Day 1: Wednesday 12ᵗʰ June [chaired by Jess Hampton and Mariana Roccia]

9:30 am - 10:30 am: Session 1

- Presentation 1: Mary Robinson & Karen Corrigan - "Young EU migrants in Northern Ireland: Experiences of navigating a divided society on the eve of Brexit."

- Presentation 2: Sara Young - "Resisting the anti-migrant narrative: the perspective of Polish-born teenagers living in the UK."

- Presentation 3: Thi Bogossian - "What does it mean to be Polish? Children's negotiation of ethnic identity in post-Brexit England."

10:30 am – 10:45 am: Break

10:45 am – 11:45 pm: Session 2

  - Presentation 1: Stephanie Connor - "Polish language provisions and maintenance in the city of Liverpool, post-Brexit: An online-offline exploration"

  - Presentation 2: Francesca Romana Branciari - "Language maintenance in the anglophone world: a case study on the Italian language in family language policies in Liverpool"

  - Presentation 3: Meiqi Li - "Family Language Policy of Finnish Immigrants in the Context of Brexit: Focus on Heritage Language Maintenance"

11:45 pm - 12:45 pm: Lunch Break

12:45 pm – 1:45 pm: Session 3

- Presentation 1: Christina Balaska - "Italian Transnational Families in the post-Brexit Era: Influence of Language Ideologies on Heritage Language Management."

- Presentation 2: Ophélie Castellani - "A 'charming' or 'embarrassing' accent? Exploring French migrants' perspectives on their 'French accent' in the Brexit era."

 - Presentation 3: Argyro Kanaki - "Lithuanians in Scotland: language, identity and migration"

1:45 pm - 2:00 pm: Break

2:00 pm - 3:00 pm: Session 4

  - Presentation 1: Giulia Pepe - "Post-2008 Italian migrants and the negotiation of their migratory status: The impact of Brexit on migrants' self-conceptualization."

  - Presentation 2: Mariem Krida - "Last Christmas as a Cinematic Mirror of Central Europeans as Victims and Perpetrators of Social Chaos"

  - Presentation 3: Diana Madroane - "Romanian Immigrants in the UK as Brexit-Critical (Counter)Publics: A Discourse and Rhetorical Analysis of Diasporic Forum and Media Contributions"

3:00 pm - 3:15 pm: Discussing publication strategies with presenters (for interested presenters only)

Day 2: Thursday 13th June [chaired by Caterina Guardamagna and Djordje Sredanovic]

10:15 am – 10:30 am: Welcome

10:30 am - 11:15 am: Session 5

  - Presentation 1: Marianela Barrios Aquino - "A Jewish family arriving with three suitcases, you know… that's an immigrant. I'm a European citizen. Narratives of migration and hierarchies of belonging."

  - Presentation 2: Brexit couples project - ""It's not like you're some weird immigrant coming in": Migrantisation and exceptionalism narratives of UK-EU couples."

11:15 am – 11:30 am: Break

11:30 am - 12:30 pm: Session 6

  - Presentation 1: Christopher Lees - "Language practices and identity construction on Facebook in the aftermath of Brexit: The case of a group of British migrants in Greece applying for Greek citizenship."

- Presentation 2: Katarina Zajacova - "Silencing voices of former au-pairs from Slovakia and Czech Republic: 'What now?' Post-Brexit dilemmas of 'settled' female migrants in the UK."

- Presentation 3: Caterina Guardamagna et al – "Where are you from?"

12:30 pm - 1:30 pm: Lunch Break

1:30 pm - 2:30 pm: Session 7

- Presentation 1: Alexander Pavlenko & Anastasia Malykhina - "When common methodological language frameworks can really help (the case of post-Brexit migrants from continental Europe)"

  - Presentation 2: Eduardo Faingold - "Irish in the UK and English in the European Union in the aftermath of Brexit"

- Presentation 3: Rexhina Ndoci & Petros Karatsareas - "Co-constructing the affordances of migrating to the UK as EU citizens: the vantage points of Albanian onward migrants from Greece."

2:30 pm – 2:45 pm: Discussing publication strategies with presenters (for interested presenters only)

Marianela Barrios Aquino

A Jewish family arriving with three suitcases, you know… that's an immigrant. I'm a European citizen. Narratives of migration and hierarchies of belonging

This paper explores how EU citizens who had naturalised as British after Brexit articulated their resistance to the state's affective power. Through semi-directive interviews with EU citizens residing in the Southeast of England in the months after the referendum to leave the EU, I explore narratives of belonging and everyday representations of citizenship. Participants to my research identified as EU citizens and naturalised as British citizens in response to Brexit. While mobilising discourses on rights, justice, and equality, they perpetuate exclusionary notions of citizenship and belonging. In looking at the ways in which Brexit mobilised emotions for my participants, I want to speak about civilising processes from below and how everyday experiences of exclusion, in some cases, can legitimate forms of violence and exclusion towards those considered as non-belonging and less deserving. In the articulation of their resistance to the ways in which media and the state migrantised them, these individuals perpetuated a hierarchy of deservingness in which they remained at the top. The ultimate goal of the paper is to reflect on the ways in which discursive construction of EU citizens' as migrants in the direct aftermath of Brexit, resulted in notions of deservingness being mobilised to legitimise certain forms of belonging and exclude others. The paper touches on issues of accentism, media representation, narratives of migration and belonging.

Thi Bogossian

What does it mean to be Polish? Children's negotiation of ethnic identity in post-Brexit England

Children of immigrants navigate the complex terrain of multiple ethnic identities and spaces of belonging, a process shaped by diverse contextual influences. The current global climate, steeped in anti-immigrant rhetoric and exclusionary immigration policies, exacerbates the challenges faced by these children. The United Kingdom's (UK) Brexit referendum stands as a poignant example, reflecting a culmination of hostility towards migrant and ethnic minorities in Britain (Benson and Lewis, 2019; Burrell and Schweyher, 2019). Many Europeans living in the UK reported an increase in incidents of discrimination (Lumsden et al., 2019) and feeling more vulnerable as whiteness was no longer seen as a mask of protection (Botterill and Burrell, 2019).

Considering this background, this study employs a symbolic interactionist framework, based particularly on the work of Goffman (2022a, 2022b), to investigate how 9–11-year-old Polish pupils negotiate their ethnic identity amidst this hostile environment against migrant and ethnic minorities. I carried out ethnographic research in a multi-ethnic school in the Southeast of England, which included participant observation in their classrooms and school common areas and a palette of creative, collaborative, and child-centred methods that Polish pupils were invited to opt-in or out: drawings, photo elicitation, and Persona Dolls. Data was analysed through a grounded theory framework (Charmaz, 2014) where children's creations were integrated into fieldnotes in search of common themes.

