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Language and Superdiversity: An Interdisciplinary Perspective

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Superdiversity

While we were writing this chapter, a devastating fire overwhelmed Grenfell Tower, a 24-floor high-rise block in one of London's most prosperous districts, the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea. While the borough as a whole was one of the wealthiest areas in England, the locality of the tower was in the top 10% most deprived areas in the country. The marks of inequality were starkly evident. In the fire 80 people were reported to have lost their lives, many of them apparently following fire safety advice to stay in their flats. The external cladding and insulation material on the building were reported to be not fire-resistant, survivors said there were no water sprinklers, and the building had only one exit. Whole families were said to have perished in the fire. Rage and anger quickly gathered momentum in the fire's aftermath, as local residents expressed their fury at developers, local government councillors, and national government austerity policies.

The word 'diversity' was in regular use by media reporters and residents alike as they described Grenfell Tower and its immediate neighbourhood. Common phrases included: diverse community, diverse area, vibrant and diverse, ethnically diverse, religiously diverse, economically diverse, diverse people, socio-economically diverse, and linguistically diverse. Members of Parliament and lawyers for the Grenfell survivors recommended that a diverse panel be appointed to advise the inquiry into the fire (*The Guardian* 22.07.2017). The ideological nature of the term 'diversity' is evident here. Diversity becomes a superordinate term to describe the poor, gathered together discursively to include 'migrants' (documented and undocumented), black and minority ethnic working-class people, and white working-class families. Religious diversity were also referenced through mention of the many churches, gurdwaras, mosques, synagogues and charities volunteering to provide assistance to those in need, often in the absence of official or professional provision. Running alongside a discourse of diversity as difference was a discourse of the unifying power of diversity. The collective, shared experiences of those affected by the disaster was readily apparent. The 'diversity' of Kensington and Chelsea's poorer northern wards stood in contrast to its 'hyper-segregated' (Flores and Lewis 2016) wealthy wards. Media discourse did not describe wealthy residents of Kensington and Chelsea as 'diverse'. This tended to be saved for the 'diverse poor'. This is not to say that diversity did not exist within the wealthy areas of the borough. People of many different nationalities lived in the affluent areas, just as there were people of different nationalities and ethnicities living in the tower. London's globalized financial sector attracted highly paid workers from across the globe, and Kensington and Chelsea had the highest proportions of residents working in the financial sector, outside the City of London itself.

Ahmed (2007:235) suggests that "what makes diversity useful also makes it limited: it can become detached from histories of struggle for equality". The language of multiculturalism and cultural diversity produce a discourse which perceives difference as something 'they are', and something we 'can have'. Defining diversity in a way that refers simply to counting people who look different may impede the exposure of social and educational advantage (Ahmed, 2007). However, while diversity can be defined in ways that reproduce rather than challenge social privilege, the openness of the term means that the work it does depends on who gets to define it, and for whom (Ahmed 2007). The word 'diversity' should not be separated from ongoing fights against social inequalities. For example, the use of the term became so routinised in US higher

education and corporate life that it was taken for granted, and diversity came to index the saturation of higher education with corporate and neoliberal values (Urciuoli 2016). A UK government White Paper, *Secure Borders, Safe Haven: Integration with Diversity in Modern Britain* (Home Office, 2002), welcomed "the richness of the cultural diversity which immigrants have brought to the UK", while ratcheting up the requirements that must be met by migrants who wanted to become British citizens. Diversity was welcome, but only on the government's terms (Blackledge 2006). Superdiversity emerged at a point when concepts such as diversity, multiculturalism, integration, and assimilation were found to be limited in their power to explain the complexity of contemporary societies (Meissner 2015).

Superdiversity was conceived as a descriptive and analytical term in the context of rapid demographic change in London in the early twenty-first century (Vertovec 2007). Since then the concept has been read, invoked, criticized, and taken up in an "astounding" variety of different ways across academic disciplines, and in policy and public debates (Vertovec 2017: 1). Superdiversity refers to increasingly stratified and multiple processes and effects of migration, leading to heightened complexity. Across the globe more people, from more varied cultural and linguistic backgrounds, subject to more varied conditions of mobility and legal status, come into regular contact with one another in expanding cities (Vertovec 2015). The context in which the concept of superdiversity has thus far had most salience in academic and policy contexts is in West European nation states (Hall 2017). In 2015, 76 million international migrants were residing in Europe, the highest number of any global region (United Nations 2016). In that year more than 2 million asylum applications were lodged in 38 European countries (UNHCR 2016).

The mobility of people and resources, and variable dimensions of such mobility, has been a common experience in the (so-called) global South for many years. The interaction of multi-dimensional variables which mobility brings has recently been noticed by scholars in the (so-called) global North due to an intensification of mobility, and the complexity of configurations of migration to Europe in particular. Superdiversity describes people coming into contact or proximity as a result of (*inter alia*), migration, invasion, colonization, slavery, religious mission, persecution, trade, conflict, famine, drought, war, urbanization, economic aspiration, family reunion, global commerce, and technological advance. These phenomena involve the mobility of people, and the mobility of resources. Mobility is not confined to the movement of people across national borders, but includes travel within borders. Superdiversity also includes the mobility of digital resources, as people come into contact or proximity online. Androutsopoulos and Juffermans (2014) note that digital language practices in settings of superdiversity extend and complicate the semiotic resources available to people for their performance of identities and social relationships.

More than merely describing the diversification of diversity as a result of recent migration, superdiversity has the potential to offer an interdisciplinary perspective on change and complexity in changing social and cultural worlds. To study superdiversity is to study not only new migrants but the mix of individuals in a place: 'old' and 'new' international migrants, native established populations and resident minorities (Grzymala-Kazlowska and Phillimore 2017). Superdiversity aligns itself with critical approaches which reject simplifying and reifying conceptualisations of complex realities along national and/or ethnic lines (Blommaert et al 2017). A superdiversity orientation pushes understandings of difference to

move away from ethnic, racial, and national groupism, as well as from old binary oppositions of host majority culture versus immigrant minority culture(s) (Blommaert, Spotti, and Van der Aa 2017). Superdiversity departs from diversity as a descriptive, theoretical, methodological, and practical term (Meissner and Vertovec 2015). In doing so it seeks to critique the ideological and structural apparatus of neoliberalism, to address inequality in all its forms, to situate its analysis historically, to be adaptable to different global contexts and temporal scales, and to have practical application to improve people's lives. Superdiversity is still new, as a concept if not as a phenomenon, and is finding its way in the world. It should not be a term associated with a romantic liberal approach to social difference (as 'multiculturalism' at times was, perhaps unfairly). If superdiversity is to achieve anything it must have the teeth to stand against illiberal orientations to difference. In the year before the Grenfell fire the UK electorate voted in a referendum to leave the European Union – widely interpreted as an anti-immigration move. The newly-inaugurated President of the United States signed an executive order banning citizens from Iraq, Syria, Iran, Libya, Somalia, Sudan and Yemen entry to the U.S. for 90 days – widely interpreted as an anti-Muslim move. Superdiversity as a theory of practice must be equipped to critique forces of discrimination. We will examine the potential of superdiversity to shed light on changing social life, and also consider its current limitations, before focusing on superdiversity and language.

Configuring superdiversity

Coined to draw attention to complex patterns in migration, superdiversity entails emerging and specific configurations of, among other dimensions, national and racial or ethnic background, gender, age, language, socio-economic status, legal status and migration channel. So far superdiversity research has almost universally referred to migrants. Much of this research has tended to accept the term 'migrant' as a natural social category which refers to a homogenous group. The term is usually taken to mean a person living in a territory different from that in which she or he was born. So far studies have not engaged significantly with questions of whether it is possible to re-position oneself, to be a migrant at one point in time, and not a migrant at another, or whether it is possible to be a migrant at some points in space, and not a migrant at others.

