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English language lecturer on research team awarded two million to explore multilingualism in UK

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A consortium led by MOSAIC Centre for Research on Multilingualism (Professors Angela Creese and Adrian Blackledge), University of Birmingham, has been awarded a Large Grant as part of the AHRC Translating Cultures theme. The 4-year research project, *Translation and Translanguaging: Investigating Linguistic and Cultural Transformations in Superdiverse Wards in Four UK Cities*, is a collaboration between four UK universities. The interdisciplinary research programme will develop new understandings of multilingual interaction in cities in the UK, and communicate these to policy-makers and communities locally, nationally, and internationally. The award is £1,973,527. The research project will run from 2014 - 2018. The role of **Dr Caroline Tagg (/staff/profiles/elal/tagg-caroline.aspx)**, from the Department of English, is to coordinate across the four cities the investigation of participants' use of social media as a crucial part of their multilingual practices.

Globalisation and changing patterns of migration mean that 'superdiverse' cities are increasingly populated by speakers of multiple languages. Researchers from University of Birmingham, Birkbeck (University of London), University of Leeds, and Cardiff University will generate new knowledge about communication in changing urban communities.

The research team will conduct detailed linguistic ethnographic investigations in selected wards in Birmingham, Cardiff, Leeds, and London. Researchers will focus on multilingual interactions between people in contexts of business, legal advice, community sport, and libraries and museums. Analysis will provide detailed evidence of how people communicate across languages and cultures.

The interdisciplinary project will involve academic researchers from a broad range of subject areas, including Business and Entrepreneurship, Cultural Heritage, Education, Law, Sociolinguistics, Sport and Exercise Sciences, and Social Policy. Interdisciplinary work will be co-ordinated by University of Birmingham's Institute for Research into Superdiversity (IRiS).

The project will be run in collaboration with partners from private, public, and third sectors, including *Migrants' Rights Network, Library of Birmingham, Business in the Community, Birmingham Museums Trust, Law Centres Network, Sporting Equals, Equality and Human Rights Commission, and Midland Heart*. The project will also benefit from the expertise of international specialists in multilingualism and superdiversity.

Theme Leadership Fellow for Translating Cultures, Professor Charles Forsdick, commented that the award "will provide an urgently needed contribution, from an Arts and Humanities perspective, to our understanding of some of the most pressing issues in the twenty-first-century. The aim of the project is to interrogate, analyse and demonstrate the central place of languages and culture in contemporary life. The project will transform academic and public understanding of the theories and practices of translation and interpreting in innovative, exciting and, I anticipate, often unexpected ways."

Principal Investigator Professor Angela Creese welcomed the award, saying "This award gives researchers at the University of Birmingham the opportunity to lead a major, ground-breaking study of multilingualism in superdiverse cities across England and Wales. The research will make a significant contribution to knowledge about the potential of multilingualism as a resource for communication, creativity, and civic participation".

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