Findings suggest that, in this changing context, Polish children's ethnic identity is not a static entity but rather a dynamic and negotiated construct shaped by interpersonal relationships and

contextual factors. Partially due to their whiteness and the multi-ethnic nature of their school, children demonstrated an ability to express or hide their affiliation and belonging to the Polish ethnic minority. Pupils perceive language proficiency and ancestral ties to play pivotal roles in the delineation of Polish identity. Furthermore, this paper also discusses instances where children's ethnic names and non-standard accents when speaking English are seen as stigma markers (Goffman, 2022a), which underscores the complex interplay between linguistic markers and social identity.

These insights deepen our understanding of the multifaceted experiences faced by migrant children in navigating their ethnic identity within the school environment. By doing so, this paper contributes valuable insights to the growing literature on migration, ethnicity, and identity in the context of Brexit-era Britain. Finally, this research serves as a platform to amplify the voices of marginalised children, providing them with an opportunity to be heard in a landscape where their perspectives are often overlooked.

Benson, M., Lewis, C., 2019. Brexit, British People of Colour in the EU-27 and everyday racism in Britain and Europe. *Ethnic and Racial Studies 42*, 2211–2228. https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2019.1599134
Botterill, K., Burrell, K., 2019. (In)visibility, privilege and the performance of whiteness in Brexit Britain: Polish migrants in Britain's shifting migration regime. *Environment and Planning C: Politics and Space 37*, 23–28. https://doi.org/10.1177/0263774X18811923e
Burrell, K., Schweyher, M., 2019. Conditional citizens and hostile environments: Polish migrants in pre-Brexit Britain. *Geoforum 106*, 193–201. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.geoforum.2019.08.014
Charmaz, K., 2014. *Constructing grounded theory*. Sage.
Lumsden, K., Goode, J., Black, A., 2019. 'I Will Not Be Thrown Out of the Country Because I'm an Immigrant': Eastern European Migrants' Responses to Hate Crime in a Semi-Rural Context in the Wake of Brexit. Sociological Research Online 24, 167–184. https://doi.org/10.1177/1360780418811967
Goffman, E. (2022a) *Stigma: notes on the management of spoiled identity*. London: Penguin.
Goffman, E. (2022b) *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*. London: Penguin.

Christina Balaska

Italian Transnational Families in the post-Brexit Era: Influence of Language Ideologies on Heritage Language Management.

This research investigates the management of Italian as a heritage language within families residing in the North-West of England, examining how language attitudes and ideologies influence daily practices. The study was conducted in the post-Brexit era, specifically in 2022, and aimed to further inquiries into the Family Language Policy (FLP) of transnational families in the UK. FLP research has grown in recent years, yet there is a gap in studies on the Italian community in the UK. This study explores the experiences of Italian immigrants in Liverpool, offering insights into parental language beliefs and their alignment with broader social ideologies on multilingual parenting. The study was guided by the following research questions: how does the broader political and ideological context shape FLP, to what extent do families envision a multilingual future for their children and how do language interventions reflect parental ideologies. Drawing on ethnographic methods, this study followed a mixed-methods approach, employing questionnaires, linguistic autobiographies, and semi-structured interviews as tools for data collection. The participants of this study comprised families

residing in the North-West of England where Italian is spoken as a first language (L1) by at least one parent.

The findings show that the 'bilingual advantage' is one of the most prominent language ideologies. Sociocultural benefits were also highlighted by the participants, with a particular emphasis on the economic assets of bilingualism, revealing how language choice is based on value judgements and how the ideological status of languages can influence language choice among immigrants. The data reveal that language practices and management strategies are a result of parental conscious and unconscious choices. These decisions are influenced and motivated by language ideologies, past experiences, the socio-political context, and aspirations for the future. Globalisation and the current social conditions have encouraged social researchers to embrace the study of multilingualism in its inherent complexities and not to see languages as bound systems (Heller, 2012). The diversity of bilingual and multilingual experiences in the families that participated in this study is an indication that multilingualism in transnational families needs to be studied from a holistic perspective. As Hua (2008) suggests, the investigation of FLP should transcend stereotypical perceptions of diaspora and ethnic communities, given that family dynamics within these groups undergo significant transformations due to their interactions with diverse social groups. As a result of globalisation, multilingual transnational families are increasingly becoming the norm and thus studies of FLP will help to understand language use and emerging dynamics (Spolsky, 2009). Notably, even though Italy has experienced economic and political instability in the past decade, the participants of this study repeatedly mentioned how fluency in Italian can benefit their children's studies or employment opportunities in Italy. This finding contradicts previous studies where the English language is seen as more valuable (e.g., Curdt-Christiansen, 2009; 2016) and could serve as an indication of how Brexit has affected the language ideologies of transnational families.

Curdt-Christiansen, X.L. (2009) 'Invisible and visible language planning: ideological factors in the family language policy of Chinese immigrant families in Quebec'. *Language Policy*, 8, pp. 351–375. DOI: 10.1007/s10993-009-9146-7.

Curdt-Christiansen, X. L. (2016) 'Conflicting language ideologies and contradictory language practices in Singaporean multilingual families', *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 37(7), pp. 694-709. DOI: 10.1080/01434632.2015.1127926.

Heller, M. (2012) Rethinking Sociolinguistic Ethnography: From Community and Identity to Process and Practice. In: Gardner, S. and Martin-Jones, M. eds. *Multilingualism, Discourse, and Ethnography*. New York: Routledge. pp. 24-32.

Hua, Z. (2008) 'Duelling Languages, Duelling Values: Codeswitching in bilingual intergenerational conflict talk in diasporic families'. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 40(10), pp. 1799–1816. DOI:10.1016/j.pragma.2008.02.007.

Spolsky, B. (2009) *Language Management.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Francesca Romana Branciari

Language maintenance in the anglophone world: a case study on the Italian language in family language policies in Liverpool

In our globalised world, one of the main linguistic and cultural issues is the decline of linguistic diversity, leading to a significant cultural loss for humanity. Within this scenario, there are countries that can be described as having a "privileged monolingualism" - particularly English-

speaking countries, where populations may not perceive the need to learn another language, owing to the global relevance of their first language. One notable case is the United Kingdom, which even before Brexit recorded lower language skills compared to other European Union countries (Copland and McPake, 2022; Lanvers and Coleman, 2017; Scottish Government, 2012).

Despite the historical focus of language policies' analyses on public and school contexts (King et al., 2008), during the last few decades research has focused more on the private domain. The analysis of family language policies (FLP), as a vast and interdisciplinary field (Schwartz & Verschik, 2016), can shed light on the explicit and overt choices (Shoamy 2006; Schiffman 2009) made by transnational families concerning language planning, language shift and maintenance. Moreover, the study of FLP acts as a bridge between the mechanisms connecting the public and private spheres, revealing the conflicts that families must navigate and negotiate in response to social pressures and societal demands on the one hand, and the desire to maintain the native language as a source of continuity and linguistic-cultural connection on the other (Curdt-Christiansen, 2013; King et al., 2008). Precisely because the family and the familial environment represent the first contact with language and literacy (Melo-Pfeifer, 2022; Grieshaber et al., 2011), it is crucial to investigate the choices made by parents. As highlighted by De Houwer (1999), the linguistic development of a child is primarily shaped by parental ideologies and beliefs, and secondarily by the linguistic choices and interaction strategies that stem from them.

