FRENCH MIGRANTS' LANGUAGE HABITS AND ATTITUDES IN ENGLAND IN THE AGE OF BREXIT

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Abstract

The UK EU membership referendum in June 2016 was followed by a rise in anti-European hate crimes. Early studies about Brexit and xenophobia showed that many Eastern Europeans were targeted by these attacks and felt unsafe when speaking their native languages in public places. Nevertheless, to date, little is known about other Europeans' experiences of xenophobia before and after the EU referendum and how it could affect the way they use their native languages. Therefore, this thesis intends to determine whether French speakers in England are changing their language habits and the way they express their identity in a period of heightened antagonism towards the EU brought on by Brexit. It will analyse whether linguistic pride has been affected by Brexit and observe the consequences of societal change on languages.

In 2020, 514 French nationals living in different English cities answered an online questionnaire about their language habits pre- and post-EU referendum, changes they may have noticed and the languages they speak with their children when applicable. Thirty-two of them were invited to discuss their answers in online focus groups. The responses to the questionnaire were analysed quantitatively whereas a qualitative approach was used for the focus groups.

This research found that most French migrants felt unwelcome, anxious, and disappointed by the outcome of the EU referendum. After the referendum, some felt uncomfortable when speaking in French whether they had been victims of hate crimes themselves or not. Nevertheless, most of them still evaluated their experience in England as positive and thought that these feelings, as well as the occurrences of xenophobia towards them, tended to fade a few months after the referendum. Many did not perceive a change in their language habits and believed they had a privileged position in England compared to Eastern Europeans whom they thought were more often victims of hate crimes. However, some participants still feel uncomfortable four years after the referendum and admitted being more careful when speaking French in public places, and some are planning to leave the UK as they no longer feel wanted there. This study highlighted the importance of studying how Brexit affected migrants speaking different languages, as even those considered privileged reported cases of linguistic discrimination.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Context and rationale of the research

I started this thesis in 2019, during the transition period between the United Kingdom European Union membership referendum of 2016 and the official withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the European Union in January 2020. Very few studies had been conducted at this time on the potential impact of Brexit on the languages spoken by migrants in the UK. However, some of them (Burnett, 2017; Rzepnikowska, 2019; Virdee & McGeever, 2017) started to show that the number of anti-European crimes had increased just after the EU referendum, indicating that because of this, some migrants felt reluctant to use their native language in public places. Most of these studies focused on Polish and Eastern European migrants, and very little information was available about other nationalities. It is therefore important to determine whether most researchers studied the Polish population because it is the most common non-British nationality in the UK (The Migration Observatory, 2022) or if it indicates that Polish migrants are more often targeted by xenophobic attacks than other Europeans.

French migrants are usually not studied as they are perceived as a privileged category (Huc-Hepher, 2021b: 57), even often referred to as "expats" rather than "migrants" (Brahic, 2020: 2172), as will be developed in 1.3.1. Therefore, it could be assumed that they would not be as targeted by hate crimes as Eastern Europeans, but the specific context of Brexit could prove otherwise. This thesis intends to find whether French migrants in England were also discriminated against or attacked pre-or post-Brexit because of their native language, and if Brexit could have an impact on the way they express themselves.

It is important to provide data about the languages spoken by migrants from different countries in the UK after Brexit, as it is likely to impact them in several ways. Having studies like this one for all EU and non-EU migrants in England is necessary as attitudes towards them as well as their own attitudes towards their native language are expected to differ. One of the consequences of Brexit could be that it would legitimise discrimination and aggression against migrants, as it started to be reported (see 6.4.1). This could therefore result in migrants modifying their language habits as suggested in the first studies published after Brexit (see 2.4.2). These behaviours could then lead to first language attrition for a part of the migrant population, and the loss of their heritage language for their offspring. Therefore, collecting data about migrants' language habits will allow a better understanding of the about 10% of the population in the UK that does not have English as their main language (gov.uk, 2018), but also to be able to take more measures to prevent discrimination and hate crime if proven necessary.

In conclusion, this thesis intends to address the gap in research on French as a minority language spoken by migrants and to shed light on the experiences of various European migrants in England following the EU referendum. Through this research, my aim is to raise awareness of the post-Brexit xenophobia against EU migrants and advocate for the protection of their language rights. This thesis adds to the ongoing efforts of other studies that seek to combat hate crimes and discrimination, as well as new language policies that may harm linguistic diversity. For instance, recent research on accent bias in the UK has highlighted the need for the 2010 Equality Act to include languages and accents as protected characteristics (Sharma et al, 2019: 150). By advocating for a more inclusive and diverse society that values and respects linguistic diversity, this thesis contributes to the broader discourse on social justice and equality.

1.2 Research questions and hypotheses

This thesis investigates how French migrants in England use and perceive the French language and their French identity after the outcome of the UK EU membership referendum. It will attempt to answer four research questions, themselves divided into two to three sub-questions, about language habits, heritage language, identity and the impact of Brexit on all of these. This section will present the research questions and hypotheses of this thesis.

RQ1 a) How do French migrants use the French language in different contexts in England?

b) What are their attitudes towards it and the way they speak it, how do they perceive their translanguaging and accent, and what is their experience of accent bias before and after the EU referendum?

As will be shown in 2.5.1, there is a gap in the literature regarding French migrants' attitudes to the French language. The literature showed that the French language was important for French people's identity (Ager, 1999; Gordon, 1978; Oakes, 2001). Oakes (2001: 189) for instance found that French people thought the French language was part of their country's cultural heritage, that it was a beautiful language worthy of knowing and well-suited to modern society, and that they felt a duty to their ancestors to speak French. Therefore, it was expected that French migrants may want to maintain their native language as much as possible. Moreover, as many of them tend to only stay in the UK for a few years (France Diplomatie, 2021), they would need to maintain their language if they are planning to return to France. Most of the literature about the French in the UK focuses on those who live in London and show that they have access to (although do not always wish to participate in) a French community (Huc-Hepher and Drake, 2013: 403). However, little is known about those living outside of the capital, who may have fewer opportunities to use the French language in their daily life.

As developed in 2.5.1, several studies (Guilford, 1997; Oakes, 2001; Walsh, 2016) found that despite the prescriptivist attitudes in France's official institutions and elite organisations such as the *Académie Française*, the French people tended to be more open to the evolution of their language, including anglicisms. Therefore, it was expected that French migrants in England may use English words when speaking in French, Huc-Hepher (2021a) for instance showed that translanguaging was a way to express their new migrant identities.

Finally, as the French accent tends to be perceived positively abroad, including in the UK (Giles, 1970; Bishop, 2005; Dragojevic & Goatley-Soan, 2022), French migrants may also have positive attitudes towards their accent. Nevertheless, recent studies have shown that some European migrants felt vulnerable because of their accents after the EU referendum, and some of them wished they could have a "British accent" (Benedi Lahuerta & Isumen, 2021; Rzepnikowska, 2019; Sime, et al., 2022). Therefore, French migrants in the UK may also have similar attitudes towards their own accent in English.

RQ2 a) How important is it for French migrants to transmit the French language to their children?

b) Did Brexit seem to have an impact on their views about this matter, did it reinforce or weaken their wish to transmit their language?

For the same reasons as those listed in the hypotheses for the first research question, it was expected that French migrants would wish to transmit the French language to their children. Nevertheless, Brahic (2020: 2180) showed that some French mothers in Manchester felt vulnerable when speaking in French with their children in public places after the EU referendum. Other studies such as Dovchin (2019: 347) showed that if migrant mothers felt that their native language would be a burden rather than an asset for their children, they would not try to transmit it. Therefore, while it was expected that French migrants would still be proud of their language and consider it an asset for their children, there was a possibility that Brexit would change some parents' views on this topic.