Some using the term superdiversity have referred to the notion of 'more ethnicities' rather than to multidimensional shifts in migration patterns. But superdiversity is about more than merely the addition of further variables of difference: it is also about conjunctions and interactions of variables, in terms of composition of neighbourhoods, their trajectories, and public service needs (Berg and Sigona 2013). A reading of superdiversity as just 'more groups'– ethnic, national or other – falls short of the original meaning, which calls for a greater recognition of multi-variable configurations (Meissner and Vertovec 2015). While superdiversity has yet to be pinned down precisely, it is at least a 'summary term' to encapsulate a range of changing variables surrounding migration patterns, which amount to a recognition of the complexities of societal diversity (Meissner and Vertovec 2015).

Changing configurations not only mean the movement of people from more varied national, ethnic, linguistic and religious backgrounds, but also the ways that shifts concerning these

categories or attributes coincide with a worldwide diversification of movement flows through specific migration channels. Legal channels to migration fall within three broad streams: labour, education, and family reunion (Collett, Clewett, and Fratzke 2016). However, millions of migrants do not choose to move. By 2015 65.3 million people were forcibly displaced worldwide as a result of persecution, conflict, generalized violence, or human rights violations. 3.2 million people were waiting for a decision on their application for asylum. An estimated 40.8 million people were displaced within the borders of their own country due to conflict and violence (UNHCR 2016). Differential migration channels have been pivotal to the concept of superdiversity. Since migration channels and their respective legal conditions have an impact on the social, economic and political lives of migrants, these most clearly expose the fault lines of 'community' thinking along ethnic lines alone. Appreciating these channels and statuses is necessary for understanding the combined workings of multidimensional patterns on outcomes of socio-economic inequality (Meissner and Vertovec 2015). Migrant legal statuses may limit rights and access in ways that position people as closer to or distant from the state. At the same time, they socially rank people. Such a process of stratification is a means to control people's mobility, socio-economic positioning, and access to public resources. For migrants and asylum-seekers, the stages and statuses that comprise the legal hierarchy have fundamental implications for people's well-being, in terms of earnings, health outcomes, housing, social network formation, locality, incorporation into neighbourhoods and family dynamics (Vertovec 2017).

Social scientists have provided few accounts of interactions between individuals in terms of multiple groups, categories and characteristics: how such encounters are negotiated and maintained, and how local physical and historical conditions contribute to their formation. Public spaces directly influence the ways people engage one another through location, official regulation, physical layout and material conditions. Public spaces have the potential to be mutually negotiated in terms of their local meaning, configuration and use (Vertovec 2015). Social space incorporates social actions, the actions of subjects both individual and collective (Lefebvre 1974 / 1991). Wessendorf (2016) illustrates how the demographic superdiversity of an area facilitates newcomers' settlement process. Conversely, in regions where superdiversity has not been a feature of everyday life, settlement processes may take a different character. Neal et al (2015) examined the relationship between situated public green spaces and superdiverse populations and the relationship between social research processes and those complex multicultural populations. They found that the space of public parks elicits and animates social practices that increase possibilities of encounter, contact, and proximity. Communicative repertoires, available resources at a point in time and space, are subject to the contingencies of the produced space (Blackledge, Creese, and Hu 2017). Research on diversity and diversification in urban public space engages with the notion that public spaces have different meanings and values for different people. The 'spatial repertoire' links the repertoires formed through individual life trajectories to the particular spaces in which these linguistic resources are deployed. Spatial repertoires draw on individual as well as other available resources, while individual repertoires contribute to and draw from spatial repertoires (Pennycook and Otsuji 2015).

Theorizing superdiversity

Superdiversity is not a theory (Vertovec 2017), and remains a conceptual work in progress (Meissner and Vertovec 2015). But referring to superdiversity merely as a social phenomenon obscures its analytical potential to unveil and make accessible for study social complexity as it relates to migration, and also issues beyond the impacts of migration (Meissner 2015). Silverstein (2015) reminds us that for many centuries communicative repertoires have been contingent on the mobility and mixing of populations. Emerging scholarship argues that superdiversity is a useful instrument for historical research, facilitating the systematic exploration of multiple layers of difference within historical migrant populations, in order to better understand the trajectories of migrants and their impact on the societies that received them (De Bock 2015). Using a superdiversity analysis to examine migration to the city of Ghent from 1960 to 1980, with an emphasis on the differentiation of migration channels, De Bock demonstrates that post-war Mediterranean migration to Western Europe cannot be reduced to a stereotypical story of guest worker recruitment and subsequent family reunification. Scholars are increasingly pointing to historical cities that may compete with contemporary urban centres in terms of the diversity of their populations. Looking at history through a superdiversity lens, and superdiversity through a historical lens, can inform understandings of past migrant populations, and can help assess claims of contemporary exceptionalism, as historical examples provide insight into how current configurations of diversity are similar to, and different from, those in the past (De Bock 2015). Theoretically informed empirical work dealing with past migrations enables us to understand what exactly constitutes superdiversity, and to delineate what sets it apart from other instances of diversity, both today and in earlier periods. Also taking a historical perspective, Morawska (2014) compares the forms and contents of conviviality in Cairo under the Fatimid rule in the late 10th and 11th centuries, pre-ghetto Venice in the late 14th and 15th centuries, St Petersburg under the reign of Catherine the Great in the late 18th century, and Berlin at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries. Freitag (2014) examines how people of different ethnic, linguistic, religious and national backgrounds and of all social strata managed to live together peacefully in the late Ottoman Empire. Port cities in particular were massively mixed spaces, both with regard to their Ottoman population and to the presence of communities of nationals of different origins. Freitag's micro-historical perspective takes into consideration social interactions contributing to the creation of different types of communities. A superdiversity perspective on history, like a historical perspective on superdiversity, has much to offer.

As we have seen, superdiversity research has developed largely in the context of Western Europe. The term was coined as a descriptor of London at a point in history when the city was undergoing increasingly stratified processes and effects of migration, leading to heightened social diversity and complexity. This led to some anxiety that superdiversity was limited as a Eurocentric, or Western-centric, notion (Pavlenko 2016; Ndhlovu, 2016). The authors and contexts represented in this volume are mainly 'Western', and many of them West European, reflecting superdiversity's birthplace. However, the child superdiversity is gaining independence, and is beginning to take steps out into the world. Acosta-García and Martínez-Ortiz (2015) argue that superdiversity as a lens to study diversification processes allowed them to better understand the changing dynamics of Mexico. Biehl (2015) addresses the multiple variables impacting the experiences of new migrant populations in Istanbul, and argues that a superdiversity perspective

has clear implications for the development of housing policy in the city. Varis and Wang (2011) examine emerging superdiversity in hip-hop, and on the internet, in China, with a focus on a Chinese rapper's super-vernacular. Vertovec (2015) and colleagues looked at social encounters in urban public spaces in New York, Singapore, and Johannesburg, and asked what happens when people from increasingly heterogeneous cultural and linguistic backgrounds, subject to varied conditions of mobility and legal status, come into regular contact with one another under a variety of urban conditions. We will suggest that superdiversity has far greater potential than as a descriptor of intensified diversification. With Deumert (2014) we consider that the differences brought about by diversity in the social world are too complex to be catalogued. Rather than offering a description of difference, superdiversity is an ideological orientation to difference. As such it is locally, historically, and politically contingent, and is adaptable to different sets of conditions. Whether difference is 'new' or 'old', whether it is situated in the 'West' or the 'East', the 'global North' or the 'global South', whether it is historical or contemporary, superdiversity is a contingent, ideological orientation to difference.

Planning superdiversity

Superdiversity highlights the need for policymakers and public service practitioners to recognise new conditions created by global migration and population change. Silverstein (2015) suggests that state institutions are unprepared for the multi-dimensional fluidity of superdiversity. However, policy-makers have increasingly taken up the term superdiversity as a useful means of conceptualizing the challenges and affordances they engage with in planning to meet the needs of complex societies. Some local authorities in the United Kingdom have formally embraced superdiversity. Yet the implications of doing so in a fair, affordable and politically acceptable way have yet to be worked out (Berg and Sigona 2013).