This contribution focuses on the analysis of FLP among twenty Italian transnational families in the city of Liverpool. The three inclusion criteria for families in the investigation are: Italian as L1 of at least one member, recent migration of the Italian member (participants must not be second-generation immigrants), and the presence of at least one child within the family.

The research, conducted through a variety of methods and combining both qualitative and quantitative approaches, aims to investigate the ideologies and maintenance strategies of the Italian language and other minority languages adopted by parents in various types of participating families. In addition, the study aims to analyse the role of Mammamia Liverpool school as an example of bottom-up language policy in the landscape of Italian language teaching in the north-west of England, where it represents the only educational reality offering Italian language courses for children aged 0-16 years. The research pays particular attention to the perspectives of children, their attitudes towards the study of the Italian language, and the role of Mammamia in language learning.

Brannen, J. (ed.). (1992). *Mixing methods: Qualitative and quantitative research*. Aldershot: Avebury.

Copland, F., & McPake, J. (2022). Building a new public idea about language? Multilingualism and language learning in the post-Brexit UK. Language Planning 23(6), 1-20. https://doi.org/10.1080/14664208.2021.1939976

Curdt-Christiansen, X.L. (2013). Family language policy: sociopolitical reality versus linguistic continuity. Language Policy 12,1–6. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10993-012-9269-0

De Houwer A., (1999). Environmental factors in early bilingual development: the role of parental beliefs and attitudes. In G. Extra and L. Verhoeven (eds.) *Bilingualism and Migration*, (pp. 75–96). New York, NY: Mouton de Gruyter.

Grieshaber, S., Shield, P., Luke, A., & Macdonald, S. (2011). Family literacy practices and home literacy resources: An Australian pilot study. In Journal of Early Childhood Literacy, 12(2), 113–38.

King, K., Fogle, L., & Logan-Terry, A. (2008). Family language policy. In Language and Linguistic Compass, 2(5), 907–22. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1749-818X.2008.00076.x

Lanvers, U., Coleman, J. (2017). The UK language learning crisis in the public media: a critical analysis. Language Learning Journal, 45(1), 3-25. https://doi.org/10.1080/09571736.2013.830639

Melo-Pfeifer, S. (2022). Linguistic Landscapes in the Home: Multilingual Children's Toys, Books and Games. In Stavans, A. & Jessner, U., (eds.), *The Cambridge Handbook of Childhood Multilingualism*. Cambridge Handbooks in Language and Linguistics (pp. 605-622). Cambridge University Press.

Scottish Government (2012). A rapid review of the evidence if impact on Scottish Businesses of a monolingual workforce. https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/corporate-report/2012/05/languagelearning-scotland-12-approach/documents/00393436-pdf/00393436-pdf/govscot%3Adocument/00393436.pdf.

Ophélie Castellani

A 'charming' or 'embarrassing' accent? Exploring French migrants' perspectives on their 'French accent' in the Brexit era.

Migrants in the United Kingdom have faced both administrative and emotional challenges during the years surrounding the UK EU membership referendum, which were exacerbated by a rise in open xenophobia and anti-European crimes that Brexit brought on. This climate of hostility sometimes led them to, for instance, avoid using languages other than English in public spaces or wishing to erase 'markers of foreignness' such as their accent, fearing potential repercussions. Existing research primarily focuses on the socioeconomic impacts of Brexit, often neglecting the diverse experiences of migrants and their languages. Moreover, studies on linguistic discrimination tend to focus on Eastern Europeans, overlooking the experiences of individuals from other countries. Thus, there is a need to further investigate the representations of various migrant communities and their languages in the UK after Brexit and understand how these representations shape their lived experiences.

Because of their apparent privileged position, French migrants in the UK, despite their significant presence especially in the London area, are underrepresented in research about discrimination and Brexit. Nevertheless, considering the shifting political landscape of Brexit, it is imperative to explore the experiences of all migrant populations, including those who may have benefitted from positive treatment in the past. While research has found that the French language and accent tend to be associated with being 'glamourous', 'romantic' or 'sexy' in England, there is to date a lack of research on whether Brexit had an impact on these representations.

This paper addresses this gap through a mixed-methods approach, using focus group interviews and questionnaires to gather insights from over 500 French migrants residing in various places across England. It explores their experiences regarding the perceptions of their 'French accent' in England before and after 2016, and how these representations may have influenced their own attitudes towards it. Findings suggest that while many participants still believe that the French accent is still positively perceived in England, several did encounter instances of not being taken seriously or facing mockery because of it, particularly in recent years. Furthermore, some participants reported uncomfortable conversations regarding Brexit and their migrant status upon others noticing their accent. Most respondents admitted to actively working on concealing their accent. While many attributed this to negative perceptions originating from France, others cited Brexit as a factor, leading them to modify how they speak to avoid being recognised as foreigners.

Despite England's history of glottophobia, accents are still not recognised as a type of discrimination under the Equality Act of 2010, underscoring the need to address accentism and ensure fair treatment for all individuals. This study advocates for the recognition of accents as a protected characteristic, aiming to address and penalise discrimination based on languages and accents, which is particularly relevant in times of heightened xenophobia such as Brexit.

Stephanie Connor

Polish language provisions and maintenance in the city of Liverpool, post-Brexit: An online-offline exploration

Since the EU Referendum result in 2016, the number of Polish nationals living in the UK has been shifting, as have the numbers of speakers of Polish. With a focus on both online and offline contexts in the post-Brexit era, this presentation investigates how Polish language use is promoted, supported, and maintained across different settings in the city of Liverpool. I follow recent work around Polish language maintenance and policy in the UK post-Brexit (see Kozminska & Zhu, 2020), however, I observe online-offline practices of not-for-profit, migrant-led Polish organisations, rather than family-based language practices. I draw on a scope of previous research on multilingual language use in urban contexts (e.g. García & Fishman, 1997; Carson & King, 2016; Mar-Molinero, 2020), whilst situating my findings in the developing study of the online-offline nexus of communication (Blommaert, 2019). I assess networking and communication in the multilingual city as hybrid, i.e. occurring both offline and online. Therefore, observing online communication and how it is linked to the provision and maintenance of European languages in UK cities post-Brexit is an essential part of this study.

In the UK Census 2021 results for Liverpool, around 45,000 respondents of a total number of 486,100 reported their 'main language' to be a language different to English. Polish was the third most spoken 'main language' after English and Arabic, with 4,809 residents reporting this to be the case. Poland was also reported as the country of birth for 5,700 Liverpool residents, making it the most represented country of birth after England (ONS, 2021). Shifting to a qualitative, ethnographic perspective based on these figures, I draw on data created as part of a wider, ongoing PhD research project. I focus on discourse produced through interviews with staff members from Polish organisations in the city, as well as through both online and offline observations. I explore hybrid practices of such organisations, considering ideologies around – and attitudes towards – the Polish language in Liverpool, and how it is used alongside English and other languages.