RQ3 a) What role does the French language play in the expression of French migrants' identity in England?

b) Did Brexit impact how French migrants perceive and express their French identity?

The French language is expected to play an important role in the identity of these French migrants due to the French linguistic pride mentioned in the hypothesis for the first research question, and because it is a medium to maintain ties with the French culture and their family in France. Reed-Danahay (2020: 26) found that Brexit reinforced this French identity, and even awake or revive a European identity for some of her French participants, therefore similar results were expected.

RQ4 a) Does Brexit seem to have an impact on the way they perceive and use the French language?

b) Do French migrants in England feel discriminated against or threatened because of their native language?

c) To what extent do factors such as age, gender, or number of Leave votes in their area have an impact on French migrants' language attitudes?

The literature available when starting this research focused on attacks and discrimination towards Eastern Europeans before and after the Brexit vote (Rzepnikowska, 2019; Tyrrell et al., 2018). However, there was very little information about potential hate crimes against French migrants or Western Europeans in general. The hypothesis for this research question was that French migrants would be less often targeted by hate crimes or discrimination due to their privileged position (Brahic & Lallement, 2018: 10) and the perceived prestige of the French language mentioned in RQ1. If that were the case, Brexit would not drastically change British attitudes towards French and their language, and it would not affect the way French migrants speak.

Nevertheless, there was also a chance that not all French migrants would have the same experience in the UK. People living in cities or working in sectors where most of the population voted Leave for instance would be more likely to face xenophobia and discrimination than those who would be more often around people who voted Remain. Therefore, they would also be more likely to modify their language habits, by avoiding using the French language in public places for instance if they felt threatened when doing so. Other factors such as the age of the participants or their gender were also expected to have an impact on the discrimination they faced after Brexit and/or their language habits, as this will be developed in 6.5.4.

1.3 Abbreviations and definitions

1.3.1 Migrants, expatriates, and other problematic terminologies

Finding an appropriate term to describe French citizens living in England was one of the first challenges of this research. Different terminologies were used in studies about this population such as "London French" (Huc-Hepher, 2021b) or "French citizens in London" (Reed Danahay, 2020a), "migrants" (Huc-Hepher, 2021a) or "movers" (Brahic, 2020). The three main options originally considered were expatriates, immigrants, and migrants. The definitions for these three words in the Oxford English Dictionary are as follows:

Expatriate: An expatriated person. In modern usage, a person who lives in a foreign country (OED, 2022a).

Immigrant: One who or that which immigrates; a person who migrates into a country as a settler (OED, 2022b)

Migrant: A person who moves permanently to live in a new country, town, etc., esp. to look for work, or to take up a post, etc.; an immigrant (OED, 2022c).

At the very beginning of a book about the French population in London, Huc-Hepher (2021b), who uses the term "migrant" to refer to them states:

> "When London's minority migrant communities are referred to in political, media and everyday discourses, the French tend not to be the people that spring to mind. Despite being significant in number, historic impact and their cultural contribution to the capital, they remain largely overlooked in both societal and academic fields. Not conforming to the disadvantaged, invasive stereotype we are routinely fed through mass media and right-wing political rhetoric, particularly in a post-EU-membership referendum era, the French, as a minority, escape the public gaze." (Huc-Hepher, 2021b: 1)

Initially, I thought that because of these stereotypes associated with the word "migrants", it did not seem representative of my participants, as like it is explained in the extract above, it is not how they are usually described in the media for instance. I first chose to use "expatriates", as it is the term French people in the UK themselves tend to use, alongside "French in x country/city" (Brahic, 2020: 2172). French nationals in the UK statistically tend to only stay for 5/6 years (France Diplomatie, 2021), and expatriate was the only definition that did not have the notion of settlement. This was discussed by some participants in 5.3.2 who used "expats" to refer to someone usually sent by a company in their home country to complete a mission abroad for only a few years and will leave the country after. These participants did not identify as expats as they chose to move to the UK themselves and intend to remain there. Nevertheless, "expatriate" is also often used in research to define skilled international migrant within the labour market (Gatti, 2009: 7; Cranston, 2017: 3) which is the case for most of my participants (see 3.2.2), including those just mentioned. Nevertheless, other participants did not identify with the term "expatriate" (see 5.3.2).

I was conscious that the term "expatriate" carried problematic political and racial connotations, as it is mainly used to describe western, and usually white migrants (Cranston, 2017: 1; Kunz, 2016: 90; Kunz, 2020: 2156). However, for these exact reasons, "expatriate" is somehow appropriate to reflect this position of privilege that French people in the UK have (Brahic & Lallement, 2018: 10). As highlighted by Brahic (2020) who uses the term "mover", replacing "migrant" with "mover" "obscures the existence of persistent hierarchies based on ethnic and national identities that social scientists ought to make visible and challenge" (2020: 2182).

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I finally came to the conclusion that although French people usually did not identify with the term "migrant" (Brahic, 2020: 2182), it was the most frequently used in the literature about EU citizens in the UK and would probably have more neutral connotations than the other terms. Using the word migrant over expatriate for instance, but even "movers", would avoid the perpetuation of distinctions between migrants implying that some of them are "good" while others are "bad" (Cranston, 2017: 10). Section 6.4.2 will discuss these perceptions of "good" and "bad" EU migrants and show that those coming from new European countries such as Eastern Europeans tend to be depicted in the media as "welfare tourists" or even criminals (Radziwinowiczówna & Galasińska, 2021: 90), whereas those from western Europe countries are usually seen as contributing positively to the system (2021: 78), which has repercussions on how migrants are perceived by the local population.

Another widely used although criticised term (Dewaele, 2018: 236) I will be using in this research is "native language/speaker" as well as "non-native". This term has been criticised for its vagueness and potential harm to those it referred to in some contexts, such as in English Language Teaching, when it implies that native speakers are better equipped to teach English (Cheng et al. 2021:9). I acknowledge that these issues are valid in some contexts, such as studies on language acquisition, or the discriminatory aspect in using "native speakers" for language teaching for instance.

Cheng et al. (2021: 2) encourage researchers to avoid using this term and to describe the specific aspect of language experience they are interested in instead. They argue that there is no clear consensus definition of what a native speaker or language is in the literature (2021:4) and identified three main common usages: "nativeness-as-history (including age, order, and context of acquisition), nativeness-as-proficiency (including continued usage), and nativeness-as-identity" (Cheng et al., 2021: 2).

Using "native speaker" for "nativeness as history" is particularly problematic as it would require a consensus of before what age a speaker needs to learn a language to be considered native, it is also particularly difficult to define for multilingual children. For nativeness as proficiency, it poses the problem of language attrition in the context of immigration, as in my research for instance. It implies that speakers of a language who lose proficiency after spending time in another country would no longer be native speakers (Cheng et al., 2021: 3).

Nevertheless, in the context of this project, the exact age of my participants when they learnt French or their current proficiency in this language was not important for their recruitment. I assumed that some of them might feel more fluent in English now that they live in an anglophone country (see 4.4) for instance. For this research, I am interested in "nativeness as identity", as I am looking at how French migrants use a language that they consider being their native language, or even one of their native languages as is the case for several of my participants. Therefore, French might not have been the very

first language they learnt but if it is a language they used often before moving to England and, more importantly, that *they* would refer to as their native language, they could take part in this research.

Dewaele (2018: 237) contends that the term "non-native" is problematic due to its monolingual bias, which defines people by what they are not rather than what they are. He suggests using "LX" instead, as the traditional dichotomy of "native" versus "non-native speaker" assumes the superiority of the former and the inferiority of the latter (2018: 239). While I agree with this perspective and use "LX" in some instances when discussing language learning, I find the monolingual bias in "non-native" to be useful in highlighting the discrimination that migrants face based on their language use. Therefore, I will use "non-native" in section 4.3 when discussing accent bias, as it emphasizes that speakers are discriminated against specifically because they are not native English speakers.