Superdiversity has begun to make a difference to policy in a range of areas, including social work, urban planning, housing, business and enterprise, maternity care, health services, and education. In social work policy and practice, superdiversity acts as an emerging lens on diversification processes, particularly in large urban areas. It has important implications for social work theory and practice, challenging routine ways of categorizing 'ethnic' clients (Boccagni 2015). Urban planning is also an area of policy informed by superdiversity thinking. In order to effectively plan city spaces, the spatial-theoretical implications of superdiversity are being developed in relation to the micro-dynamics of superdiversity in the fabric of the city (Knowles 2013). Phillimore (2015) found that in order to secure housing for refugees and enhance their employability, there was a need for initiatives that were capable of helping institutions adapt to superdiversity. The concept of superdiversity has also informed contextual analysis of support for new migrant enterprise (Sepulveda, Syrett and Lyon 2011). A superdiversity perspective provides a useful starting point for describing population change and identifying the interplay of different dimensions of diversity (Ram et al 2012). Emergent understanding of entrepreneurial minorities afforded by superdiversity analysis finds itself in friction with the more traditional ethnic managerialism prevailing in policy circles (Ram et. al. 2011). By examining how superdiversity is played out in practice, policy-makers are able to see how the imperative to essentialise and ethnicise diversity reacts with an initiative to pursue a

more relational and fluid approach to communities and enterprise (Ram, Jones, and Villares-Varela, 2017).

Phillimore (2016) studied new migrant women's access to maternity care, and concluded that the maternity system was insufficiently flexible to meet the needs of a superdiverse population in Birmingham, UK. Given high infant mortality rates in this population, there was a need for a review of training and support of professionals in maternity services. Phillimore's (2015) superdiversity analysis revealed a relationship between immigration status and migrants' poor access to ante-natal care, and associated above-average perinatal mortality rates, contradicting previous research which had concluded that migrants had low levels of contact with ante-natal care because it was not valued in their 'cultures'. Phillimore (2010) also revealed that new migrants were trying and failing to fit into a health care system they did not understand, and that did not understand them. Policy makers needed a new way of talking about migration and engaging migrant communities that acknowledged the reality of superdiversity, and looked for practical ways to adapt institutions and services. An international study (Green et. al 2016) demonstrated that formalised support would be useful in a number of settings to assist migrants in Western Europe to access health care. The concept of superdiversity threw new light on how health care was sought and negotiated. Bradby et. al. (2017) found that there was a need for greater recognition of multi-variable migration configurations that underpin the concept of superdiversity in the encounter between health professionals and health service users.

Gogolin (2011) applied superdiversity analysis to open up multilayer activities and multilevel methodologies to provide answers to questions that are relevant to education policy and practice. She argued that deeply rooted traditions which hold binary constructions of reality were inadequate to understand how people teach and learn. Within school populations the features and societal effects of superdiversity play a role in both learning and teaching. With a conceptual framework of superdiversity, binary constructions of reality can be replaced, and the multiplicity and interactivity of features of migration taken into account. However, Gogolin argues that education policy and practice needed to engage with superdiversity as a constant characteristic of contemporary schools, and should be taken up with regard to structure as well as teaching practice.

There is more work to be done to make new knowledge about the complexity of superdiverse neighbourhoods useful to policy-makers and planners. Complex explanations may be deemed elitist and out of touch (Vertovec 2017). Academic researchers have a responsibility to find ways of communicating effectively with those who can make a difference to policy and practice. Collaborating with policy-makers from the outset, and trusting them as partners, goes some way to reduce the gap between the separate constituencies. Beyond the level of policy, academic researchers across disciplines as disparate as health sciences, urban geography, medical sociology, religious studies, sport and exercise sciences, law, economics, demography, business and entrepreneurship, and heritage studies have found that superdiversity analysis illuminates their understanding of social life (Meissner and Vertovec 2015).

Superdiversity research has considerable potential to investigate, configure, theorise, and plan for greater equality in, complex societies. In order to do so it will need to keep its balance, challenging established discriminatory structures, while at the same time going beyond those

structures to reveal them as social and discursive constructions. This is a balancing act that requires social researchers with an interest in contributing to the creation of more equal societies to step into each others' academic territories, and exchange knowledge and expertise. It requires an approach that is interdisciplinary, or transdisciplinary. This is the approach taken by the present volume. The authors of 35 chapters bring multiple disciplinary perspectives to report the generation of new knowledge in superdiverse settings. Their collective accounts provide a picture of how superdiversity research is able to shed light on social life. What unites their accounts is a focus on language.

Language

This is not a book about multilingualism. It is a book concerned with how people communicate in societies characterised by heightened social diversity and complexity. The most sensitive index of the kind of societal transformations acknowledged in the previous section is the emergence and development of new forms of human communication. That is, social transformations go hand in hand with sociolinguistic transformations (Blommaert 2013). Here we refocus our perspective on a "sociolinguistic superdiversity" (Blommaert and Rampton 2011:2). In developing a theoretical and practical orientation to sociolinguistic transformations we will consider the potential of language and superdiversity, interaction ritual, emergence and constraint, conviviality, everyday encounters and inequality, translanguaging, and heteroglossia. We suggest that taken together, these related but distinct elements constitute superdiversity as (borrowing from Bourdieu 1977) a theory of practice, and as a contingent and ideological orientation to difference. We will conclude with a discussion of methods for investigating sociolinguistic transformation in the future.

Language and mobility

As we have seen, contact and interaction (physical or virtual) between nationalities, ethnicities, languages, cultural modes, media, and practices are the norm. These developments have affected the ways people communicate in all contexts of life, thus calling for a rethinking of the concepts and methodologies underlying the practice of sociocultural linguistics (De Fina, Ikizoglu, and Wegner 2017). However, there is some disagreement about the question of whether recent history has introduced 'new' sociolinguistic phenomena. Flores and Lewis (2016) suggest that to regard contemporary communicative practices as 'new' is to ignore the reality that similar characteristics of diversity have existed in many contexts for centuries. Blommaert (2014) engages with this point directly, arguing that technological change has ushered in new communicative practices. Developments in technology have led to large online communities creating "new, specialized modes of communication on digital platforms, involving new identity performance opportunities, as well as new norms for appropriate communicative behavior, and requiring new kinds of visual literacy-based semiotic work in new genres and registers" (Blommaert 2014:8). Androutsopoulos and Juffermans (2014) point to technologies that enable and intensify the present-day global flows of people, discourses, and signs. Deumert (2014) suggests that bringing sociolinguistic work on digital (and other forms of) creativity together with work on the sociolinguistics of superdiversity has potential for productive debates and

further theoretical development on both sides. Jacquemet (2014) further argues that the concept of superdiversity should be stretched to include digital interactions, and in particular the way that communicative technologies have made digital media accessible to everyone, producing a transformation in access to knowledge infrastructure, particularly in long-distance interactions.

Mobility is a central theoretical concern in the sociolinguistics of resources, as it describes the dislocation of language and language events from a fixed position in time and space. An approach to language which concerns itself with mobility views human action in terms of temporal and spatial trajectories. A sociolinguistics of mobility focuses not on language-in-place but on language-in-motion, with various spatiotemporal frames interacting with one another (Blommaert 2010; 2014). Sociolinguistic transformation through superdiversity is not limited to the spatial and temporal co-existence of different 'languages'. Rather, sociolinguistic superdiversity is a complex system subject to very different and separately developing forces, with multiple historicities and scales entering in uniquely situated communicative events (Blommaert 2013). To understand the relations of power, constraints, structures, and ideologies at play in the social world, we can examine the fine grain of people's communicative practices. To inform analysis of such practices we turn to Goffman's 'interaction ritual'.