Through my analysis I demonstrate how Polish language use in post-Brexit Liverpool is promoted, maintained, and supported to varying degrees, dependant on the settings in which it is being used. Attitudes towards the roles of Polish alongside English and other languages tend to differ in settings related to education and learning, political activism, healthcare, well-being, and arts-based activities. Efforts to maintain the Polish language and to support L1 speakers of Polish are evident, and awareness of strategic language use in both online and offline spaces is prominent. The uses and roles of English are also referred to, often linked to outreach, integration, and intercultural communication. Although both positive and negative experiences are presented, I illustrate the overall resilience of Polish organisations and community groups and their effects on Polish language maintenance, despite the difficulties and uncertainties presented by Brexit. I also emphasise the power of hybrid networking within migrant communities and the need for exploring its effects on EU migrants in the UK through the Brexit era.

Blommaert, J. (2019) From groups to actions and back in online-offline sociolinguistics. *Multilingua*, 38(4), pp.485-493.

Carson, L. King, L. (2016) *The Multilingual City*. Multilingual Matters: Bristol.

García, O. Fishman, J.A. (1997) *The Multilingual Apple: Languages in New York City*. Mouton De Gruyter.

Kozminska, K. Zhu, H. (2020) The promise and resilience of multilingualism: Language ideologies and practices of Polish-speaking migrants in the UK post the Brexit vote. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 42(5), pp. 444–461.

Mar-Molinero, C. (2020) Researching Language in Superdiverse Urban Contexts: Exploring Methodological and Theoretical Concepts. Multilingual Matters: Bristol.

Office for National Statistics. (2021) *How Life Has Changed in Liverpool: Census 2021.* Available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/censusareachanges/E08000012/>.

Eduardo Faingold

Irish in the UK and English in the European Union in the aftermath of Brexit.

Writing in June 2019, Faingold (2020) speculated about the possible effects of Brexit on the language rights of speakers of Celtic languages, especially Irish, in the UK (European Language Equality Network, 2018; Mac Giolla Chríost & Benotti, 2018) and on the status of English as an official or working language of the EU (Mac Giolla Chríost & Benotti, 2018; Modiano, 2017; Salama-Carr, Carsten, & Campbell, 2018). At that time, I hypothesized that Brexit could have a detrimental effect on the Irish language, due to the expected loss of access to EU funding and programs for language planning and development. I also noted that the loss of EU funding for cross-border Irish language projects, and the termination of the cooperation agreements between Gaelic groups in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland, could have a negative impact on upholding the Good Friday Agreement which has been instrumental for keeping the peace in the region for more than a quarter-century (European Language Equality Network, 2018). As for the status of English as an official or working language of the EU, I speculated that the regime of official languages might be adjusted as the English constituency would be much more reduced, comprising of the Irish and the Maltese only, and that a formal application to include English as an official EU language would have to be made, since only the UK had requested this.

Nearly half a decade since Brexit, this study aimed to determine whether it has had a detrimental impact on the language rights of Irish speakers in the UK and on the upholding of the Good Friday peace agreement in Northern Ireland, as well as on the status of English in the EU. As this study argues, with the passing of the Identity and Language (Northern Ireland) Act in 2022, which enhances and protects the use of the Irish language by public authorities in the provision of public services, the scope of language rights for Irish speakers in the UK has been expanded rather than diminished; and the Good Friday Agreement that brought peace to Northern Ireland in 1998 after three decades of violence continues to remain central to ensure a lasting peace in the region. Thus, the fear that Brexit could have a detrimental impact on the language rights of Irish speakers in the UK and on the upholding of the Good Friday Agreement did not come to pass. As for the current status of English as an official/working language of the EU, at the time of this writing (February 2024), the official website of the European Union continues to list English among the 24 official/working languages of the EU (https://european-union.europa.eu/principles-countries-history/languages_en). Thus, despite the withdrawal of the UK from the EU, English continues to be considered an official and working language of the European Union by EU legislation as if Brexit had never happened. So far, EU officials

have not shown any interest in changing the current state of affairs, a *de facto* declaration of support for maintaining English as the lingua franca of the EU, or maybe an unintended consequence of the legal requirement that "changes to the EU language regime must be agreed upon unanimously by the Council of Ministers," a seemly unattainable goal at this time (Salama-Carr, Carsten, & Campbell, 2018, p. 212).

European Language Equality Network (ELEN). (2018). *Joint statement on the effect of Brexit on the celtic languages*. Retrieved from https://elen.ngo/wpcontent/uploads/2018/12/ELEN-joint-statement-final-2-Brexit-2018.pdf.
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Salama-Carr, M., Carsten, S., & Campbell, H. J. L. (2018). Translation and interpreting in a post-Brexit Britain. In M. Kelly (Ed.), *Languages after Brexit: How the UK speaks to the world* (pp. 207–218). Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan.

Caterina Guardamagna [Jessica Hampton, Mariana Roccia, Djordje Sredanovic]

Where are you from? Local Identities and Microaggressions toward EU academics in the UK in the Brexit Era

An (apparently?) descriptive question, that might be classed as an innocent "ice-breaker", has come under fire in the last decade or so as a potential vehicle of hidden racism. Asking "where are you from?" has come to be seen – especially in the American context – as a covert way to interrogate a fellow citizen on their ethnicity, when this is different to the one of the dominant group. By not engaging with interactional/conversational data and replying on heavily edited anecdotes or "vignettes", the literature in psychology/counselling (Sue & Spanierman 2020) and philosophy (Rini 2020) produces the sweeping generalisation that this question invariably encodes racism.
This talk focuses on a case-study in which the "where are you from?" question appears in the context of a nationality based microaggression spontaneously oriented to by an academic migrant in the UK. The sequential interaction shows how the conversational context promotes a more nuanced reading. The participant takes issue with "Where are you from?" question inasmuch as it expresses essentialist attitude towards migrants, which flattens their identity to place of origin (alongside length of stay). Against this view, the participant invokes a more rounded view of national and personal identity, which is elaborated on at length in the surrounding context. This suggests that looking at locally occasioned identities beyond transportable identities (including nationality) and focusing on the "where are you from?" question in context is a more promising way to reach a greater understanding of such a controversial question.

Rini, Regina. 2020. *The Ethics of Microaggression*. London: Routledge.
Sue, Derald Wing, and Lisa Beth Spanierman. 2020. *Microaggressions in Everyday life*, 2nd edition. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.

Argyro Kanaki

Lithuanians in Scotland: language, identity and migration

This paper explores the relationship between language attitudes, identity, belonging and migration of Lithuanian migrants in Scotland.