1.3.2 Brexit
The official name of the "EU referendum" mentioned throughout this thesis, also often referred to by participants as the "Brexit vote", is United Kingdom European Union Membership Referendum 2016. Nevertheless, to avoid repetition and for clarity, "the EU referendum" will be used more often than United Kingdom European Union Membership Referendum 2016 or even UK EU Membership Referendum. "Brexit vote", although less neutral than other terms mentioned above, was used by participants as well as in some Brexit studies and will therefore sometimes also be used in this research. Participants even often simply referred to it as "Brexit" although the withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the European Union only happened over three years later, on January 31st, 2020.

The words "Leavers" and "Remainers" refers to people who were either in favour of leaving the EU (Leave vote) or remaining in it (Remain vote).

The European Union Settlement Scheme (EUSS) was launched in 2019 by the Home Office to give EU citizens already settled in the UK the right to remain in the country. EU migrants had to apply for a Pre-settled status or Settled status (whether they had lived in the UK for over three or five years) in order to maintain their rights after Brexit happens.

In this thesis, United Kingdom and European Union will be abbreviated as UK and EU.

1.3.3 Hate crime, discrimination and microaggression
This research focuses on perceived discrimination and hate crimes (see 3.4), and therefore may include events that are not considered by the law as discriminatory, or on the contrary exclude events that are discriminatory by law but not perceived as such by the participants (Straiton et al, 2019: 326). A hate crime is defined on the British government's website as "any criminal offence which is perceived, by the victim or any other person, to be motivated by hostility or prejudice towards someone based on a

personal characteristic" (Gov.uk, 2021). Krahe et al (2005: 265) adapted a model from Allport's (1954) analysis of 'The Nature of Prejudice' to describe four levels of discrimination:

1) Antilocution: negative, oversimplified and/or patronising verbal comments not directly addressed to the person targeted.

2) Avoidance: avoiding contact with a person or a group, whether by avoiding places where these people are likely to be found or avoiding eye contact for instance.

3) Direct discrimination: denial of equal treatment and exclusion from certain rights and privileges, such as refusing to rent a flat or hiring someone solely based on their ethnicity. It can be individual or institutional.

4) Physical assault: threat or infliction of physical harm on someone because of their belonging to a group. The most serious form of discrimination, often preceded by the other forms above.

Another relevant term when talking about discrimination is "microaggression", defined by Sue et al. (2007) as "brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioural, and environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative racial slights and insults to the target person or group" (2007: 273). They describe three forms of microaggressions: micro-assaults (verbal or nonverbal attacks such as using racial slurs), micro-insults (rudeness and insensitivity) and micro-invalidations (negate the psychological thoughts or feelings of someone) (2007:274–75).

In this research I will also refer to the term "Subtle Act of Exclusion" (SAE) suggested by Jana and Baran (2020) to replace "microaggression". They argue that the "aggression" part of the word creates a defensive and counterproductive reaction from the initiator of the microaggression, while the "micro" part seems to imply that it is not important since it is only "micro", and therefore not worth mentioning, which can create even more harm to those who experience these microaggressions (2020: 19). Therefore, Subtle Acts of Exclusion probably defines better what these microaggressions, they are often not obvious "things that people say and do", sometimes without any ill intention, that create exclusion rather than inclusion (2020: 20). SAE make people feel like they are invisible, inadequate, a curiosity, a threat, or a burden, like they are not normal and do not belong (2020: 23-4).

Often, the initiator has good intentions and is trying to either compliment or be funny for instance, but they can still cause harm. Some SAE about race and ethnicity given in Jana and Baran (2020) include asking someone "where are you really from?", mistreating someone's name by making jokes about it or not trying to remember it, pronounce or spell it correctly (2020: 101), comments (including compliments) on accents. These acts make people feel like "curiosities" who "do not belong" (2020: 98).

Finally, another concept that will be mentioned in this thesis is symbolic violence. This term coined by Bourdieu refers to a form of usually subtle hostility which hurt people without being physically inflicted. Bourdieu defines it as "the violence which is exercised upon a social agent with his or her complicity" (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992: 167).

I will show in this thesis that while my participants were usually not victims of physical violence or other forms of hate crimes, some of them did perceive several forms of discrimination and SAE towards them, especially after the EU referendum of 2016.

1.4 Outline of thesis

This thesis comprises seven chapters. Chapter 2 will provide a comprehensive review of the literature relevant to this research. It will discuss several themes important for this study, starting with the notion of identity, and then discussing studies published about challenges faced by migrants in different countries including language maintenance, heritage languages, code-switching, attrition and research about transnationality and migrants' communities. Then, it will review studies specific to the context of the UK and the early published works about the potential impact of Brexit on migrants' languages. Finally, the literature review will show that despite the interest of linguists in different aspects of the French language and particularly purism in France, very little information is available about French when spoken by the French diaspora, especially in the context of a political change seen as unfavourable to immigration and foreign languages such as Brexit. The methodology for this research will then be explained in Chapter 3.

This thesis is divided by themes (see 3.3.3) and each data chapter (chapters 4, 5 and 6) provides both findings and discussion. Chapter 4 will start by introducing the findings about French migrants' language habits in England. Then it will discuss their attitudes towards their language and accent in English, as well as towards anglicisms and translanguaging, and their concerns regarding language attrition. Finally, it will show that it is important for most French citizens in England to transmit the French language to their children. The last section will therefore present the strategies they use to provide their children with bilingual education as well as the challenges they face.

Chapter 5 will look at how French migrants maintain their language, identity and culture while integrating into the British culture as well. It will show that while French migrants may not instinctively think of their language as the most important part of their identity, it is intrinsically linked to the French culture that most of them value and take pride in. It will also present the notions of transnationality and communities and discuss whether it is relevant to talk about a French community in England, especially outside of London. Finally, it will introduce findings about national identity, participants'

opinions on applying for a British passport and how Brexit awaken or amplified a European identity for some of them.

Chapter 6 will focus on Brexit and participants' experiences of xenophobia before and after 2016. First, it will indicate that the weeks following the referendum were emotionally intense for French migrants who felt disappointed and rejected. Then, it will show that while before the EU referendum only a few participants were verbally attacked based on their language, they thought it exacerbated the latent xenophobia in Britain, and it will compare French migrants' experiences with those of other Europeans in England. This chapter will also provide answers regarding the different factors that could have an impact on French migrants' experience of xenophobia in England. In the final section of this chapter, I will argue that although many participants initially claimed Brexit did not have an impact on them, they later revealed having experienced microaggressions and that some of them started to be reluctant to speak French in public places. Finally, Chapter 7 will present the conclusions of this research, reflect on its limitations, and offer some insights into work about Brexit and immigration that will be needed in the near future.

Chapter 2: Literature review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a review of the literature on different topics related to migrants' languages studies and Brexit. It will also serve as a reference for definitions of different terminologies used in subsequent chapters. In 2.2, some of the major studies about identity will be presented. Section 2.3 will review the literature about migrants' languages and the challenges faced by speakers of minority languages, including language habits and maintenance, heritage languages, bilingualism and L1 attrition, translanguaging and transnationality. The following section will focus on studies about minority languages and migrants in the UK. It will first review the literature about language bias and linguistic discrimination in the UK. Then, it will discuss recent studies about Brexit and migrants and foreign languages representations in the media around the Brexit campaign, the consequences Brexit and these representations had on migrants in the UK, as well as the gaps in the literature due to the recent nature of the subject. Finally, 2.5 will focus on the French language. Firstly, it will discuss some major studies about purism in France, and then it will show that the number of studies about French outside of francophone countries as a minority or migrant's language is limited compared to other languages, hence the importance of the present thesis.