Interaction ritual

If the social world is produced in ordinary activity, then the tools of linguistic, semiotic and discourse analysis can help us understand communication, and more than just communication (Blommaert and Rampton 2011). Attention to the small details of language in use offers access to broader and less immediate social, cultural and political patterns (Blommaert 2013). Meetings of people in time and space provoke complex sets of rules for co-ordinating the joint social activity of talk, but also of gaze, body posture, and so forth (Blommaert et al 2017). The complex sets of rules which govern encounters between people are known as "interaction ritual" (Goffman 1971). When people come into contact, or into interaction, each participant enters a social situation carrying an already established biography of prior dealings with the other participants, and enters also with a vast array of cultural assumptions presumed to be shared (Goffman 1983). At the same time, interactions between people who bring into contact biographies which are not predictable may not share such cultural assumptions. If assumptions are made, the interaction may become unstable, and interactants may quickly need to find a way to prevent, manage, or rectify instability. In analyzing communication we might ask what kinds of change, tension or uncertainty are particular types of action orienting to, how are the interactants dealing with them, and what rituals are invoked in this cause (Rampton 2006). It is by looking closely at the detail of everyday encounters that we can see the small rituals that oil the wheels of interaction.

Rampton (2014) notes that interaction ritual actions are aimed at the restoration or preservation of normal relations. Interaction ritual offers a defence against the vulnerabilities of the ordinary world, and is oriented to the maintenance and recovery of stability. Ritual is a form of action which may be deployed to re-establish the flow of everyday life. It draws participants into the unfolding moment, into the situated, contingent, cultural and corporeal experience "where people search for some semiotic rendering of the stance in social relations they can sense and assess, but

where there can be problems in the coding" (Rampton 2014: 295). In reviewing his analysis of previous empirical material, Rampton proposes that "in their apprehensions of social stratification and efforts to develop new solidarities from ethnolinguistic difference, it looks as though people draw on interaction ritual practices that may well be fundamental to human society in general" (2014: 297).

Goffman (1983:63) proposed that forms of face-to-face life are "worn smooth" by constant repetition on the part of participants who are different in many ways and yet "must quickly reach a working understanding". When persons are present together, "territories of the self bring to the scene a vast filigree of trip wires which individuals are uniquely equipped to trip over" (Goffman 1971: 106). Superdiversity brings people into contact and proximity with differences in territories of the self in terms of (*inter alia*) biography, background, legal status, migration channel, educational history, socio-economic status, nationality, linguistic repertoire, ethnicity, and 'race'. Through interaction ritual a vast filigree of trip wires may be navigated, or found (for the moment) not to be navigable.

Emergence

The concept of emergence, adapted from complexity theory, offers potential for moving beyond the reification of normative assumptions about language in sociolinguistics (Flores and Lewis 2016). In an emergence perspective categorizations are reconceptualized as the social positioning of self and other, as emergent positions that are produced through social interaction, and as always open to change. Social interactions are shaped by the complex interrelationship between the historical and contemporary context of the interlocutors, and the larger societies in which they are embedded. Linguistic practices and categories are sociopolitical emergences that are produced through social interactions that are themselves shaped by historical and contemporary processes. Jaffe (2016) takes up the notion of emergence, arguing that the superdiverse in sociolinguistic research needs to be seen not as a given but as an emergent quality of a particular context, an emergent property of communicative practice in sites of engagement and interaction: not merely a description of a social context, but an ideological orientation to communication and difference. Thus we can speak of people in everyday encounters taking a "superdiverse stance" (Jaffe 2016: 15). Superdiversity emerges as a reflexive object, a way of being in the world that can be documented in a variety of sites, both conventionally 'diverse' and otherwise. Analysis of emergence also attends to constraints, which emerge from local, less enduring patterns that mediate or even undermine more enduring regularities (Wortham 2012).

In order to gain a better understanding of how meaning is constructed through the mechanisms and strategies of talk in interaction, it is important to closely examine how voices of participants strive to intermingle. Interaction is the locus where different beliefs, commitments, and ideologies come into contact and confront each other through the intersecting voices of participants. It is also the site at which categorization takes place and where the establishment, negotiation and rejection of categories happens (Blommaert et al 2017). The contexts in which people communicate are partly local and *emergent*, continuously readjusted to the contingencies of action unfolding from one moment to the next, but they are also infused with information, resources, expectations and experiences that originate in, circulate through, and/or are destined

for networks and processes that can be very different in their reach and duration, as well as in their capacity to bestow or deny privilege and power (Blommaert and Rampton 2011).

Conviviality

The term 'conviviality' can be used as an analytical tool to explore how, and under what conditions, people constructively create modes of togetherness (Nowicka and Vertovec 2014). Gilroy refers to conviviality as the interaction of sameness and difference as "just living together" (2006a :7), and calls for a shift in thinking about difference which no longer misunderstands and oversimplifies 'culture' as ethnic property to be owned and held under copyright (2006b). Although public and political discourses often associate migration with crime and conflict, contradictory interactions have developed alongside these discourses (Gilroy 2006b). While many studies focus on conflicts, ruptures and discontinuities in social, ethnic and inter-religious relations, there is still relatively little knowledge about the ways people live together successfully, how they envision a *modus co-vivendi*, and the strategies they create in order to practise it (Nowicka and Vertovec 2014).

Gilroy (2004: xv) further defines conviviality as "the processes of cohabitation and interaction that have made multiculture an ordinary feature in Britain's urban areas and in postcolonial cities elsewhere". Convivial social forms have come into being spontaneously and unappreciated, rather than as the outcome of government policy. Conviviality is a social pattern in which different metropolitan groups dwell in close proximity, but where "their racial, linguistic and religious particularities do not – as the logic of ethnic absolutism suggests they must – add up to discontinuities of experience or insuperable problems of communication" (Gilroy 2006b: 40). In these conditions, a degree of differentiation can be combined with a large measure of overlapping. Rymes (2014) takes up the notion of overlapping in proposing that individuals communicate across difference by negotiating or seeking out common ground and creating new shared terrain. Understanding 'the other' is not so much a matter of identifying difference, as of raising awareness of multiple repertoires and expanding points of overlap.

Problems often assumed to be inevitable features of a clash of civilisations, cultures and outlooks melt away in the face of a sense of human sameness (Gilroy 2006a). Institutional, generational, educational, legal, and political commonalities intersect with dimensions of difference. These commonalities complicate the simple notion of 'cultural groups', or 'communities', which might otherwise be held to be united by their apparent difference from others. Conviviality acknowledges this complexity and, although it cannot banish conflict, "can be shown to have equipped people with means of managing it in their own interests and in the interests of others" (Gilroy 2006b: 40). Gilroy argues that this is far from being a romantic notion, and nor is it a panacea to solve tensions which continue to exist in society. Rather, racial and ethnic differences have been rendered unremarkable and ordinary, as people discover that the things which really divide them are much more profound: taste, lifestyle, leisure preferences. Gilroy argues that in such a scenario difference is less of a threat to social cohesion because it is commonplace, everyday, and almost unnoticeable.

Wessendorf (2014a) conceptualizes the normalization of difference as 'commonplace diversity', to describe ethnic, religious, linguistic and socio-economic diversity experienced and perceived as a normal part of social life. She argues that diversity becomes normalized over time, as a result of accumulated experiences of difference. This does not mean that difference is therefore neutralised. Commonplace diversity does not mean that people's national, ethnic, religious, and class backgrounds are unnoticed. While these differences are not seen as particularly unusual, they are at the same time often acknowledged. Difference is something that people live with, and acknowledgement of diversity can contribute to unity. This does not indicate an indifference to difference, rather people are aware of the differences around them, but they do not see them as unusual or problematic.

Superdiversity provides a compelling space to explore what it means to live with the changing nature of migration as configured through a wider presence of individuals and groups within contemporary social formations (Hall 2017). In such a context it is important to describe not only how hegemonic structures and regulations limit migrants' life opportunities. It is also crucial to examine how migrants and others negotiate everyday encounters. If investigating how people get along in their everyday lives has long been a concern for social research, this question becomes increasingly pressing when people experience increasing diversification of diversity, more variegated patterns of mobility, and the intensification of experiences of radical difference (Wise and Noble 2016). Notwithstanding the demographic changes to their neighbourhood, many people have become used to massive diversity. For many people practices of living with ethnic diversity have become so normal that this aspect of differentiation has become ordinary.