The relationship between language, identity and migration remains underexplored in existing migration literature about Scotland. On the one hand, the Eastern Europeans' experiences of settlement and relocation in Scotland (Kay & Trevena 2021) have been documented. On the other hand, the focus has always been mainly on Polish migration (McCollum & Trevena 2021). Language has only been researched as a medium that helps the building of social networks in the experiences of queer migrants in Scotland (Stella & Gawlewicz 2021). So far, there have not been any studies looking at the nexus between language, identity and migration of Eastern Europeans after Brexit, and especially Lithuanians living and working in Scotland. The paper draws on data collected via in-depth interviews from an on-going project *Lithuanians in Scotland: Language, Identity and Migration.* It presents stories and experiences of seven Lithuanian migrants who live and work in Scotland in post Brexit era. Using concepts from Critical Border Studies, where borders are dynamic and changing, always dependent on political discourses and decisions, constructed socially and culturally, we see that the Lithuanian narratives are also based on binaries between 'us' and 'them'. Their narratives resonate similar feelings and opinions with other Eastern European nations showing how Eastern Europeans have been historically othered and racialised by Western European host countries (Fox et al. 2012). The discourses produced by the Lithuanian migrants in their everyday practices illustrate that they seem to be aware of the political debates and othered and racialised discourses that have existed in the UK in relation to EU migrants.

However, Lithuanian language plays an important role in all these narratives. The paper foregrounds the importance of Lithuanian language in shaping Lithuanian identity and self-identity abroad. Lithuanian language is always associated with different degrees of cultural and emotional closeness to the home country, Lithuania; it is also a marker of racialised identity, self-identity and ethnocultural belonging.

Fox, J., Moroşanu, L. & Szilassy, E. (2012) The Racialization of the New European Migration to the UK, *Sociology,* 46:4, 680–695.

Kay, R. & Trevena, P. (2021) (Not) a good place to stay! – East European migrants' experiences of settlement in disadvantaged neighbourhoods in Scotland, *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 47:15, 3492-3510.

McCollum, D & Trevena, P. (2021) Protracted precarities: The residential mobilities of Poles in Scotland, *Population Space and Place*, DOI: 10.1002/psp.2438.

Stella, F. & Gawlewicz, A. (2021) Social networks, language and identity negotiations among queer migrants in Scotland*, Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 47:11, 2537-2555.

Mariem Krida

'Last Christmas' as a Cinematic Mirror of Central Europeans as Victims and Perpetrators of Social Chaos

Traditional scholars, who show commitment to method and training, have shown a rejection of film as a projection of events, as truth is often distorted for the sake of entertainment (Harzallah 2020, 74; Bisson 2014, 143-146). Nevertheless, without these films, complicated issues, such as the Brexit vote, would not have generally reached a wider audience beyond Europe and the US. This paper deals with the cinematic construction of UK-based Central Europeans' shifting

identities and sense of belonging amidst the backdrop of the Brexit referendum. Specifically, it conducts an analysis of the 2019 film 'Last Christmas' to illuminate these dynamics. While the movie is not typically a historical documentary in the way that a factual, historical account might be, this fictionally-entertaining work includes themes related to the impact of the Brexit referendum on Central Europeans in the UK during this period. This paper attempts to offer insights into the ways in which movies contribute to societal conversations on complex geopolitical issues during periods of significant change, as in the case of the Brexit vote. Drawing on framing theory, I attempt to scrutinize the film's portrayal of the characters residing in the cosmopolitan and pro-EU city of London. I seek to show the extent to which soft power contributes to the faithful representation of a group that was already negatively portrayed in British media in the run-up to the Brexit referendum. Overall, this study shows that although the film sheds light on hostilities experienced by UK-based Central Europeans in the lead-up to the referendum, and highlights their agency in confronting the growing xenophobia, it seems to reinforce existing stereotypes associated with particular communities. By exploring these cinematic representations, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of how visual storytelling both reflects and shapes societal perceptions during times of significant geopolitical shifts.

Christoper Lee

Language practices and identity construction on Facebook in the aftermath of Brexit: The case of a group of British migrants in Greece applying for Greek citizenship

Following the 2016 referendum which saw the UK vote to leave the European Union, some significant divisive discourse has been noted in UK politics and newspapers, such as Theresa May's comments presenting EU migrants as "bargaining chips" in the subsequent Brexit negotiations and to UK citizens claiming to be "citizens of the world" as "citizens of nowhere." Despite the fact that Brexit affects both EU citizens in the UK and UK citizens living and working in the EU, emphasis has largely been placed on the former rather than the latter. Indeed, recent references in the press to difficulties faced by UK citizens in the EU tend to stereotypically focus on UK citizens as holiday makers, as opposed to examining the cases of professional British migrants living and working in Europe.

Similarly, in linguistic research, although there exists a notable body of work which looks at the language practices of European migrants in countries such as Germany (Androutsopoulos 2015) and the UK (Georgalou 2015), there is a distinct lack of sociolinguistic studies examine the multilingual practices of British migrants in Europe. This paper intends to bridge this gap by presenting authentic data from the 60 Facebook posts and 46 comments produced in March 2021 by 7 British migrants living in Greece and seeking Greek citizenship in the aftermath of Brexit. This specific period of time was selected, as many citizenship interviews were held at this time and a great deal of discussion was observed between members of the Facebook support group. The study adopts a blended data approach used in online ethnography (Androutsopoulos 2013), so as to include the insights of the Facebook users themselves. Such an approach allows the researcher to observe the ways in which users communicate with each other, but also to interpret communicative practices through the insight of the participants themselves. By presenting examples of both language practices and discussions with participants, we will see how the Facebook users in question construct identity through the use of code-switching and translanguaging, and how they position themselves in relation to Greece, the UK, and their fellow migrants.

The proposed paper sists, therefore, between the thematic areas of identity and belonging, translanguaging, and narratives of migration. It also intends to contribute to the discussion on language and Brexit by showcasing data from a hitherto under- researched demographic group in migrant-based sociolinguistic research.

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Meiqi Li

Family Language Policy of Finnish Immigrants in the Context of Brexit: Focus on Heritage Language Maintenance

While the 1993 establishment of the EU and subsequent developments may have challenged the de facto dominance of English in the UK, Brexit serves as a further argument for its statutory recognition as the official language (Chríost & Bonotti, 2018). However, this raises questions about the potential implications of Brexit for the survival of other European languages within the UK. In addition, despite the significant consequences of Brexit, its potential effects on the language policies of both the UK and EU remain largely unexplored. Few existing studies primarily focus on European attitudes towards English and changes in its status within the EU or the UK, with less attention given to the language attitudes and practices of European immigrants living in the UK. As such, taking the perspective of family language policies, the study centers on Finnish immigrants living in the UK, aiming to investigate their family language policies and the Finnish language maintenance situation in the context of Brexit, where English is progressively gaining prominence. My choice of Finnish stems from research indicating an emphasis on developing bilingualism and multilingualism in the country, regardless of whether the languages are dominant or heritage languages, compared to other countries like the United States and the United Kingdom. For example, a study conducted in Finland found that Finnish bi(multi)lingual teachers had knowledge about second language acquisition and positive attitudes towards students' first languages (Vigren, et al., 2022). In contrast, in Greece, the results of the quantitative study in Gkaintartzi et al.'s (2015) research have indicated that a very large number of teachers (48.2%) consider their pupils' heritage languages a hindrance to Greek learning. In this mixed-methods study, an examination will be conducted into the language attitudes, managements, practices, and motivations of Finnish immigrants concerning both Finnish and English. The primary focus will be on whether, why and how they actively preserve their heritage language and the language education decisions they make for their children. Data collection will be facilitated through the use of semi-structured interviews and questionnaires.