2.2 Identity

2.2.1 Identity in sociology

This section will present some of the classic works on identity, more studies focusing specifically on migrants and identity will be discussed in subsequent sessions. The concept of identity has been discussed in various academic fields, including sociology, anthropology and linguistics. In this section, I will present some of the main schools of thought about different aspects of identity, and I will then focus on studies published in linguistics about language and identity. Different definitions of identity have been given over time, for instance, Fearon argued that there are a social identity and a personal identity that he defines as follows:

> "In the former sense, an "identity" refers simply to a social category, a set of persons marked by a label and distinguished by rules deciding membership and (alleged) characteristic features or attributes. In the second sense of personal identity, an identity is some distinguishing characteristic (or characteristics) that a person takes special pride in or views as socially consequential but more-or-less unchangeable." (Fearon, 1999:2)

In other words, for Fearon, social identity would be a reply to the question "Who are you?", whereas personal identity is linked to honours, pride, and dignity, and would therefore answer the more philosophical question "Who am I?" (1999: 11-12). Erikson differentiates ego and group identities and

argues that people are not born with identities but acquire them over time (1994:23). Goffman's theory is also that people when presenting themselves to others are similar to actors on a stage: they perform, which results in the opposition between a self-identity and the creation of an identity for the other (Goffman, 1959: 28).

Bourdieu produced several works about how identity and society interact with each other. He argues that an individual's identity is granted to him by his social background, therefore identity cannot be considered as a process of autonomous reflection, but as the reflection of incorporated *habitus* (Bourdieu, 1994: 154), which is "a subjective but not individual system of internalised structures, schemes of perception, conception, and action common to all members of the same group or class" (Bourdieu: 1977: 86). In his study of French society, he explains that "social order is progressively inscribed in people's minds' through 'cultural products' including systems of education, language, judgements, values, methods of classification and activities of everyday life" and that it resulted in an unconscious acceptance of social differences and hierarchies, a sense of "one's place" and to behaviours of self-exclusion (Bourdieu, 1984: 471). The experience of transitioning and holding two habitus at one time is called a "cleft habitus" (Bourdieu 2004:111). Ingram and Abrahams (2016) describe it as a third space where people belong in "neither and both places at once" (2016: 152). Huc-Hepher (2019; 2021a, b) studied French migrants' identities in London through Bourdieu's concepts. She compares the habitus of a migrant to a backpack: "Like a backpack whose contents evolve over the course of its owner's travels but whose basic form remains unchanged […], the habitus of a migrant is at once fundamentally rooted in its sociocultural origins and open to transformation" (Huc-Hepher, 2021b: 62). In a paper about the symbolic capital losses and gains experienced by French people when they move to London, she for instance argues that their migration resulted in greater symbolic capital, others experienced a loss. For some, the self-reinventing effect of moving abroad was perceived positively, while for others their linguistic habitus transformation made them feel out of place (2021a: 71).

Some researchers also worked on cultural identity, which is when a group of individuals share "general knowledge, artistic productions, historical traditions, activities or productions such as type of housing, clothing, culinary habits and tastes, techniques, social behaviour" (Drouin-Hans, 2006: 19). Therefore, cultural identity is an entity regrouping different individuals belonging to this entity, which can be a country, a city, or a social group for instance, but only common particularities between individuals are emphasized rather than differences (2006: 20). Gilbert (2010) argues that there are two uses of the notion of cultural identity. The first one refers to the identity of an individual formed by how this person was raised, their religious and moral values for instance. In this case, cultural identity can be unique to this individual (2010: 2). Gilbert calls the other use more "problematic", as it no longer refers

to an individual but a collective identity, which is shared by other members of a group, and implies that a group shares a culture rather than only features of culture (2010: 3).

2.2.2 Language and identity

Gumperz (1982), Edwards (1985;1999) and Joseph (2004) demonstrated that languages were more than a way to communicate with others, but that they could also be a way to express one's national, ethnic, or even religious identity. Identity and nations are concepts that are difficult to define and analyse and are consequently often debated in sociology and linguistics (Anderson 1983:13). Anderson (1983) worked on clarifying the concepts of nation, nationalism, and nationality in what he calls the "imagined community". He defined a nation as follows:

> "It is an imagined political community, and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign. It is imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each life the image of their communion […] all communities larger than primordial villages of face-to-face contact (and perhaps even these) are imagined. Communities are to be distinguished, not by their falsity/genuineness, but by the style in which they are imagined" (1983: 14).

However, Joseph (2004:13) states that researchers in the late twentieth century such as Anderson tended to focus on how national languages shaped national identities rather than how national identities shaped languages. He argues that "our language is not just an accidental part of who we are as people but has been directly moulded by the most fundamental part of who we are, our bodies." (2004: 43). He explains that linguists need to think about the identity of people who have to abandon their traditional languages and what it means to them on the philosophical but also political and economic levels to save these languages (2004: 23). For instance, in some countries, speakers of regional languages were forced to abandon their language in favour of the dominant one in the country. Giving up one's language means losing a part of one's identity to create a new one by "constructing an identity for themselves that is bound up with a conception of modernity as communication extending beyond their village and their country to the world at large" (2004:23).

It is especially important to continue the research in this area in the era of globalisation and migration. Over the last twenty years, researchers have gained interest in regional and minority languages and identities in different places (Archer, 2013; Atkinson, 2011; Braber, 2009; Jaffe, 2013), which will be discussed in the next section presenting the literature about migrants' identity, language habits and maintenance and communities.

2.3 Migration studies

2.3.1 Language habits and maintenance

Many studies highlighted the complexity of language and identity for migrants (Salomone, 2010: 69). Salomone (2010: 71) for instance insists on the importance of language for the identity of migrants, as a shared language reflects ways of thinking and values, enables communication and identification to a group and gives them access to their culture. Many studies (Al-Sahafi, 2015; Kliuchnikova, 2015; Que & Correa, 2018; Yazan & Ali, 2018) have looked at how identity was perceived by migrants from and living in different countries and showed that for most of them it was important to maintain it as it was at the core of their identity. Therefore, migrants may need their language not only to communicate with their families or access migrants' communities in their host country (Isurin & Riehl, 2017: 114) but also to practise and express the values of their religion for instance (Al-Sahafi, 2015:78; Yazan & Ali, 2018: 382).

Several researchers have also highlighted the difficulties encountered by migrants to "integrate"/ "assimilate" into a new country because of their low proficiency in the dominant language (Johansson, 2016: 306). It can have an impact on many aspects of their lives such as education (Benzie, 2009) or employment (Bergman, 2008; Harrison, 2013). Bergman (2008) for instance analysed how speaking a foreign language in the workplace was perceived in the US, and Harrison (2013) focused on employment and glottophobia, a term coined by French sociologist Philippe Blanchet (2016), to talk about the discrimination based on foreign or regional accents (see 2.4.1). The literature about migrants is vast, therefore this section will present some of the major aspects that are important for this study such as heritage languages, attrition, code-switching and transnationalism, more detail will be offered about migrants in the UK specifically in 2.4.

