an exclusively Spanish group of boys. Neil's hobby was football, and he played for a local team, 'Las Lagunas', who were all Spanish. Jivan did not go out drinking at the weekends. All his friends in his local community that he associated with were Spanish.

Using the community of practice approach, as mentioned before, I have categorised people into the groups that I have observed. Through the fieldwork it was evident that a German boy called Sam was also very much in this group. Sam felt more competent speaking English than Spanish. However, he spoke Spanish very well. In this way, Sam differed from the other migrants. During recreation time, Jivan, Neil and Sam would always speak Spanish to each other.

### **3.7.3 Year 12 Anglophone Group**

The year 12 core Anglophones originate from a variety of dialect areas, including Manchester, Sheffield, the Isle of Man and the south of England. Two of the informants were born in Málaga, and have lived on the Costa del Sol all their lives. The rest of the group have been in Spain between 2 and 6 years. They all mix both in and out of school with other Anglophones and some English speaking migrants. None of the group has any real Spanish friends, although some of them have acquaintances. Some of the group have tried to mix with Spanish, usually in a mixed Anglo/Spanish setting, but all of them claim that this never really works out, and results in the 2 groups branching off into their own ethnicity groups on the occasions that they have had nights out together. All of the group speak some Spanish.

### **3.7.3 Year 12 Sky and friends**

Sky and her friends are a very tight knit group of 3 girls, from South Africa, the Republic of Ireland, and the a new member from New Zealand. Kay, the new member, was immediately accepted into the group. The girls see themselves as separate from the Anglos. This is reflected in the spaces they occupy (see plan above), and also, they claim, in their dress outside of school. Everyone including the sixth form kids is required to wear school uniform in school, but apparently outside school they wear quite 'Gothic' clothes. The girls admit that they feel different to the other groups. Lucette, the Irish girl claims that she was immediately drawn to Sky, from South Africa, because she has never really got on with English people. Sky also felt very different from the Anglos, in that she had grown up in a dangerous environment of conflict in South Africa. Kay had previously lived in South Africa for several years, and therefore felt an immediate affinity with Sky. Even though the original pair were very tight knit, Kay



immediately fitted straight into the group as soon as she joined the school. There didn't seem to be any doubts from any of them as to who she would hang around with. Their quite insular behaviour was viewed as deliberately ignorant, unfriendly and even offensive by some of the Anglo group. However, in my observation, this was not the intention. They were very friendly girls, but just felt a bit different to the rest. They were also much more diligent about study.

### **3.7.5 The Year 12 Northern Europeans**

The English speaking migrants do not hang out in a small group; they are merely a category that I have constructed for the purpose of the study. There are 3 members, Trude, a Norwegian girl, Sam, a German boy and Nick, a Dutch boy. Of the 3, Trude is the most competent speaker of English. One would maybe be unaware that she was Norwegian, and mistake her for an Anglo; she speaks with a quite noticeable south east of England accent with a little hint of a northern twang now and again. Trude hung around very much with the Anglos, but all of the year 12 kids were her friends. Sam spoke English well, but had a slight non-native accent. He hung around mainly with the year 12 Spanish group, but also mixed with the rest of year 12. Nick spoke English the least well of the entire group. He had had an older brother at the school a year before and there had also been some more Dutch pupils at the school. Therefore, he had previously hung around in a predominantly Dutch group. During the time of the study, he mainly hung around with the Anglos and other Northern Europeans.

### **3.7.6 The Year 13 Anglophone Group**

The members of this group, apart from one, all originate from the South East of England. Chantelle, the only person not from the South East, comes from Bootle in Liverpool, but also

lived in Wales for 6 years. The amount of time that the informants have been in Spain ranges from 3 years to all their life. They all hang around in predominantly Anglo and English speaking migrant social networks apart from Oscar, (see case study below). None of them have any close Spanish friends. Several of the group socialise together out of school, mainly in Fuengirola. All of the group speak some Spanish, ranging between intermediate and advanced, apart from Gina, who is bilingual Spanish and English. (See case study below).

### **3.7.7 The Year 13 Northern European**

There is only one Northern European in year 13, Annette from Norway. She is bilingual Norwegian and Swedish. Annette speaks English very well but has a slight non-native quality to her accent combined with a more noticeable American accent. As we shall see in chapters 5 and 6, the analysis chapters, for the majority of the analyses year 12 and 13 ethnic groups are combined. We shall also see, however, that they behave differently linguistically. Therefore, I shall introduce them here in their year groups.