Wessendorf (2014a) argues that in order to navigate a public space characterized by a variety of languages and backgrounds, people need to master a code of practice and certain social skills. Padilla, Azevedo and Olmos-Alcaraz (2015) explore the notions of sameness and difference in superdiverse settings, and find that heterogeneity is common and experienced on a daily basis, such that 'difference' may be transformed into a positive feature. Watson (2006) argues for an understanding of encounters enacted in public space which is predicated on a commitment to the public acknowledgement of difference, and to the social relations these encounters produce. Wessendorf (2014b) argues that civility towards people who look, speak or behave differently is learned through everyday contact and interaction in a multiplicity of day-to-day, social situations. She refers to "cosmopolitan pragmatism" (Wessendorf 2010:20), suggesting that in order to get around, buy things, get help to get on a bus, carry a buggy up the stairs, and so on, individuals need to develop intercultural competence.

Everyday encounters and inequality

Although most research in superdiversity is concerned with questions of equality, particularly with reference to migrants, there is more to do to demonstrate how such research connects to structures of economic and political power, and the inequalities they produce. Repertoires of exchange feature prominently in the vocabularies of superdiversity, while prevailing inequalities such as 'race' and class are less invoked. Hall (2017) argues that there is a need to insert 'race' more centrally into investigation of social relations, connecting categories of race, religion and legal status to the restrictions of mobility. As much as cities are sites of cross-cultural

participation, they are also sites of inequality where global processes of migration intersect with 'race' and class. There is a need to develop a way of seeing that is attentive to forms of division and racism alongside, and sometimes within, multicultural convivialities (Back and Sinha 2016).

Kubota (2014) argues that the 'multi/plural turn' in social research parallels an ideology of neoliberal multiculturalism – of individualism and elitist cosmopolitanism rather than critical acknowledgement of unequal relations of power. The conceptual features of the multi/plural turn perpetuate "color-blindness and racism" (Kubota 2014: 474). Although Kubota does not refer to superdiversity *per se*, superdiversity research does well to ensure that relations of power and inequality remain at the forefront of its agenda. Wise and Noble (2016) suggest that such critiques may stem from a tradition of scholarship on race and ethnicity that takes friction and racism as the problem and starting point, and the reproduction of relations of social power as the end point. Those working on questions of everydayness, they suggest, often begin with a more open-ended approach, and inevitably a more complex picture emerges. Everyday interaction is just as much a legitimate research object as the reproduction of racism. Wise and Noble (2016) contend that there is a need to step away from a binary which sets as opposite poles a rosy perception of cultural harmony and a view of difference as the reproduction of power. Neither captures the complexity and depth of coexistence (Wise and Noble 2016). Studies of social interaction have the capacity to understand both everyday racism and everyday cosmopolitanism as coexistent, and not mutually exclusive. A spectrum of qualities and outcomes characterizes urban encounters of difference. While interactions in public spaces may be pleasant, positive, and amiable, at other times and in other spaces they may be marked by bigotry, unfairness, hostility, and conflict (Vertovec 2015). No assumptions can be made about such encounters. Their character can only be known through regular, repeated, detailed observation over time (Blackledge, Creese, and Hu 2015, 2016; Creese, Baynham, and Trehan, 2016).

Gilroy is at pains to point out that "recognising conviviality should not signify the absence of racism" (2006:40). Research in language and superdiversity must attempt to understand not only the positive coexistence of people, but also how these positive developments take place alongside long-standing or incipient tensions, conflicts, and practices that implicitly or explicitly exclude others. The strength of conviviality as a theoretical orientation is that it offers a series of analytical instruments that enable us to understand the coexistence of both racism and convivial culture (Back and Sinha 2016). It is here that differences arising from the long-term consequences of post-colonialism, mass migration, multicultural policies and transnationalism are foregrounded (Wise and Noble 2016). In their research in Sydney and Singapore, Wise and Velayutham (2014) refer to 'convivial multiculture' to signal relations of coexistence and accommodation. They argue that the concept of conviviality opens new frames of thinking about diversity in everyday practice, but also that conviviality cannot be divorced from the context in which it occurs. Wise and Velayutham (2009) explore how social actors experience and negotiate cultural differences on the ground, and how their interactions and identities are shaped and re-shaped in the process. They point out, however, that even where cross-cultural contact is civil and courteous, this does not necessarily translate to a respect for difference, or signal any shift in private attitudes to otherness. The challenge is to comprehend the full range of interactions, patterns, behaviours and meanings at work, including the interconnections between different forms of coexistence.

Translanguaging

To better understand how people communicate when they bring different histories and repertoires into contact, we can turn to the notion of 'translanguaging'. Otheguy, García, and Reid (2015: 281) define translanguaging as "the deployment of a speaker's full linguistic repertoire without regard for watchful adherence to the socially and politically defined boundaries of named (and usually national and state) languages". García and Leiva (2014) argue that bilingual families and communities translanguage in order to construct meaning. What makes translanguaging different from other fluid languaging practices is that it can be transformative, with the potential to remove the hierarchy of languaging practices that deem some more valuable than others. Translanguaging is thus about a way of being, acting, and languaging in social, cultural, and political contexts. The act of translanguaging "creates a social space for the multilingual language user by bringing together different dimensions of their personal history, experience and environment" (Wei 2011: 1223). Translanguaging leads us away from a focus on 'languages' as distinct codes to a focus on individuals engaged in using, creating, and interpreting signs for communication.

Noguerón-Liu and Warriner (2014) suggest that translanguaging expands existing theories of multilingualism by examining the social practices of individuals. They adopt this term to move away from a focus on abstract, idealised notions of 'a language' as a set of skills, and to emphasise the fact that people deploy a variety of resources while engaging in everyday practice. García and Wei (2014) point out that translanguaging differs from code-switching in that it refers not simply to a shift or a shuttle between two languages, but to the speakers' construction and use of original and complex interrelated discursive practices that cannot be easily assigned to one or another traditional definition of a language, but that make up the speakers' complete semiotic repertoire. Translanguaging starts from the speaker rather than the code or 'language', and focuses on empirically observable practices. Translanguaging practices are not viewed as marked or unusual, but are rather taken to be the normal mode of communication that characterises communities throughout the world. A translanguaging analysis proposes that, rather than making decisions about which 'language' to use in a particular social setting, people have a semiotic repertoire from which they select resources to communicate.

In the context of university education in South Africa, Makalela (2017) demonstrates that classroom spaces can be transformed when they are reconceptualised as microcosms of societal multilingualism where fluid, versatile language practices are affirmed and encouraged. As translanguaging enables multilingual students to reflect on and construct or modify their sociocultural identities and values, it has the potential to transform historical institutional identities of South African universities (Hurst, Madiba, and Morreira 2017). Translanguaging allows the simultaneous use of both indigenous African languages and their academic varieties, and English. It is not a question of either/or, as both are possible.

Kusters et al. (2017) point out that as communication is inherently multimodal, we should refer to semiotic repertoires rather than linguistic repertoires. Semiotic repertoires include but are by no means limited to the linguistic. Rather, they include aspects of communication not always thought of as 'language', including gesture, posture, and so on; they are a record of mobility and

experience; they include gaps and silences as well as potentialities; and they are responsive to the places in which, and the people with whom, semiotic resources may be deployed (Blackledge, Creese, and Hu, 2015). The way people walk, stand, and sit, the way they tilt their head, the gaze of their eyes, the shrug of their shoulders, the movement of their hands and fingers, their smile or frown, all are part of the semiotic repertoire. The integrated nature of the semiotic repertoire is fundamental. Embodied communicative practice is not in any way separate from linguistic communicative practice. They are integral to each other to the extent that they are one and the same (Blackledge and Creese 2017).