Diana Madroane

Romanian Immigrants in the UK as Brexit-Critical (Counter)Publics: A Discourse and Rhetorical Analysis of Diasporic Forum and Media Contributions

During the months preceding the EU referendum vote and in the following period, a counterpublic has emerged in the Romanian diasporic media in opposition to dominant mainstream narratives that affirmed British nativist stances towards EU immigrants (Author et al., 2020). On the one hand, contributors to Romanian diasporic publications advanced significant counterarguments to claims made by Brexiteers about EU immigrants (regarding issues such as crime or benefits scrounging) and upheld democratic values (diversity, equality, freedom) rooted in EU membership as well as in Great Britain's past policies; on the other, they essentialized and reproduced, to some extent, hierarchical forms of identification (the "good" and the "bad" immigrant) and oppositional relationships (Romanians vs. native Brits). Against this backdrop, it becomes significant to look into the development of such articulations in the post-Brexit, post-pandemic era, at a time of multiple crises in British society (truck driver crisis, agricultural worker crisis, etc.) that triggered reflections on the new social reality in the UK. A preliminary search on the biggest online forum of the Romanian community in the UK – *Români în UK* – and in one of the diasporic publications that claims editorial independence – *ClickRomânia* – has shown that the opinion articles, contributions, and FB comments concerning Brexit usually focus on those cases where British society is struggling as a result of loss of EU immigrant workforce.

The present study proposes to analyse such diasporic contributions, made between 2021 and 2024, through two lenses: (1) critical rhetoric, as understood in advocacy and activism practices, namely a critique of the status quo aimed at raising awareness and making one's voice heard (Pezzullo & Cox, 2018); (2) counterpublic formation (Asen, 2000; Fraser, 1990; Warner, 2002) in the process of engaging with the negative consequences of Britain's decision to exit the European Union. The positionings that are taking shape, while seeking to counteract the stigmatizing and even racist attitudes towards EU immigrants (Fox et al. 2012) by highlighting their worth for British society, also run the risk of deepening symbolic identitarian divides between Romanian/other EU immigrants and the British citizens who voted for Brexit and are assigned blame for the post-Brexit crises. Analytically, the study uses multimodal discourse analysis and rhetorical criticism to examine such critical interventions, which include articles, FB comments/forum entries, images and short videos, as public modalities (Asen & Brouwer, 2010) of expression and diasporic identity building online (Trandafoiu, 2013), often drawing upon irony, satire and even incivility. What do such diasporic stances and idioms (Brubaker, 2005) foreshadow for identity reconfigurations in the post-Brexit era? Is the migrants' critical rhetoric a source of counterpublic enclavization and polarization or does it have the potential to open dialogue and bring solutions? The study aims to fill a gap in the literature on diasporic counterpublicity and in the discourse analysis-based research on Brexit.

Rexhina Ndoci and Petros Karatsareas

Co-constructing the affordances of migrating to the UK as EU citizens: the vantage points of Albanian onward migrants from Greece

In this paper, we draw attention to a group of EU migrants who have hitherto received little attention in linguistic scholarship: onward migrants (OMs) who hold EU passports. OMs are people whose spatial trajectories involve extended stays in two or more destination countries (Ahrens & King 2023). Between 2007/2008 and 2020, the UK was one of the top destinations of people who had previously migrated from non-EU countries to EU countries that were worst affected by the financial crisis – most notably, Greece, Italy, Spain, and Portugal –; were naturalised as EU citizens; and, exercised EU freedom of movement rights (King & Karamoschou 2019). The size of such groups remains to be established, but it can be safely

assumed that Oms are at least partly responsible for the increase in the number of speakers of Greek, Italian, Spanish, and Portuguese that was recorded in the 2021 census for England and Wales compared to 2011 (+52% for Greek, +73% for Italian, +78% for Spanish, +68% for Portuguese; ONS 2022).

We focus on the experiences of people who migrated from Albania to Greece as children and from Greece to the UK as adults – a route followed by many in recent years owing to the acquisition of Greek citizenship and enhanced mobility rights but also in response to the lack of employment opportunities as well as experiences of discrimination and racism in Greece (Karamoschou 2018, Gemi & Triandafyllidou 2021). We draw our insights from the thematic analysis of the transcripts of three focus group sessions that we facilitated with thirteen Albanian OMs, in which we took an auto-socio-bio-ethnographic approach (Busch, 2022), centring participants as agentive subjects who narrated, communicated, and deliberated on their lived experiences of legal, socioeconomic, and linguistic inequalities such as the ones that drove and were created by their (onward) migration and processes of categorisation (Flubacher & Purkarthofer, 2022).

Here, we present how research participants discursively co-constructed the affordances of migrating to the UK as EU passport holders before and after Brexit. Comparing their lives in the UK with the lives they had led in Greece, they constructed arriving in the UK as a watershed moment that enabled them to reflect retrospectively on what it had meant to grow up and become adults in Greece as children of Albanian migrants. Participants generally reported that they had not experienced racism or downward occupational mobility in the UK. Onward migration was therefore portrayed as an opportunity to overcome the trauma of the previous fragment in their migration trajectories by living lives that were truer to themselves, their identities, and their aspirations (cf. Benson & O'Reilly, 2009). At the same time, participants believed that Brexit was evidence that racism in the UK was a powerful driving force in society (Tudor, 2023) and acknowledged that they found themselves outside its reach and that EU citizenship protected them from the UK's hostile environment (Griffiths & Yeo 2021) compared to others who attempted to migrate to the UK post-Brexit – including recently-arrived Albanian citizens (Morris & Qureshi 2022).

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Alexander Pavlenko and Anastasia Malykhina

When common methodological language frameworks can really help (the case of post-Brexit migrants from continental Europe)

Brexit has reduced the flow of EU migrants to the UK, and increased the requirements to the continental foreign workforce, the linguistic requirements in particular. Those who are still planning to move to the post-Brexit UK from the continent may face serious challenge as regards their English language competence. In order to harmonise the situation with the "new-wave" EU migrants' expectations and their actual English language competence it may be wise to think again about the common European institutions and methodological frameworks which were introduced at the turn of the millennium.