2.3.2 Heritage languages, bilingualism, and language attrition

Researchers such as Gutirrez (2007), Lee et al (2015) and Zhang & Slaughter-Defo (2009) examined how migrants defined their identity through their language and compared first and second generations' attitudes towards their native/heritage language. Gutirrez, (2007) for instance studied how Spanish nationals who migrated to the UK between 1950 and 1973 maintained their language and acquired the language of their host country. This research showed that, in the twentieth century, in many countries, including the UK, monolingualism was associated with cultural homogeneity and bilingualism and national identity were seen as mutually exclusive. Therefore, especially when raising children, migrants may have to adapt and change their language habits, such as the choice of the languages used in the private sphere (2007: 212). Gutirrez (2007: 213) also showed that distinctions could be observed between families in which both parents were Spanish and mixed families with one Spanish parent and a British one for instance. In the latter case, English was usually the main language

of the household and result in monolingual English-speaking families. In families in which both parents were Spanish, the couple maintained the mother tongue, but would switch to English when raising children. Second-generation migrants in this study were bilingual, some of them learned or improve their skills in Spanish as a second language once adults, usually for practical reasons such as enhancing career opportunities, but also sometimes with the intention of transmitting the language to their own children (2007: 228). Other studies such as Zhang & Slaughter-Defo (2009:91) who looked at heritage languages attitudes among Chinese migrant families in the US, or Lee et al (2015: 508) who observed Spanish speakers in the US, showed that migrant parents usually think that bilingualism will give their children opportunities in the future. Participants considered that being "truly bilingual" means being able to read, write and speak "correctly" in both languages, and felt "embarrassed" when their offspring was unable to do so in Spanish (Lee et al, 2015: 510).

Research also indicated that although second or third-generation migrants may not always speak their heritage language fluently (Lee, 2008), it was important for most of them to connect with their family and origins, and therefore played an important role in their identity (Blackledge, 2009; Kouritzin, 1999; Lee, 2013). Blackledge (2009) who studied complementary schools in the UK for instance showed that teaching the history of a country is often seen as linked to teaching the language by teachers in these schools for heritage language students (2009: 471). Nevertheless, while many students felt proud to learn their heritage language, many also contested their affiliation to their parents' country of origin and national language, as for these children born in the UK, it was only one aspect of their identity (2009: 471). Adolescence is often a difficult time for children of migrants who want to feel accepted and do not want to be seen as different (Johansson & Olofsson, 2011: 198; Raufelder et al., 2021: 2213). Therefore, they often neglect their parents' home culture and language to embrace the host country's culture, and progressively no longer use the mother tongue even in the family context (Petreñas, 2018: 236). Studies have also highlighted that not all ethnic groups had the same relationship with their heritage language and that some had a closer relationship than others. For instance, Kim and Chao (2009) found that heritage language was a more important component of ethnic identity for second-generation Mexican adolescents than second-generation Chinese adolescents.

The notion of bilingualism is still debated in linguistics (Edwards, 2005: 8; Hamers & Blanc, 2008: 7), as different definitions are used for this word. Some consider that minimal skills in some of the four categories (speaking, listening, writing, reading) in a second language are sufficient to be bilingual. For instance, Edwards (2005: 7) argues that "everyone is bilingual" as almost everybody acquires some knowledge about languages other than their mother tongue at some point in their life. Others, especially in early studies on the topic such as Bloomfield (1933), think that "native-like skills" are required to be "bilingual" (Edwards, 2005: 8). However, even "native-like" lacks precision, as some

would argue for instance that someone with perfect grammar, but a foreign accent could not be bilingual (Hamers & Blanc, 2008: 7). Edwards (2005: 8) mentions two different types of bilingualism: additive, when both languages are perceived as useful and valued, and subtractive, when one dominates the other, as it is often the case for migrants.

In terms of bilingual education, Edwards (2005: 12) and Bialystok (2018: 670) argue that early studies such as Firth (1930) tended to support that bilingualism was harmful to children which stayed in popular minds. Nevertheless, more recent studies have refuted this idea and proved that bilingualism did not cause speech delay for instance (Barac & Bialystok, 2011: 37; Park, 2014: 127). Edwards (2005: 12) explains that negative consequences observed are not due to bilingualism itself but to other factors such as social, personal or cultural ones. Most research about bilingual education highlighted on the contrary the cognitive benefits of speaking more than one language from an early age, such as better performance for tasks that rely heavily on executive control (Bialystok & Viswanathan, 2009: 499). Lifelong bilingualism was also proven to have several advantages including delaying symptoms of dementia (Bialystok et al., 2004: 299) as well as "increased opportunity for employment in a global economy, facilitation of travel and broadening of social spheres, and enrichment from widened horizons from language, arts, and culture" (Bialystok, 2018: 675).

Finally, studies about bilingualism also found that bilingual people often "felt different" or had "different identities/personalities" in each language they speak, and were for instance even described as funnier in one language than another by others (Koven, 2007: 8), a phenomenon called "feeling of self-change in bilingual speakers", which has been observed by psychologists and linguists over the last 60 years (Ervin-Tripp, 1964; Koven, 2007; Lasan, & Rehner, 2018; Luna & Peracchio, 2008; Mijatović, & Tytus, 2019; Solomone, 2010: 73).

Finally, another important aspect of migrants' languages studies is attrition. L1 attrition, the loss of one's native language resulting from reduced exposure and lack of practice (Paradis, 2007: 125), has also received considerable attention in recent years. In their review of the literature about language attrition Gallo et al (2021: 2) explain that attrition is an individual change rather than an intragenerational process and that while language shift refers to a sociolinguistic aspect of usage (see 2.3.4), language attrition occurs at the cognitive/psycholinguistic level, and is not due to any brain degeneration or age-related cognitive impairment. Schmid (2008: 10) therefore describes attrition as the result of "a change in linguistic behaviour due to a severance of the contact with the community in which the language is spoken", and far from being rare, it is integrant of the language development of bilingual people (Schmid & Köpke, 2013: 14). Attrition can affect the phonology, morphology, syntax, lexicon, and semantics of a language (Gallo et al, 2021: 3).

Migrants living in communities of people from their country of origin (see 2.3.4), while they are still in contact with their native language, are also more likely to be exposed to different variations, as it might be the L2 for some other migrants (especially second generation). Therefore, they may be more influenced by the dominant language of the country than isolated migrants. The latter have less contact with their L1 in the new country, but if they maintain it through the country of origin, they may have access to a higher quality of language (Schmid & Köpke, 2013: 16).

Flores (2010) and Brehmer & Treffers-Daller (2020) focused on attrition during childhood and showed that the acquisition of a second language may co-occur with the decline of the first language proficiency, especially in a context where the L2 becomes dominant. Flores (2010) showed that the age and amount of contact with the L1 play a role in attrition, younger children and children who do not use the L1 frequently are more likely to lose it, especially if the L1 was acquired in an L2 setting (2010: 545) such as a migrant setting (Brehmer & Treffers-Daller, 2020: 1).

2.3.3 Code-switching, code-mixing and translanguaging

Code-switching is a "shift in accent, vocabulary or syntax" in speech, observed in bilingual or polyglot communities, such as migrants' communities or regional minorities (Gardner-Chloros, 2009:4). An initial theory, even before the word "code-switching" started to be used (Auer, 1998: 30), was that several phonemic systems could co-exist in monolinguals speech (Fries & Pikes, 1949: 29). Jakobson et al (1952) adapted the notion of "switching code" to include bilingual and refer to how speakers change their speech to "decode" someone else's "code" (Jakobson, et al, 1952: 603). Code-switching was first used in bilingualism studies and described by Vogt (1954) as "perhaps not a linguistic phenomenon, but rather a psychological one, and its causes are obviously extra-linguistic" (1954: 368).

Gumperz (1962) produced one of the first studies in which the emphasis was on the social functions of code-switching (Auer, 1998: 32). Based on the concept of linguistic communities, which he defines as "small groups bonding together by face-to-face contact or may cover large regions, depending on the level of abstraction we wish to achieve" (1962: 31), he argues that within these communities, everyone has a "role" and an expected "behaviour role", including speech behaviour (1962: 31). He then refers to a "code matrix" which is a set of codes and subcodes that varies in each community (1962: 32) and gives the examples of French regional languages and dialects used at home, whereas Standard French is used outside (1962: 32). Later, Blom and Gumperz (1972:126) referred to two types of switching: situational and metaphorical. Situational code-switching occurs when there is a direct relationship between the language and the social situation. The speakers need to change their language when there is a change in situational factors, such as a non-speaker of one of the languages entering the room. On the contrary, there is no change in the situation when metaphorical switching occurs, such as two people switching codes within the same conversation with the same person for

certain topics. They then preferred using the terminology conversational switching, which is a close analysis of spoken exchanges to "identify and describe the function of code-switching" (Nilep, 2006:9).