Heteroglossia

In everyday encounters people deploy whatever communicative resources are available to them to make meaning. Invariably, the communicative practices in play will say something about the interactants' social positioning. Whereas we might previously have focused on how communicative practice points to stable and predictable categories such as social class, or nationality, a superdiversity perspective proposes that language practices point to more complex, multi-dimensional positionings. To explore this, sociolinguists have turned to Bakhtin's notion of 'heteroglossia' (Blackledge and Creese 2014). As a cover term for linguistic diversity, heteroglossia describes how language use involves various socio-ideological languages, codes, and voices (Madsen 2014). Language varieties and nonstandard dialects are shaped by social, historical, and political influences, and Bakhtin developed the notion of 'heteroglossia' to describe and theorize the existence of and relationship between different language varieties.

Bakhtin argued that language in use represents specific points of view on the world, each characterized by its own objects, meanings and values (1981). That is, language points to, or 'indexes' a certain point of view, ideology, social class, profession, or other social position. Bakhtin saw that language is stratified not only into linguistic dialects but also into languages that are socio-ideological, languages of social groups, languages of professional groups, and languages of generations (1981). Stratification and diversity within a language derive from its social nature, reflecting the social and ideological differentiation in society (Bakhtin 1986). Heteroglossia is less concerned with how different languages and dialects vary according to their linguistic features than in the stratification of a common language (Lähteenmaki 2010). Heteroglossia is not only – in fact not principally – about the simultaneous use of 'languages', but rather refers to the co-existence of different competing ideological points of view, whether constituted in a single national 'language', or within the complex communicative repertoires in play in superdiverse, late modern societies.

The use of certain words in a certain way indexes some social position(s) because these words are characteristically used by members of a certain group. A voice points to and consttutes a social position (Wortham 2001). In this way, speakers inevitably position themselves with respect to others, making indexical associations and meta-level evaluations. Bakhtin noticed that whole utterances and individual words may repeat the words of others in a way that re-accents and changes them, "ironically, indignantly, reverently, and so forth", and in particular "intonation is especially sensitive and always points beyond the context" (Bakhtin 1986: 91). By re-accenting others' voices, narrators and ordinary speakers establish positions for themselves

(Wortham 2001). Each type of dialogic speech has an analytical role in understanding language in use and in action in late modern societies. The application of Bakhtin's literary theory to superdiversity reminds us to take as our focus not 'languages', but speakers as social actors in the social world. Bakhtin's theory also encourages us to interpret the meanings of talk in terms of "the social worlds, past and present, of which words are part-and-parcel, rather than in terms of formal systems, such as 'languages', that can veil actual speakers, uses, and contexts" (Bailey 2012: 502). Heteroglossia affords an analytic perspective which takes linguistic diversity to be constitutive of, and constituted by, social diversity.

A Theory of Practice

We take up Kramsch's (2015: 463) challenge to theorize practice in such a way "as to do justice both to the heteroglossic and political diversity of the practice and to its own epistemological multiculturality, and to accept to be changed in the process". Each of these aspects of sociolinguistic superdiversity overlaps, or interweaves, with the others. Each makes a distinct contribution to the development of a theory of practice with which to investigate and generate knowledge about the intensifying complexity of the social world. A focus on *mobility* directs our gaze to language in motion, as language practices and language events become unmoored from fixed points in time and space. Goffmanian *interaction ritual* serves as means to understand how everyday encounters are unbalance or stabilized. The rules by which encounters between people are conducted, the interaction rituals, are the means by which we learn how to behave in a social encounter. Analysis which pays attention to the adherence to, or departure from, the rules and rituals of everyday interactions gives purchase on interactions between people who bring different norms, assumptions, and biographies into contact. The notion of *emergence* points to the superdiverse in sociolinguistic research not as a given but as an emergent quality of a particular context. That is, superdiversity is an emergent property of communicative practice (Jaffe 2016). Thus we view superdiversity not merely as a description of difference but as an interactional stance, an ideological orientation, a way of being.

The term *conviviality* prompts us to focus not merely on differences between people, but also on sameness; not only on tensions and conflicts between people, but also on how they get on together, or co-exist in the same space. A concern with how people create modes of togetherness must also be concerned with conflicts and tensions. The strength of a focus on conviviality is that it engages with practice which normalizes and acknowledges difference. While its focus is on quotidian practices in multidimensional configurations of difference, superdiversity maintains a disposition to such practices which engages with *everyday encounters and inequality*. Superdiversity is an ideological and contingent orientation to difference which takes inequality as a primary concern. In particular, superdiversity examines everyday encounters between people in terms of relative relations of power. Superdiversity engages with inequality as it emerges and is instantiated in everyday encounters.

Translanguaging is a creative and at times transformative a way of being, acting, and languaging in the world. It is by considering interactions between people in translanguaging zones, or translanguaging spaces (Wei 2011), that we can bring into view the histories, biographies, and resources of social actors in contact. Through translanguaging we can see in semiotic practice

what we mean by superdiversity as a multi-dimensional configuration of difference. *Heteroglossia* has a related but decisive role in completing the theory of practice. The term, derived from literary theory, enables us to see how semiotic repertoires position people in everyday encounters, in terms of social class, gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, and the innumerable other differences and similarities which emerge in interaction. We tentatively propose, then, a theory of practice to bring into view dimensions of superdiversity which include mobility, emergence, ritual, conviviality, inequality, repertoire, and social and ideological positioning. But this is more theory than practice unless it is applied to real-world contexts. In the next section of the chapter we propose Linguistic Ethnography as a practical and theoretical means to account for language and superdiversity.

Linguistic Ethnography

A key aspect of language and superdiversity is methodological. Much of the history of migration studies has comprised research focused on particular ethnic or national groups, their migration processes, community formation, trajectories of assimilation or integration, and patterns of transnationalism. Superdiversity underlines the necessity to adapt methods of investigation, to move beyond approaches which focus on specific ethnic, national, linguistic, or racial groups (Meissner and Vertovec 2015). Superdiversity portrays changing population configurations arising largely from global migration flows. But superdiversity is not confined to the exploration of the impacts of migration alone. Understood as a malleable, rather than a rigid, concept the term's value lies in bringing together different debates at the juncture between migration studies, ethnic and racial studies, and other areas of research. A superdiversity lens calls researchers to: focus on the multidimensionality of differentiation processes; accept that migration will only ever be a starting point for analysis; and engage with changing migration patterns not in a vacuum, but in interaction with other processes of social change (Meissner 2015). Understanding complex social constellations without assuming their permanence, and seeing value in understanding social patterns rather than foregrounding causalities, is a relevant part of social science research. Superdiversity as a concept is particularly commensurate with this task (Meissner 2015).

Wise (2009) turns to the notion of the 'contact zone' (Pratt 1991) to describe the space in which people engage in everyday encounters and negotiate through the deployment of improvised language resources. Contact zones offer a rich space in which to observe interactions between people with different biographies, histories, and trajectories. Wise suggests the term "quotidian transversality" (2009: 22) to describe how individuals in everyday spaces use particular modes of sociality to produce or smooth interrelations across cultural difference. The term highlights how cultural difference can be the basis for exchange, where identities are not left behind, but can be shifted and opened up in moments of non-hierarchical reciprocity, and are sometimes reconfigured in the process. Wise points out, however, that while everyday civil encounters are important, they do not ensure a culture of tolerance, and inequalities must be recognised and addressed. Creese, Blackledge, and Hu (2017) found that while superdiversity research is generating new knowledge about people's conduct in public spaces, investigation of life in cities should not neglect the private realm. Hall (2012) argues that crossing boundaries between the familiar and the unfamiliar demands particular social and cultural skills. Hall refers to the notion

of 'micro-publics', "the social spaces in which individuals regularly come into contact" (Hall 2012: 6). These are not simply spaces of encounter, but of participation, requiring a level of investment to sustain membership. Such social spaces are sites at which to fruitfully direct the ethnographic gaze.