The paper focuses on a set of common methodological frameworks regulating and facilitating teaching and learning of second and foreign languages, which was introduced by the Council of Europe and has been used by the member-states for more than two decades. What makes the tools in question special is their applicability to any indigenous idiom, including the lesser-used languages spoken on the territory of the European Union (and, in fact, beyond).

The most fundamental of the abovementioned international arrangements is the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, which provides a common basis for the elaboration of syllabuses, teaching materials as well as assessment programmes and tests [1]. As is known, this framework features a system of common standards including six reference levels, which serve as a basis for the so-called European Language Portfolio, whose status changed in 2014 from mandatory to advisory. The Council of Europe Language Policy Division, which is based in Gratz (Austria), is responsible for elaborating the common strategy and tactics in the field of language teaching. The paper provides an overview of the opinions and judgments of specialists in the field of language education and linguists regarding the prospects for using these mechanisms in the Bexit situation and their effectiveness.

The notions of *plurilingualism* and *multilingualism* imbedded in the said frameworks and constituting their conceptual basis are re-considered in particular. An analysis of the concept and the phenomenon of *plurilingualism* is carried out as regards its connection with the English language training and assessment services available for future labour migrants of various linguistic backgrounds.

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Giulia Pepe

Post-2008 Italian migrants and the negotiation of their migratory status: The impact of Brexit on migrants' self-conceptualization.

In 2008, the financial crisis destabilised the economies of many European countries, in particular southern European ones. The higher price of this situation was paid by the youth of these countries, that suddenly felt their future was at risk. Consequently, new migratory fluxes started, re-shaping the geography of European migration, as thousands of southern Europeans migrated to northern countries (King 2017; Lafleur and Stanek 2017). For almost a decade, the UK, and London in particular, represented the favourite destination for these migrants (King et al. 2018). This paper focuses on post-2008 Italian emigration to London, an emblematic and interesting case in terms of numbers and socioeconomic variables (Pepe 2022), which although presents some characteristics common to all post-crisis intra-European migration.

The post-2008 European migration has been defined as *liquid* (Bygnes and Bivand Erdal 2017). Many described the post-2008 migrants as the *Eurostar generation*, using a term coined by the sociologist Adrian Favell (2008), or as "highly-mobile people", who benefitted from the European freedom of movement (Scotto 2015: 160). This contributed to the idea that the post-crisis generation was not formed of traditional migrants - people who moved to a different country with the intention to settle and integrate into the host society (Anderson and Blinder 2015) - but of transnational individuals, who live their lives fluidly, and who are hyperconnected to more than one reality. Such representation, valid for many aspects but misleading for others, led to a false media narrative that labelled this migration as elite, or as a brain drain (Pepe 2022).

This paper explores how a key word, "migrant", is accepted, contested, negotiated by a sample of post-2008 Italian migrants living in London, with the purpose of shaping their own identities and contesting the media narrative. Between 2015 and 2022, I collected ethnographic data during two projects which involved post-2008 Italian migrants in London, observed and audio-recorded in in-group gatherings. The data, analysed through the principles of Narrative Analysis (De Fina 2015) and Discourse Analysis (Handford & Gee 2013), show that migrants re-shape the image of the typical migrant, or immigrant, throughout their narratives, or relying on their reflections on migration trajectories and experiences. New forms of mobility started in the post-modern era opened the discussion on the essence of a migrant, or to put it simple, on who counts as a migrant (Anderson and Blinder 2015). The paper illustrates how participants do not always follow officially delineated standards to identify themselves as migrants (e.g., they neglect the duration of their stay in favour of more meaningful factors, like nationality and ideologies) and discusses the impact that phenomena as Brexit have on individual narratives and on migrants' reconceptualization of their status. Without the presumption of providing a new definition for the term, the paper aims at offering different parameters and features - suggested by those who actively lived a migration - that determine the ontology of such term and starts a debate on the value this term has when interpreted as a life-defying label.

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Mary Robinson and Karen Corrigan

Young EU migrants in Northern Ireland: Experiences of navigating a divided society on the eve of Brexit

Although the Northern Irish (NI) population overall rejected the EU Referendum 'Brexit' vote, voting was split along familiar ethno-nationalist lines - 85% of Roman Catholics (RC) choosing 'remain' and only 40% of Protestants doing so (Garry 2018). Sectarian divisions extend to A8 expansion EU immigrants from majority RC states like the 'Visegrád Four' (Rothgangel 2021). However, this should not imply that even prior to the Referendum they were perceived as integrated within NI's RC communities either (McDermott 2023).

This paper offers new insight into the rarely explored experience of young EU newcomers navigating Euroscepticism and racism while also forging a new life in a deeply divided society. We exploit a large corpus of sociolinguistic interviews undertaken on the eve of Brexit but amidst the rising anti-migrant backlash present throughout the UK just prior (Goodwin & Milazzo 2017). They were collected from pupils (aged 5-20) who had either a NI or a newcomer migrant background and were attending schools in Armagh, Belfast and Donaghmore. A key aim was to examine the extent to which the latter had acquired the constraints on linguistic variation that typified locally-born peers (see FIRST AUTHOR 2020). An important ancillary objective was to generate narratives of migration that could be explored from diverse perspectives to uncover issues of migrant identity and belonging. This led to insightful discourses, capturing the hostile practices meted out to 'blow-ins' (a local pejorative term for immigrant), from peers, neighbours and the wider community as well as within educational, governmental and other state-run institutions. They included microaggressions towards newcomers' translanguaging practices as well as inadequate provision of translating and interpreting services alongside exclusion from certain leisure activities with which the local RC population strongly identify.

The paper explores 3 themes which focus particularly on issues of identity and belonging, sectarianism and discrimination. The first highlights discourses in which young immigrants to NI with an Eastern European heritage express a split sense of national and cultural identity.

This schism is experienced even by those in the sample who were born in NI and have strong social networks that extend to local youngsters. They also admit to not having maintained their parents' L1s. The second theme focuses on EU newcomers' experiences of NI as sectarian which is often expressed as bewilderment or even annoyance that they are ascribed nationalist attitudes and discriminated against solely because they share the same RC religion as their locally-born peers. The third topic extends the analysis to consider other types of social exclusion which EU immigrants have faced since arriving. These range from being excluded in classroom contexts to being forced to translate for parents in confidential settings. The discourses also recount incidents involving being bullied off a Gaelic football team, reactions to profane, racist and anti-migrant graffiti and experiences of racially- motivated incidents. NI shares a land border with the EU which newcomers could once take advantage of. However, these youngsters experienced discrimination and a sectarian divide even prior to Brexit which were considerably harder to navigate.