### **3.7.8 The Year 13 Spanish Group**

The year 13 Spanish group are quite different to the year 12 Spanish group, in that they are a group of 3 boys, 2 of whom hardly ever speak English unless they must. All 3 feel more comfortable speaking Spanish than English. Álvaro's parents are both Spanish. He does not mix with any Anglos in or out of lessons, and dislikes speaking English. He has quite a strong Spanish accent, although his command of English is good. He has been at St. John's since year 7 (11 years old). Isaac has an English mother (Head Teacher at St. John's) and a Spanish father. He has been at St. John's 18 months. He previously attended a French school in Málaga. English

is his second language, and he has a slight non-native quality to his accent. Neither of the boys mixes with Anglos or other migrants at the school. Conversely, neither of them associates with the local Andalusian community either. Jason is the third member of the group. His mother is Spanish and his father is from Hong Kong. He is bilingual Spanish and English and speaks Cantonese to quite a high level. He speaks Spanish at all times when with the other 2 members of the group. However, unlike the other 2 members, he mixes with Anglos and other migrants in classes and at break times if Álvaro and Isaac are not present. He has been at St. John's since year 6 (11 years old). He previously attended a Spanish school in the province of Murcia. He does not mix with the local Andalusian community. Outside of school, he socialises with Argentinians, who do not mix with the local Andalusian community either.

### **3.7.9 The young informants**

For this research I recorded 12 young informants, all year 3 and all 8 years of age. Gladis and Gerardo are adopted brother and sister (both Spanish). Maria and Rosario are also Spanish. Rosario speaks English with quite a thick Spanish accent, but the other 3 Spanish youngsters are all bilingual. Pierre is French and has been at the school for 18 months and Peter is Danish and has been at the school and speaking English for just under a year. Eloise, Phillippa, Mandy, Macy, Ronan and John are all Anglos. Ronan and Mandy have lived in Spain all their lives. For more information, please see Table 3.1.

### **3.7.10 The Individual Informants**

We now turn to the information regarding the individual informants. Below, I have selected some informants for case studies. I have selected informants who contrast in their linguistic behaviour. For the sake of brevity, I decided to condense the information for the rest of the individual informants in the form of summary tables. Tables 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3 show this information.

### Year 3 pupils

Speaker	Language Origins	Number years in Spain	Number years in school	Friendship group	Level of Spanish	Level of English	Language spoken at home
Guillermo	Spanish	All life	5	Mixed	Native	Fluent	Spanish
Gladis	Spanish	All life	5	Mixed	Native	Fluent	Spanish
Maria	Spanish	All life	5	Mixed	Native	Fluent	Mainly Spanish, some English by mum
Rosario	Spanish	All life	3	Mixed	Native	Advanced	Spanish
Eloise	French	All life apart from year 1 and 2 in France	1	Anglo	Beginners	Native	French and English
Pierre	French	1	18 months	Mixed	Advanced	Advanced	French
Peter	Danish	1	1	Mixed	Beginners	Intermediate	Danish
Philippa	Cheshire	3	2	Anglo	Beginners	Native	English
John	Somerset	18 months	18 months	Anglo	Beginners	Native	English
Maddie	Middlesbrough	3	3	Anglo	Beginners	Native	English
Mandy	Essex	All life	3	Anglo	Beginners	Native	English
Ronan	Irish/English	7	3	Anglo	Beginners	Native	English