Wise and Noble (2016) propose that we draw on observational methods to follow the flows of people and goods in spaces marked by diversity, map networks of association (both ephemeral and sustained), and analyse processes of exchange, negotiation and otherwise. A necessary corollary is to stress the situated nature of these processes. A sustained ethnographic focus on everyday diversity allows us insight into: the processes that shape urban encounters; everyday negotiations with difference; belonging as practice; and embodied, affective and sensory dimensions of lived difference (Wise and Noble 2016).

Ethnographers need to pay close attention to local context, historicity and specificity, but also to non-local, transnational dynamics, connections and relations. For ethnographers the challenge is how to acquire the requisite language skills and appreciation of home country contexts, the different conditions and trajectories of different groups, including legal status, life stage, gender and generational dynamics and so on, when the residents in a single neighbourhood originate in different societies and represent different diasporic generations, each with their own specific histories of migration and settlement. Investment of time is needed to develop the knowledge that enables the ethnographer to go beyond a superficial, journalistic account. A fine-grained, ethnographic understanding of the diversification of diversity as lived experience helps us understand when, where, how, why and for whom some differences come to make a difference (Berg and Sigona 2013). In their study of social encounters in New York, Singapore, and Johannesburg, Vertovec (2015) and colleagues observed that locally constructed understandings of ethnicity or 'race' are just part of the dynamics of difference: language, class, socio-economic position and legal status combined with ethnicity and 'race' to condition social categories and socio-spatial practices.

To engage with the complexities of situated social identification, ethnography and micro-ethnographic analysis are necessary (Rampton 2016). Since complexity implies a lack of predictable features in social events and their outcomes, a meticulous ethnographic approach is the research method that guarantees best outcomes (Blommaert et al 2017). Hornberger and Cassells Johnson (2007) demonstrate how ethnography can illuminate local interpretation and implementation. To study language and superdiversity we do not seek to separate the linguistic from the superdiverse, but examine language as it constitutes, and is constituted in, superdiversity. To do so we engage linguistic ethnography, an interpretive approach which studies the local and immediate interactions of actors from their point of view, and considers how these interactions are embedded in wider social contexts and structures (Copland and Creese 2015). Linguistic ethnography investigates contexts for communication rather than assuming them, and addresses the internal organization of semiotic data to understand their significance (Rampton 2015. Through detailed attention to interactions between people, linguistic ethnography links everyday linguistic and cultural practices to wider social processes, ideologies, and relations of power. In the remainder of this section we will briefly outline a research project which took a superdiverse orientation to communication in superdiverse cities, and also provided

the intellectual stimulus for this handbook. The project was designed as a team linguistic ethnography.

The research project, *'Translation and translanguaging: Investigating linguistic and cultural transformations in superdiverse wards in four UK cities'*[i], was funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council as a Large Grant in the Translating Cultures theme (2014-2018. Principal Investigator: Angela Creese). The section editors and general editors of this handbook were members of the research team, with the addition of Melanie Cooke as a specialist in Education. The aim of the project was to gain an advanced understanding of the ways in which people communicate when they come into contact in changing, complex cities, and to analyse their communicative practices in terms of wider social processes, ideologies, and relations of power. In order to achieve this it was necessary to observe communicative practices closely and repeatedly, over time. We observed people engaged in different kinds of activities, and in different spaces. In designing the research we had to account for the fact that in contemporary cities in the UK we would encounter people communicating through semiotic repertoires which may not be accessible to many or most of the investigators.

To ensure a diversity of regional focus, we selected four cities in the UK as broad research sites: London in the South of England, Leeds in the North, Birmingham in the Midlands, and Cardiff in Wales. As a means of collecting observational material associated with a range of activities, we established that we would select four types of research site in each of the four cities. These would include: (i) Business settings, (ii) Cultural heritage sites, (iii) Sports clubs, and (iv) Legal advice contexts. However, the thematic focus of the project was not limited to the selection of types of research site. Rather, the four 'themes' (Business, Heritage, Sport, Law) would profoundly structure the project, going beyond background context to become disciplinary foci in themselves. To this end we did three things.

First, academic experts in each of the four thematic areas were recruited to the research team. They held the portfolio as Senior Researchers with responsibility for leading their thematic area throughout the project. Second, non-university experts in each of the four thematic areas were recruited to the research team. Like the academic experts, the non-academic experts joined the research team before the project began, and collaborated throughout and beyond the four years. The organisations concerned gave freely of their time, expertise, and experience. They included: 'Business in the Community', a charity that provides services and practical guidance to businesses; 'Birmingham Museums Trust', which is responsible for governing and managing the museum sites and collections owned by Birmingham City Council; 'Library of Birmingham', Europe's largest public library, opened in 2013; 'Sporting Equals', which promotes the involvement in sport and physical activity of disadvantaged communities; 'Law Centres Network', which defends the legal rights of people who cannot afford a lawyer; 'LawWorks', also a charity which connects volunteer lawyers with people in need of legal advice; and 'Migrants' Rights Network', which works and campaigns for the rights of migrants. Third, each of the thematic areas was overseen by one of the Co-Investigators, to broker academic/non-academic partnerships, and to organise and synthesise analysis in 'their' theme.

Cities such as London, Leeds, Birmingham, and Cardiff are too big and populous to be feasible ethnographic research sites. We therefore focused our gaze at a more manageable level. In each

city we selected 'wards', the smallest unit of political organisation, typically with around 20000 residents. It was a principle of the research project, and therefore of the research design, that we were interested in all of the communicative practices we would encounter in ethnographic field work in the chosen neighbourhood. However, this introduced a logistical problem. In previous multi-site ethnographic work we had (for example) focused on schools which taught minority languages such as Panjabi, Gujarati, Turkish, Bengali, Cantonese, Mandarin. In such projects we were able to recruit researchers who were proficient in these languages. However, with our focus on communication in superdiverse wards we would not be able to recruit researchers whose repertoires matched those of the research sites. We might easily come across 150 'languages' in our observations. We took a pragmatic decision that we would refer to the most recent UK Census (2011) to identify which languages residents of the selected neighbourhood reported they spoke as their main language other than English. This was not an exact science. Census data do not offer a straightforward picture of social reality, and in Leeds in particular a degree of flexibility was employed. At the end of the process we recruited researchers who were proficient (in addition to English) in Polish (London), Mandarin (Birmingham), Arabic (Cardiff), and Czech, Slovak, Romani, and Portuguese (Leeds).

In each of the wards in the four cities research sites were selected for detailed, intensive observation of communicative practice. It was a criterion for selection that the research site should fit the thematic orientation of the project, and that there would be opportunities to observe interaction in practice. The data collection would be organised in four thematic phases. The first of these, conducted simultaneously across the four city wards, was the Business phase. The following table represents the structure of the project.