Myers-Scotton introduced the markedness model and argues that all language speakers have the ability to make choices about the varieties they use and that these choices are meant to achieve social ends. She explains that speakers' goal is to "optimise", therefore they choose one variety over another to "enhance rewards and minimize costs", which implies a certain level of rationality when code-switching (Myers-Scotton, 1998:19). These choices, in a rationally based model of linguistic variations, imply external and internal constraints on speakers, and acting rationally also means that "speakers take account of their own beliefs, values, and goals, and that they assess these regarding internal consistency and available evidence" (Myers-Scotton & Bolonyai, 2001:23). Gardner-Chloros (2009:41) explains that code-switching takes different forms and occurs for several reasons. At a social level is the product of a power struggle between two varieties whereas at an individual level it "reflects varying bilingual competencies and serves as a discourse-structuring device". Heredia & Altarriba (2001: 167-168) mention the lack of proficiency in a language and dissociation from emotional events as reasons for code-switching. However, several other factors lead to code-switching including – but not limited to- showing solidarity and reflecting social status (Rihane, 2007:5-8). Gumperz (1982: 66) refers to a "we code" usually associated with the minority language and is used for informal activities while the "they code" is associated with the majority language and used for formal and less personal out-group conversations. Gardner-Chloros (2009: 57) shows that both codes are often used within the same conversation. She gives the example of a conversation between Punjabi speakers about the loss of Punjabi culture in Britain, who switched to English (they code) for the word "culture", representing the threat of English on Punjabi.

One issue with code-switching in the context of my research is that it is sometimes difficult to differentiate borrowings and code-switching, and there is no consensus in the literature regarding what code-switching and borrowing exactly refer to (Alvanoudi, 2018: 3; Gardner-Chloros, 2009:12; Muysken, 2000: 15). For Gardner-Chloros (2009:12), "loans start off as code switches and then become gradually established as loans". While some linguists such as Myers-Scotton (2010:21) think that single items should be considered code-switching, others like Poplack (1988:53) make a strict distinction between lexical borrowings (see 2.5.1) and code-switching; contrary to code-switching, established borrowings usually follow the RP's morphology, syntax, structure and often phonology. Nonce borrowings are similar, but contrary to established borrowings they are not recurrent or widespread, and require some level of bilingual competence, comparably to code-switching. Aikhenvald (2002) also argues that "what appears to be a nonce borrowing, or an occasional code-switch, for one speaker, could be an established morpheme for another speaker" (2002:197). Therefore, Poplack, claims that

"distinguishing nonce borrowings from single word code-switching is conceptually easy but methodologically difficult" (Poplack, 2004: 591). Muysken (2000:1) uses the term code-mixing to refer to all cases where lexical items or grammatical structures from two languages occur in a sentence and code-switching for "the rapid succession of several languages in a single speech event" (2000: 1). Switching would therefore describe an alternation between two codes whereas mixing would refer to the insertion of items of L1 into L2 (2000: 4). Nevertheless, Muysken distinguishes borrowings, which are L2 words introduced into the lexicon of the L1, from code-mixing which is when two grammars and vocabularies are produced in a sentence (2000: 69). He also highlights again the complexity of differentiating nonce borrowings from code-mixing:

> "Code-mixing involves inserting alien words or constituents into a clause; borrowing entering alien elements into a lexicon. It is not always the case, however, that borrowing can be seen as a form of simple vocabulary extension, and that code-mixing has a primarily symbolic function, e.g. marking a mixed cultural identity. I will argue that what might be formally characterized as borrowed elements particularly in bilingual discourse take on certain discourse functions of code-mixings. This result perhaps throws some light on the question of why `nonce borrowings' are so controversial. In the perspective taken here they constitute a class of elements that formally might be grouped with borrowing, and functionally can, in certain circumstances, be grouped with code-mixing, namely when the borrowing primarily has a symbolic function." (2000: 69).

Finally, another notion often associated with code-switching that will mainly be used in my research is translanguaging. It was first used to describe pedagogical practices in Welsh revitalisation programmes, where both English and Welsh were used in the classroom, the teacher would usually teach in Welsh and the students would reply in English (Li, 2018: 15). Researchers such as García (2019; 2020) and Li (2018; 2022) studied this concept and found that it was an effective pedagogical practice for language learners (Li, 2018: 15; Li & Ho, 2018: 57; Zhu & Gu, 2022: 229). Li (2018) claims that the term translanguaging "has been applied to pedagogy, everyday social interaction, cross-modal and multimodal communication, linguistic landscape, visual arts, music, and transgender discourse" and seems to compete with other terms such as code-switching and code-mixing (2018: 9). To him, translanguaging does not intend to replace the existing terminologies, but re-examines the role of the L1 in language learning and teaching and the "one-language-at-a-time" ideologies still used in teaching practices (2018: 16). He argues that we do not think in one language, but we individually produce their own "unique, personal language" (2018: 18) and that translanguaging allows to "think beyond the artificial boundaries of named languages" (2018: 19) and that consequently from this perspective, only

looking at which language is used "becomes an uninteresting and insignificant question" (2018: 27). Therefore, this is how he defines the concept:

> "Translanguaging reconceptualizes language as a multilingual, multisemiotic, multisensory, and multimodal resource for sense- and meaning-making, and the multilingual as someone who is aware of the existence of the political entities of named languages and has an ability to make use the structural features of some of them that they have acquired" (2018: 22)

Li (2018: 27) also talks about how the alternation between languages builds an identity for the speaker. In an investigation into the work and life of a multilingual, London-based artist of Polish origin, Zhu & Li (2022) conclude that "translanguaging is also about the multiplex of identity as continuous, dynamic, and ever-changing situated performance that breaks the boundaries between the spontaneous and the rehearsed, the actual and the imagined, and the authentic and the faked" (2022: 13).

Huc-Hepher (2021a; 2021b) uses the term translinguaging to talk about the language of French migrants in London. Through her analysis of blogs written by French women in London, she shows that the evolution of the language on these blogs moved "from affected code-switching to more organic translanguaging" and argues that French migrants are merging their French and British "habits, habitats and attitudes" rather than feeling torn between the two cultures (2021b: 230). In another study, Huc-Hepher (2021a) shows how translanguaging allows in-group bonding and community cohesion but also creates "an invisible symbolic boundary" between them and their family and friends in France (2021a: 81), as it will be shown in 4.3.3. She concludes this paper by saying that "perhaps, therefore, translanguaging can be apprehended as a generative and fertile transcendental third space, but only among those who share a common sense of diasporic belonging and selfhood: a common-unity of practice apart, rather than a community of practice within" (2021a: 82).

2.3.4 Transnationality, diaspora and communities

The final important notions in the literature about migrants' languages and identities to define are transnationality and communities. Özkul (2019: 433) argues that transnationalism emerged to move away from the assimilationist theories that focused on how migrants could adapt to their new country's norms and values and did not accurately represent migrants' practices and attachments to both their new and home countries. Therefore, transnationalism is "the tendency among immigrants to maintain ties with their country of origin while also integrating into the destination country" (Bartram et al, 2014: 10). Vertovec (2003) adds that transnational studies carry subthemes such as "ethnicity, identity, gender, family, religion, remittances, entrepreneurship and political participation" (2003: 2).