**Table 3.1: Year 3 summary table**

### Year 12 pupils

Speaker	Language Origins	Number years in Spain	Number years in school	Friendship group in school	Friendship group outside school	Level of Spanish	Level of English	Language spoken at home	Language spoken in peer group in school
Aaron	South of England	All life	12	Anglo	Anglo	Advanced	Native	English	English
Lisa	South of England	All life	12	Anglo	Anglo	Intermediate	Native	English	English
Gemma	Manchester	6	6	Anglo	Anglo	Intermediate	Native	English	English
Debbie	Isle of Man	5	3	Anglo	Anglo	Intermediate	Native	English	English
Clive	Sheffield	3	3	Anglo	Anglo	Beginners	Native	English	English
Sky	Afrikaans/ Spanish/ English	Born Spain, S. Africa at 6 yrs old	3	1 N.Z. girl 1 Irish girl (Anglo)	Anglo	Fluent	Native	English/ Spanish	English
Sam	German	12	12	Mixed	Mixed	Fluent	Fluent	German	Spanish/ English
Nick	Dutch	3	3	Anglo	Dutch	Poor	Advanced	Dutch	English
Trude	Norwegian	15	3	Anglo	Anglo	Intermediate	Fluent	Norwegian	English
Neil	Spanish/ Portuguese	11	8	Spanish	Spanish	Native	Fluent	Spanish/ English	Spanish
Jivan	Spanish/ Hindi/Sindi	All life	12	Spanish	Spanish	Native	Fluent	Spanish/ English/ Hindi/ Sindi	Spanish

**Table 3.2: year 12 summary table**

### Year 13 pupils

Speaker	Language Origins	Number years in Spain	Number years in school	Friendship group in school	Friendship group outside school	Level of Spanish	Level of English	Language spoken at home	Language spoken in peer group in school
Helena	South of England	7	5	Anglo	Anglo	Intermediate	Native	English	English
Gina	South of England	13	5	Anglo	Anglo	Native	Native	English/Spanish	English
Shane	South of England	6	5	Anglo	Anglo	Beginners	Native	English	English
Tom	South of England	3	3	Anglo	Anglo	Intermediate	Native	English	English
Will	South of England	6	5	Anglo	Anglo	Intermediate	Native	English	English
Chantelle	Liverpool/Wales	3	3	Anglo	Anglo	Beginners	Native	English	English
Michael	Danish/English	All life	12	Anglo	Anglo	Advanced	Native	Danish/English	English
Annette	Norwegian	3	3	Anglo	Anglo	Beginners	Fluent	Norwegian	English
Isaac	Spanish/English	All life	2	Spanish	Spanish	Native	Fluent	Spanish	Spanish
Álvaro	Spanish	All life	5	Spanish	Spanish	Native	Advanced	Spanish	Spanish
Jason	Spanish/English	All life	6	Spanish	Spanish	Native	Native	English/Cantonese	Spanish
Oscar	Spanish/English	All life	13	Mixed	Mixed	Native	Native	English/Spanish	English/Spanish

**Table 3.3: Year 13 summary table**

### 3.8 Case Studies:

#### Oscar

Oscar has lived in Spain all his life. His father is Spanish and his mother is English. She is Deputy Head of the school. He has been at St. John's since he was 5 years old. His mother moved over to Spain due to suffering from quite chronic arthritis in her early twenties, which virtually disappeared in the Spanish climate. He claims that his dad speaks very bad English despite being married to his mum for 20 years. At home, he speaks to his mum in English and his dad in Spanish, and sometimes translates between the two of them.

"I speak to my dad in English and my mum in Spanish ... sometimes I'll translate what my mum says to my dad".

He claims that his mum's Spanish is very poor (although probably only comparatively, she was certainly one of the better Spanish speakers of the school teachers). The first language he acquired was Spanish. He started to speak English when he was about 3, although old video recordings reveal at that time he spoke Spanish with an English accent, despite being at a Spanish nursery.

"I've been speaking English until I was like ... 3, then all of a sudden I just started coming out with Spanish ... but the Spanish wasn't that good, I had like a funny English accent to it".

He feels that his command of English is slightly better than his command of Spanish, certainly the written element due to having a British education. He lives in *el campo* in a Spanish community.



Oscar considers himself Spanish and he claims that he belongs in Spain. He has only spent 3 days in England on a theatre trip and one trip when he was 2 years old. His passport says that his ethnicity is Spanish.

Oscar doesn't have English T.V. He watches Spanish T.V. at home. He prefers to watch movies in the language that they were made in. He reads fiction and non-fiction in English mainly. He wants to go to England next year to study for a degree in Performing Arts. This is not because he wants to leave Spain, but because he feels that England offers the best courses in this field. He is very involved with a theatre group in Fuengirola, and is regularly cast in productions there. He mixes with an English social network there. At the time of the study he was playing Che Guevara in 'Evita'. Therefore, during this time he felt that his identity was Spanish. He has an Argentinian friendship group, and used his knowledge of the accent in his role.