	Interdisciplinary Project Design: People, Sites & Themes PI Angela Creese Sociolinguistics				
	Birmingham (Ladywood) Adrian Blackledge	**Cardiff (Cathays) Frances Rock**	**Leeds (Harehills) Mike Baynham & James Simpson**	**London (Newham) Zhu Hua & Li Wei**	
Business	Butcher (husband & wife) Birmingham Bull Ring Market Born in China/Malaysia	Shop owner (husband & wife) Arabic mini- market Born in Iraq	Translator Advocacy support centre/community hub Born in Slovakia	Shop owners (husband & wife) Polish mini- market Born in Poland	Disciplinary expert Business: Kiran Trehan *Business in the Community*
Heritage	Customer Experience Assistant Library of Birmingham Born in Hong Kong	Librarian Cardiff University Born in Kurdistan	Event organiser Advocacy Support Group Born in Slovakia	Community artist Born in Poland	Disciplinary expert Heritage: Mike Robinson *Birmingham Museums Trust*
Sport	Volleyball coach Born in Hong Kong	Football coach Born in Sudan	Capoeira teacher Born in Mozambique	Karate instructor Born in Poland	Disciplinary expert Sport: Janice Thompson *Sporting Equals*
Law	Advice worker Chinese Community Centre Born in China	Legal advice worker Voluntary organisation hub Born in Holland	Legal advice worker Refugee Education Training Advisory Service.	Advice worker East European Advice Centre Born in Poland	Disciplinary expert Law: Bharat Malkani *Migrants' Rights Network*
Social / digital media: Caroline Tagg					
Participant Research Programme: Lisa Goodson					

In Birmingham the first of the research sites was a Chinese butcher's stall in Bull Ring Indoor Market. We selected a key participant in each site (e.g. the butcher, the shopkeeper), explained the project, and gained consent for the collection and use of data. Two researchers (Rachel Hu and Adrian Blackledge) observed the butcher's stall for sixteen weeks. Similarly, researchers in the Cardiff, Leeds, and London sites carried out ethnographic observations in business-related research sites. Part of the contract with the key participants was that we would pay for their work on the project. We also offered a free training course in conducting community research, which carried a basic qualification. This innovative programme created extended collaborations between research participants and the research team, the key participants became researchers, and the structure of the research team continuously evolved

For the first five weeks we wrote observational field notes without making audio- or video-recordings of the observed practices. From the sixth week the key participants attached an audio-recording device with a tie-clip microphone to their clothing, and recorded themselves as we continued to write field notes. We video-recorded interactions in the site when it seemed appropriate to do so. In each site we made provision for people who did not want to be audio- or video-recorded to have their voices and images deleted from the record. We interviewed the key participants and other stakeholders associated with the research sites. We also asked the key participants to copy and send to us examples of their social media and other online and digital communication. We asked the key participants to make audio-recordings of their communicative practices in their domestic and leisure settings. We took photographs of the research sites and, where appropriate, of their homes. Over a period of two years, across the sixteen sites, the research team wrote well over a million words of field notes, audio-recorded more than 700 hours of communicative interactions, video-recorded more than 100 hours of footage, took in excess of 11000 photographs, conducted 130 interviews. There was a specific focus on digital and online communication across the sixteen sites, and the research team collected more than 5000 screen prints of social media and other online and digital communicative events.

The project leader, Angela Creese, read all field notes and transcripts, and was the only member of the team to visit all sixteen research sites. Analysis of the data was conducted in weekly university-based team meetings, in regular whole-team meetings, and in workshops convened in collaboration with non-academic partners. Substantial reports were written, and posted to the research project website: http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/generic/tlang/publications/index.aspx.

The structure of the project provided that outcomes of the research would be represented in a range of settings, to academics, policy-makers, politicians, practitioners, artists, and the general public. Two 'network assemblies' were held, providing opportunities for people from public, private, and third sectors to come together to discuss the implications of the research. A film-maker was engaged, and eight short documentary films produced. Four 'city seminars' created space for key stakeholders in Birmingham, Cardiff, Leeds, and London to discuss the significance of the research findings for their city. Outcomes were presented to the House of Commons on two occasions. 45 academics from 19 countries attended a summer school taught by members of the research team. A theatre company was commissioned to devise and perform a theatre piece in response to the research, which they performed 22 times across the four cities, to more than 700 people. A group of artists was engaged to creatively reflect and expand the outcomes of the research. In March 2018 a two-day international conference in Birmingham,

UK, offered a productive forum in which ideas and outcomes emerging from the research were shared with academic and non-academic constituents.

Summary

In this chapter we introduced the notion of superdiversity, developed as a descriptive term to account for increasingly stratified and multiple processes and effects of migration in Western Europe, but with potential to contribute to enhanced understanding of mobility, complexity, and change, with theoretical, practical, global, and methodological reach. As an ideological orientation to difference, superdiversity can move on from its original role as a descriptor. Allied with sociolinguistics and linguistic ethnography, superdiversity is able to challenge and contest the very social categories and structures which bring it into being. Equipped for analysis of a proliferation of digital and online practices in virtual territories, superdiversity is able to transcend contexts of migration, and examine language in all the configurations of the social world.

Accepting that what makes diversity useful also makes it limited (Ahmed 2007), we propose, conversely, that what makes superdiversity limited also makes it useful. We make this argument from three perspectives. First, as we have seen, policy-makers have begun to consider multi-dimensional variability as the norm, and have re-considered policy action in response. Already superdiversity has shown promise in its ability to reveal the layering of multiple variables, and to develop more sophisticated understandings of difference which move away from essentialist presupposition. It will be important that researchers and policy-makers work in partnership to find the best policy response to complexity as a means of improving people's life experience. Second, ethnographic analysis of superdiversity understands interpretation as a process in which constraint, emergence and contingency create myriad affordances for meaning-making. Social categories will never wholly determine the meaning of interactions. Indeed *a priori* assumptions about social categories can all too often artificially stabilize the object of study in ways which are potentially damaging, because they silence the agentive voices of local actors. As Hymes has argued, it is in the nature of meanings to be subject to change, reinterpretation, and re-creation.

> One has to think of people not as the intersection of vectors of age, sex, race, class, income and occupation alone, but also as beings making sense out of their disparate experiences, using reason to maintain a sphere of integrity in an immediate world.
> (Hymes 1980: 94)

In the research project described above, we saw that people draw on their biographies and widely circulating discourses in their daily mundane interactions. We saw that social, cultural and linguistic difference are emically and locally relevant when people communicate. We understood that multiple diversities are resourcefully used as categories in people's local lives where difference is perceived as commonplace and everyday. We observed that local actors interpret, resist, and transform discourses about difference, and do the same with what they might perceive as overlap and sameness. A heuristic which is fit to describe and analyse the massive complexity and rapid demographic change of contemporary Western Europe, superdiversity has potential to illuminate everyday practices of communication, and to make

visible social constraints and ideologies. If language and superdiversity is (rather than 'are') to make such a contribution, we must look carefully, in detail, over time, at situated communicative practice.

Third, superdiversity is interdisciplinary. Complex societal challenges demand a range of viewpoints, an openness to dialogue, and mutual respect. Superdiversity has attracted curiosity and critique across many disciplines. In doing so, it has opened up opportunities for critical thinking, methodological innovation and civic engagement. Future research in language and superdiversity will need to be open to interdisciplinary dialogue (Budach and de Saint-Georges 2017). Like other superordinate terms, superdiversity crosses disciplines and requires academics to translate their work. This means learning to tolerate ambiguity, and developing a sense of responsibility in the face of disagreement. The present volume does not shine a light into every corner of the globe, but its vision has unusual range in other respects, focusing on language and superdiversity across broad disciplinary areas and in numerous contexts, including cultural heritage, sport, education, law, and business and entrepreneurship, together with an explicit focus on theory and method. In the accounts presented in 35 chapters we gain a deeper understanding of communication in societies characterized by mobility of people and resources, and enhanced knowledge of how communicative practices are constitutive of, and constituted by, social diversity and complexity.

Superdiversity requires a political and ethical consciousness. The inhabitants of Grenfell Tower made central their diversity as they re-positioned themselves in relation to structures of power. They invoked their multi-dimensional and differentiated diversities as a capacity for action. The different routes which brought them and their families to the Grenfell Tower flats were harnessed and deployed strategically to reveal the inadequacies of state structures to deal with the housing, health, education, bereavement, legal and social service needs of affected people. We are writing before the official inquiry and criminal investigation into the fire have begun. But it already appears to be clear that in its search for homogenization, in the erasure of difference, and a one-size-fits-all approach to the management of the tragedy, the state was revealed as unprepared. While official responses got underway, local people organised themselves through their existing communities, but also by creating new ones. These actions took place unofficially in homes, shops, libraries, schools, parks, leisure centres, community centres, places of worship, and street corners. While the strength gained from communities predicated on ethnicity, race, or language played their role, these groupings were not sufficient to represent the multi-dimensional configurations of people affected. Difference was a shared feature of life, and diversity appears to have had a unifying effect on those who came together in the face of powerful structures. This was superdiversity in action and in practice.

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