With the progress in technology and affordable travel costs, it is easier nowadays for migrants to maintain ties with their country of origin than it used to be, as they can now easily (video)call and text their families, and travel to their home country (Amit & Bar-Lev, 2016: 110; Goel, 2014: 66; Sanghera & Thapar-Björkert, 2017: 91; Vertovec, 2009: 2). In the early 2000s, Malher (2001) and Vertovec (2003) already revealed that the progress made in technology such as the possibility to phone internationally changed migrants' life as they were now able to have "discussions across the kitchen table" through the phone (Vertovec, 2003: 13) which allowed them to "feel and function like a family" even physically distanced (Malher, 2001: 584). Technology kept evolving over the last 20 years and Kim (2018) explains that nowadays, social media, email, texting or video messages "allow transnational youth a regular passage to the rich semiotic and cultural repertoires built from both their country of origin and current settlement" (2018: 41). Kim (2018) analysed the translanguaging practices of a young Korean girl living in the US in digital spaces (2018: 39). While she usually used English for school presentations for instance and Korean when video messaging her extended family in South Korea, in a video for her monolingual Korean relatives she uses both English and Korean. During her interview, she explained that it was "a natural expression of her daily language practice and a purposeful representation of her bilingual identity for the family" (2018: 46), which perfectly illustrates the concepts of translanguaging (2.3.3) and transnationalism. Nevertheless, Ryan et al (2015: 212) showed that despite the easy access to technology and more affordable transportation, maintaining relationships with loved ones in their home country required ongoing efforts and that technology did not answer all needs.

In recent years, the Internet and more specifically social media have also become a central tool in the building of these communities, helping people to meet online and support each other sometimes even before moving to a new country (Al-Rawi, 2019; Brinkerhoff, 2009; Canhilal, et al., 2020; Gius, 2021; Mallapragada, 2013; Retis & Tsagarousianou, 2019; Sahoo & Kruijf, 2014). Kraimer et al. (2001:72) argue that expatriation often generates stress as it involves moving to a new city, country and starting a new job. Canhilal et al. (2020:4-5) claim that migrants, having lost their social network, sought a new community and saw other expatriates as a source of support. While traditionally expatriates would have sought support from someone they knew, such as a colleague, nowadays they can also seek support online from strangers experiencing similar issues on forums or social media for instance (2020: 7). They concluded that the Internet was an appropriate medium for both informational and emotional support as it allowed them to be in contact with a large number of people sharing similar experiences. Sessions (2010: 376) also showed that these online meetings sometimes lead to offline gatherings which allowed the participants to create deeper relationships, as seems to be the case on the Facebook groups for French migrants in England that will be mentioned in 3.2.3 and 5.3.3. Her study also revealed that people attending offline meetings were also usually the most active on these social platforms, by

commenting on publications of other members or posting themselves (Sessions, 2010: 389). Hajská (2019) who studied the role of Facebook in the Romani community in Leicester concluded that it has become "a means of connection between individual members of the community and in many ways, mirrors the community's social structure" (2019: 124).

Migrants can maintain their cultural identity through online but also offline cultural diaspora or communities. Modern diasporas are "ethnic minority groups of migrant origins residing and acting in host countries but maintaining strong sentimental and material links with their countries of origin – their homelands'' (Sheffer, 1986: 3). Brinkerhoff (2009) argues that identity is "at the very core of diaspora and its influence in home and hostland" (2009: 31). Communities are not only a way for migrants to maintain ties with their culture and languages, but also a "solidary social network of trust" (Jones et al, 2010: 581) when settling in a new country by being, for instance, a social network to find a job or sharing information about accommodation or migrants' rights. Sanghera and Thapar-Björkert (2017) also claim that "kin and ethnic ties that are sustained through trust, reciprocity and solidarity continue to play a central role in processes of migration and settlement" (2017: 91). Jones et al (2010) for instance showed that for Somalis in Leicester diasporic networks where "crucial resources" to identify places to settle and access "finance, labour and commercially useful information" (2010: 581).

Some companies also base their international firms where communities already exist (Karreman et al, 2017: 136; Portes, 2001: 191; Vertovec, 2004: 992). For instance, many Chinese businesses rely on guanxi, or ethnicity-based social and business networks to overcome institutional and informational barriers in international markets. A shared language, norms and values are seen by these companies are beneficial as they facilitate communication, trust, and support, and therefore enhance collaborative potential (Karreman et al, 2017: 136). Consequently, not only does this system offer work opportunities to Chinese migrants, but it also allows them to work for a company and with people who share their culture and language. While the literature shows that online communities are crucial for some migrants, I will argue in 4.2 and 5.3 that the French community in the UK mainly exists online, especially outside of London.

Section 2.3 showed that the literature about migration studies includes different areas, such as migrants' language habits and attitudes, strategies to maintain and transmit their native language and the challenges they faced when they are no longer able to do so, which can lead to language attrition. Section 2.4 will focus on the literature about migrants and foreign languages in the UK, and the different forms linguistic discrimination and hate crimes that occurred after the EU referendum in June 2016.

2.4 Migrants in the UK

2.4.1 Integration, proficiency, accent bias and discrimination

In recent years, several studies have observed attitudes towards regional and foreign accents in anglophone countries, especially in the US. In a meta-analysis of twenty studies about the effects of standards and non-standard accents on evaluations of speakers, Fuertes et al. (2012) found that standard-accented speakers were rated higher than those with a non-standard accent in education, employment, and sales settings in speakers in the United States, Argentina, Turkey, and the United Kingdom (2012: 127).

In major research about accent bias in the US, Lippi-Green (2011) argues that daily, people are discriminated against, belittled, and refused jobs based on their accent, and that linguistic discrimination should be treated the same way as any other form of discrimination (2011: 333). However, Lippi-Green claims that only foreign accents linked to "skin that isn't white" or "signals of third-world homeland" receive negative reactions and that there are no documented cases of "native speakers of Swedish or Dutch or Gaelic being turned away from jobs because of communicative difficulties" contrary to speakers of "Spanish, Rumanian, Thai or Urdu" (2011: 253). Still in the US, Kraut and Wulff (2013: 259) found that native speakers of English who rarely interacted with non-native speakers rated foreign-accented speech of international students in a university in Texas as less comprehensible than those who did and scored them lower on communicative ability.

In Lev-Ari and Keysar, (2010), native speakers of English rated the trustfulness of statements read by non-native speakers of English with "mild" and "heavy" accents. They found that non-native speakers were seen as less credible than native speakers, and heavily accented statements were rated as the least truthful (2010: 1095). Therefore, these studies indicate that English native speakers' attitudes towards foreign accents tend to be negative, especially for those perceived as "heavier" and associated with "non-white populations" (2010: 1095). Lev-Ari & Boduch-Grabka (2021) replicated this study with British native speakers and Polish accents. They found that participants believed statements more when they were produced by British speakers than by Polish speakers (2021: 8). Nevertheless, they found that participants who were exposed to Polish accent before listening to the statements believed Polish speakers more than those who were only exposed to British accent (2021: 8). Therefore, they argue that discrimination may happen independently of any prejudices people have, but because they find the accent difficult to process and that exposure to foreign accents could help to combat accent bias (2021: 12).