Unlike the year 13 Spanish group, Oscar mixes with the local Andalusian people. His father is Andalusian, and he has grown up around Andalusians in *el campo*. He mixes with Spanish people of all different dialect backgrounds and classes alike. He says the Madrid accent, supposedly a more 'correct' variety, can get on his nerves, and him and his friends may call *Madrileños*, people from Madrid, *pijos* (*snobs* in English). Oscar was the only Anglophone informant to mix with all ethnicities at St. John's.

**Isaac**

Isaac is 18 years old and has lived in Benalmádena all his life. (Benalmádena is a resort with a very high proportion of British migrants and tourists.) He has been at St. John's for 2 years. He previously went to a French school in Málaga. His father is Jewish Moroccan. His first language is Spanish. His mother is from Manchester in England. She is the Head Teacher at St. John's. Isaac and his 2 siblings live with his dad. Spanish is spoken at all times in the home, although he speaks English when he is with his mother, claiming that her command of Spanish is terrible (she was one of the more competent speakers of the staff at the school). Isaac considers himself Spanish, and says that his first language is Spanish. He speaks English with a slight non-native accent and admits that he sometimes has problems understanding English. He claims that it is more effort to speak English, and he doesn't like speaking it. He claims that he feels uncomfortable speaking English. He has never hung around with any English friends. He has never desired to mix with English people in school or in his community where he lives. He feels different to Anglos, even those who speak Spanish to a native standard. He says he has always had a very Spanish identity. He speaks to the Spanish office staff, and some teachers who speak Spanish very well, in Spanish. He speaks to everyone else in school in English. I shall include an extract here from Isaac's recording. It is worth mentioning here that the minimal responses Isaac gives may reflect his reluctance to speak English. Isaac's recording was a question and answer type interaction, it was quite difficult to elicit talk from him. Therefore, the following extract is quite brief. When I questioned if I would be able to get Isaac and his two Spanish friends to do a peer recording in English, or if they would they break into Spanish when I left the room, he said that they would, giving the reasons below:

**Isaac:** 'cos we're both Spanish and it's our first language, so why would we speak in English?

**AR:** is it more of an effort to speak in English?

**Isaac:** Yea

**AR:** So is that sort of the main reason?

**Isaac:** 'cos I don't like it

**AR:** What is it you don't like, is it the way it sounds on the ear?

**Isaac:** I've already said, it's not my first language so I don't like speaking it

**AR:** Is it more uncomfortable speaking it?

**Isaac:** Yea

**AR:** Are there any English people you consider friends?

**Isaac:** In this school?

**AR:** Anywhere, in this school, in your community ...

**Isaac:** mmm ... no, not friends

Isaac dislikes reading, but he reads some magazines and sports newspapers, always in Spanish, never in English. He watches Spanish T.V. and doesn't have English satellite T.V.. He intends to go to a private Spanish speaking university in Madrid. His brother is studying dentistry in Madrid. His brother also has a very Spanish identity. Conversely, his 12 year old sister speaks with a Manchester accent. He socialises at quite expensive select clubs in Marbella. Marbella is his favourite place in Andalusia. He claims that he likes it because it is posh, and there is a better class of people there, all ethnicities included. He goes to Spanish bars and clubs there, sometimes with Álvaro. They meet to start their evening at about 12.30, and come home at about 7.30 in the morning.

His preferred type of Spanish accent is the Madrid accent. He is very critical of people who speak Spanish with an accent that he doesn't consider correct. This includes the local Spanish community. He claims that he wouldn't date an English girl, unless she spoke Spanish fluently and was very high class. However, he would still prefer to go out with a Spanish girl because they would have more in common with him. He claims he has no interest in hanging around with any English girls or boys, because they have a very poor image in the Mijas area. He also considers Latin people inferior, but not as bad as *guiris*. He says about Latin people "at least they speak Spanish".

He never mixes with migrants in group work in class, preferring to work alone. He did not like the French school he previously attended, thus the move to St. John's. He prefers the sound of English to French, and doesn't like French people. He doesn't like the local dialect, claiming that it is common and cheap. If his dad had people over to the house, they would always be Spanish, but probably not from the local community, unless they were educated.