The Brexit Couples Project

"It's not like you're some weird immigrant coming in": Migrantisation and exceptionalism narratives of UK-EU couples

Recent literature has described Brexit as a process of rebordering (e.g. Zambelli, Benson and Sigona, 2023). Before Brexit, EU and EEA migrants in the UK enjoyed most of the same rights as UK citizens, and were not subject to UK immigration laws (with minor exceptions). Since the end of the Brexit transition period however, EU/EEA citizens who wish you come to the UK have to comply with the increasingly restrictive immigration regulations, similar to other non-EU/EEA citizens. Therefore, in UK policy and law, as well as in public discourses, EU/EEA citizens in the UK were re-categorised as 'immigrants' – in other words, they were migrantised (Anderson, 2019; Dahinden and Anderson, 2021). This process of top-down categorical migrantisation may impact on experiential migrantisation – that is, how migrantisation is experienced and narrated.

Based on our qualitative research with UK-EU/EEA couples who are subject to post-Brexit marriage and family migration regulations, we are exploring the various narratives of identity, belonging and deservingness among EU/EEA migrants. As the quote in the title (first-hand data from our study) suggests, EU/EEA migrants who are used to freedom of movement may distinguish themselves from other migrants in the UK.

Drawing on our qualitative interviews with couples, we explore how European migrants in the UK – especially those subject to post-Brexit immigration processes – speak about themselves. For many of our research respondents, the UK immigration processes are the first time they experience immigration systems; and fraught with increasing costs and intrusive assessments, such encounters with immigration bureaucracies and institutions are often described as unexpected, shocking, unfair and hostile. We examine how European migrants define themselves (for example as immigrants, expats, or other labels), and how these identifications come to the fore when dealing with post-Brexit immigration systems in the UK. We discuss what narratives European migrants are using to distinguish themselves from other migrants in the UK, such as asylum seekers, refugees and other migrants from outside Europe. In this context, we highlight the potential stereotyping of non-European migrants in these narratives. We also explore how these identifications impact on UK-EU couples' perceptions and experiences with UK immigration law and processes post-Brexit, as well as when dealing with border officials and other gatekeepers in the UK, especially in the context of marriage and family migration.

Overall, we argue that EU/EEA migrants who are in or want to come to the UK are now subject to categorical migrantisation, but often adopt a narrative of exceptionalism, based on their perceived privileged status vis-à-vis non-European migrants, especially in the context of partner and marriage migration. As the first qualitative study on post-Brexit marriage and family migration by UK-EU couples, our contribution will offer an innovative and unique insight into EU migrants' perceptions and narratives of the UK immigration system and their place within it.

Sara Young

Resisting the anti-migrant narrative: the perspective of Polish-born teenagers living in the UK

While much of the literature on European Union (EU) migration, especially that from Eastern Europe, has focused on the viewpoints of adult migrants, there is a growing recognition that narratives of children offer another perspective on the experience of migration in the time of Brexit. Unlike adults, children are rarely agentive in the decision to migrate, but find themselves obliged to adapt to a new environment, a new language and also education system. However, their discourses may be those of resistance, challenging the dominant discourses to which they are exposed. Like adults, children who have migrated with their families are also subjected to anti-migrant hostility, but here often coming via the school playground or even within the classroom. Research I conducted in 2016 on the brink of the Referendum focused on a group of Polish-born young teenagers (aged 11-16) living in the UK. Aiming to explore their ethno-linguistic identity construction in the light of the Brexit Referendum, the study consisted primarily of narrative interviews, where the children were invited to discuss their experiences of migrating to the UK.

The stories they constructed highlighted multiple instances of overt anti-EU migrant hostility, encountered both at school and in the wider environment. While the incidents were upsetting to the participants, within the narratives they constructed, the children provided a counter to such anti-migrant discourses, with stories that showed them challenging the prevalent discourses of Poles coming to 'steal jobs', or having no right to be in the UK. This was reflected partly through the discursive practices through which the children positioned themselves within their narratives as agentive in their movements. The children's agentive positioning was also reflected in their language practices. Language has often been used as a proxy for more overt forms of racism; linguistic xenophobia against Poles, amongst others, had become especially prevalent at that time. In the way they used Polish to make themselves visible, refusing to be silenced when talking in Polish, and resisting efforts – including by their parents – to be positioned as 'English', the children can be seen as subverting the dominant discourse, asserting their right to be seen as Polish as much as British. They thereby presented themselves as Poles who were proud of their birth identity, but with a legitimate right to be in the UK, asserting their heritage background alongside constructing new lives for themselves in the new country. The children's attitude contrasts sharply with the more passive-victim approach that had previously been observed amongst adult Polish communities. Moreover, while scholarship on the experiences of Eastern European migrants to the UK during the Brexit era reported on what was seen as the explosion of anti-migrant hostility that emerged post-Referendum, this study shows that it was very much in evidence prior to the Referendum, as experienced by children. By highlighting this, and focusing on an under-researched group of participants, demonstrating the agentive way in which they strive to present themselves, this paper therefore offers a significant contribution to work in migration in the Brexit era.

Katarina Zajacova

Silencing voices of former au-pairs from Slovakia and Czech Republic: 'What now?' Post-Brexit dilemmas of 'settled' female migrants in the UK.

This proposed study is a continuation of life stories of female migrants from Slovakia and Czech Republic who arrived in the UK between 1989-2004. Their migration journeys started for all of them as au-pairs, as this was one of the only viable migratory options for them, before these countries joined the EU. My previous study investigated three stages of their migration until the point of them becoming, so called, 'settled' migrants.

Their journeys were and continue to be nuanced, full of precarity, but also of female empowerment, and of a relatively rapid upward social mobility. Women's own voices can be heard through their own interpretations of how they navigated various aspects of British society to transition from the domestic worker sphere and to achieve their desired integration.

Brexit put an unexpected spin to their process of integration and abruptly changed the tone of messages from their adopted society (whether perceived or actual) directed towards them. From the social researcher's perspective, this study addresses the changes in migrants' own voices whether it would be expressed by the sense of disappointment, anger, or by being silenced. The notion of the migrant story as a narrative that is completed and somehow finished once the settled (legal) status is achieved is being questioned. It is equally debatable that the process of family formation, such as marriage and/or motherhood, somehow also completed the integration process. The qualitative interviews used here take form of life stories and they investigate attitudes about split identities, but also the gendered nature of the elusive sense of belonging, utilising intersectional and standpoint theoretical perspectives.

The proposed study builds on the existing data set and as a result it adds a longitudinal perspective to migrant experiences in the UK. It addresses an under-studied nationalities from the EU migrants and offers a unique narrative of migration linked to the gender, marital status, motherhood, but also to a particular kind of whiteness. As the focus of the study pays a particular attention to migrants' voices and traces changes in the language as a direct result of Brexit, it sits well within the scope of this call. In addition to self-reported views of Brexit and its impact on migrants' lives and their plans which would be acquired from the interviews, the research also looks at language related to Brexit used by these migrants on social media.

The combination of two data collection methods offers an interesting and a more holistic picture of not only how language around integration changes for migrants after Brexit, but also how they present this to the external world through the social media.