### **Gina**

Gina's mum is from Clapham and dad is from Kingston in London. Gina moved to Spain when she was just a toddler. Her mum lived in Spain when she was a child, and therefore speaks Spanish to a high level. Gina is bilingual. She has 3 younger siblings, her 13 year old brother goes to St John's, but her 11 year old twin siblings are very Spanish and don't want to go to international school. Gina joined at year 8, 13 years old. She used to hang round more with Spanish people when she was in Spanish school but since she has been

at St. John's she claims to feel 'more English' and has lost contact with her old Spanish friends.

**AR:** (about the twins) do they consider themselves Spanish? 'Cos you said you don't like to be considered Spanish do you?

**Gina:** No 'cos I'm *not*...you see they wouldn't mind being considered Spanish I don't think...I don't think so at all...actually I think they would rather be Spanish for some reason...'cos they insult them...not *insult* them....I dunno what the word is....

**AR:** Well who insults who?

**Gina:** Their Spanish friends. They sort of say "you're different because your English" ... whenever they have a fight with someone or they are discussing with someone it always gets brought up ... that they're English ... they'd probably like to be Spanish, I'm not sure, I've never had that conversation with them ... my sister says all the time "I feel more Spanish"

**AR:** What is the language going on in your household?

**Gina:** My dad is always English, me and my sister and her twin brother speak in Spanish, but then my little brother speaks in English ... with my dad and my nan I'll speak in English, my dad doesn't really speak Spanish that well ... with my mum I switch from English to Spanish

**AR:** Is her Spanish perfect then?

**Gina:** Well, she was born in England, but she came here like same as me when she was younger ... she speaks Spanish perfectly as well

**AR:** (on the code-switching in the house) ... what switches it from one to the other?

**Gina:** Maybe if like ... one of us ... if the twins like forget a word and they like say it in Spanish then the conversation continues in Spanish ... or ... I dunno ... or if you're like talking about something that is related to something Spanish, then it just changes ... but we don't really realise it

Gina claims that Spanish and English teens in the area do not mix and that there is rivalry.

**Gina:** Spanish girls are usually really jealous of English girls, they're always like ... bitching about them ... and you stand there and you just like ... and then you look at them and like "I speak Spanish by the way, stop being so rude!" ... I pretend I don't understand and listen to the whole conversation

**AR:** What are the Spanish girls jealous of?

That we nick their guys ... I wouldn't want one, but they still come to you ... Spanish guys *really* go for English girls, they *really, really* do

**AR:** With the level of your Spanish could people mistake you for Spanish?

**Gina:** Yea ... 'cos I have a really south of Spain accent ... if I'm speaking to them in Spanish they're like "oh your Spanish" and I'm like "no, I'm English"

Gina lives next to a golf course on an urbanization (a block of apartments) where there are a mixture of ethnicities including English, German, Irish, a few Spanish. Mainly young people and elderly people live there, not families. It is mainly a holiday place.

**AR:** When you go socialising in Fuengirola do you go on a Friday or a Saturday?

**Gina:** Friday, 'cos it's English night ... I wouldn't wanna go out on Spanish night ... Spanish guys have only got one thing on their mind, it's not very nice, you just get harassed all night, and then you just get the Spanish girls all jealous and they pour their drinks over you ... it gets really bad, there's always fights between the English and the Spanish on Saturday nights ... but now you mention it I'm out this Saturday because I've got stuff to do, I'm going with 3 English friends (girls) but if I was to go out with English guys I wouldn't go on a Saturday 'cos they always get into fights

Gina was unusual in that she completely changed her identity from feeling Spanish to English when she changed school. Gina was not very popular with the other sixth formers, and hung around with younger year groups. I wondered if the other sixth formers' reaction to her was due to this change. She was unpopular with both the Spanish informants as well as the migrants. Some of them mentioned that they found her

superficial. I thought it was interesting that despite the same upbringing and primary school experience, that her twin siblings felt so Spanish in comparison to her.

### **3.9 Summary**

Within this chapter, I have showed that by using the participant observation approach, I had the experience of what life is like living as a migrant in Spain. I feel that this helped me understand what life was like for the migrant kids in the sample. I have discussed in this chapter how important the ethnographic research was in this study, in that it gave me access to information about the children and adolescents' views on topics such as ethnicity, language and integration into the Spanish culture. It also gave me access to their friendship networks, which as we shall look at in the next two analysis chapters, was used as a social factor for variation. My discussion has also covered ethical considerations related to informed consent, confidentiality and anonymity.