Giles (1970: 215) helped establish a model framework to analyse accent bias in the UK by asking British people to rank different accents based on aesthetic (how pleasant-unpleasant they thought a

particular accent sounded), communicative (how comfortable-uncomfortable they would feel if interacting with the accented-speaker concerned), and status content (how much prestige or status was associated with speaking this accent). This study included several British accents such as 'Northern English', 'Liverpool', 'Somerset' as well as some non-native and ethnic accents like French, German or Indian. The RP accent, Northern American and French accents were perceived as having a higher status than any other British regional accent (1970: 223). In 2005, Bishop et al. reproduced this study and found that the French accent was ranked sixth out of 16 accents presented in terms of prestige and social attractiveness, behind RP, "accent identical to your own", Scottish, London, and North American (2005: 140). Most regional accents or other foreign accents such as Spanish or German still had lower prestige than French (see 4.3.1 for more detail). In more recent years, Dragojevic & Goatley-Soan (2022) used a methodology similar to Giles' to study American attitudes towards foreign accents, based on three criteria: Status (competent, intelligent, educated, smart), Solidarity criteria (i.e., warm, friendly, nice, pleasant) and Processing Fluency (how easy the speaker is to understand). They found that American English speakers attributed more status, solidarity, and fluency to the Standard American English accent. French was ranked fourth behind German, Hindi and Russian in terms of status and processing fluency and first for the solidarity criterion (2022: 174). These studies indicate that the French accent is seen as prestigious in anglophone countries, which could imply that French migrants may be less discriminated against because of their accent than others, as it will be developed in 4.3.1.

Baratta (2018) studied teachers who have a regional accent in Britain and found that many decided and sometimes were told by their mentor during training to adopt a standard accent (2018: 109) even when they were teaching in their own region (2018: 189). Especially when teachers were asked to modify their accent, they reported that it created a division between their personal identity when they use their regional accent, and their professional identity with a standard accent that is "not themselves" (2018:141). A teacher in this study also argues that students should hear different accents and does not see how a regional accent could impact students' learning (2018:142). This study shows that regional accents are still stigmatised in education and that standard British is still seen as the accent that should be used in education, and therefore as the prestigious accent. Some of the consequences are that students are not aware of other accents, are made to believe that their accent is inferior to standard English and that teachers must abandon a part of their identity.

Levon et al. (2021) also found that there is a consistent accent bias in Britain, and that there was still a hierarchy of accent prestige that serves to privilege certain accents over others (2021: 375). Accents mainly used by the working class such as Estuary English and Multicultural London English were perceived to be significantly less "hireable" than speakers of RP (2021: 376). Consequently, this study

shows that people in the UK can still be discriminated against when looking for a job based on their regional accent.

Dixon & Mahoney (2004) found that a suspect's accent was associated with stereotypes of criminality. The suspect with a Birmingham accent (ranked last in Bishop, 2005 and Giles, 1970) was rated as a "more typical criminal" and more likely to be accused of a crime again in the future than the standard-accented suspect (2004: 70). Still in the context of law, as witnesses in trials sometimes must describe accents when they could not see the perpetrator of a crime, Braber et al (2022) conducted an experiment to evaluate how well people can identify accents. They found that accuracy in recognising accents from different parts of the UK was low, and that people tended to use country descriptors such as "Scotland" or "Ireland" rather than more specific areas (2022: 20).

Nevertheless, while these studies about accents in Britain indicate that there is a bias against non-standard accents, they tend to observe regional accents rather than foreign accents. Studies about migrants in the UK usually focus on how to "integrate" or "assimilate" migrants by ensuring they know enough English to be able to work (Anghel, 2012; Cowie & Delaney, 2019; Schinkel, 2018) and compare strategies used in different European countries. Anghel (2012) for instance used two case studies: Romanian people who migrated to Germany and received citizenship, and Romanian migrants in Italy who did not. This study investigated how the policy models of each country influenced the integration of migrants. It showed that while migrants in Italy were given fewer rights and support to integrate than those in Germany, they considered their integration successful, whereas migrants in Germany felt a loss of identity and prestige. In their paper comparing policies about language education for adult migrants in the UK and Germany, Cowie & Delaney (2019) argue that both countries require at least a B1 (intermediate) level on the CEFR to obtain citizenship, however, courses are better funded in Germany than in the UK (2019: 46). Courses in the UK focus on speaking skills rather than accuracy, and teachers often do not have the time to teach about employability and British culture, and most of them argued that the main purpose of teaching English was about being able to find a job, rather than "the need to access some cultural understanding in order to survive" in a new country for instance (2019: 50).

Schinkel (2018:1) highlighted the controversiality of research on integration, and the concept of integration itself. He called research about integration "highly toxic" and "tied to racist discourses and practices", as he argues that when a problem occurs, it is not considered as a problem existing within the society, but a problem of individuals "outside of society [who] need to be integrated", and that integration usually "has to do with the position and opinions of non-white individuals" (Schinkel, 2018: 5). Therefore, these studies show that in the UK "integrating" means being able to work but does not

take into consideration the identity and cultural needs of the migrant, and that this system results in xenophobia.

Ryan and Mulholland coined the term "embedding" and used it as a conceptual tool to go beyond the simplistic view of "migrant's integration" (Ryan and Mulholland, 2018: 237) and understand migrants' "belonging, identifications and attachments in particular places and over time" (Mulholland and Ryan, 2023: 602). They argue that embedding is a dynamic rather than static process, as places in which migrants are embedding are "made and re-made, including by migrants themselves" and that migrants had to "invest energy, commitment and time in maintaining a sense of belonging and attachment to the people and places in their origin country, and other countries where relatives and friends may be scattered" (Mulholland & Ryan, 2023: 604). In a recent paper, Mulholland & Ryan (2023) also used the concept of embedding (as well as dis-embedding and re-embedding) in the context of Brexit to analyse migrants' reactions to socio-economic and political changes (2023: 602).

Krahe et al. (2005) worked on perceived discrimination by international staff and students in German and British universities and showed that students were more vulnerable to discrimination than academics and that women and "visibly foreign-looking" respondents perceived the most discrimination (2005:271). However, this study showed that language proficiency did not affect overall levels of discrimination (2005: 276). Henderson (2009: 399) compared native and non-native students' experiences in a British university and how they represented each other. It revealed that native speakers tended to perceive non-native students as "underperforming and needy", sometimes receiving privileged treatment from lecturers (2009: 404) and excluding English speakers when communicating in their native language. On the other hand, native speakers also showed empathy and respect for non-native speakers and recognize the challenges they face in English universities (2009: 407). This study also suggested that non-native students often found communicating and working in groups with native students difficult. Therefore, self-exclusion in the classroom by non-native students, even with high proficiency in English, was common (2009: 404).

Hopkins (2012) showed that low proficiency in English often led migrants to choose low-skilled jobs. In this case study, migrants often had higher level qualifications than their British colleagues but chose to take jobs through employment agencies to avoid interviews in English (Hopkins, 2012: 384). They were therefore paid less than other workers (usually more proficient in English). Moreover, workers who are hired through agencies sometimes have to wear different uniforms than those who are not, creating a visible distinction between English and non-English speakers in the company (2012: 386). Moreover, this study showed that their low level of English resulted in hostility from British workers, who felt excluded when migrants spoke in their native language (2012: 385). Therefore, these studies

show that migrants, especially when they have low proficiency in English, felt excluded, and that British citizens also felt excluded when migrants are speaking in their native language, which could lead to miscommunication and tensions.

Johansson and Sliwa (2016: 306) also showed that access to employment in the UK to a large extent depends on proficiency in English, particularly if migrants are seeking an equivalent position to the one they would occupy in their native country. In an earlier study, Johansson and Sliwa (2014) analysed the evaluations non-native staff in UK Business schools made about themselves and how they influenced their actions in an organisational context (Johansson & Sliwa, 2014: 1134). They found that non-native speakers sometimes avoided situations in which their accent would be exposed and therefore excluded themselves from opportunities because of a negative self-evaluation of their accent (2014: 1141). This study also highlights a hierarchy of accents and shows that for example a speaker with a Greek accent will often be perceived as not organised, competent or disciplined whereas a speaker with German-accented English will be evaluated as serious and hardworking (2014: 1146).

There are also a few studies about the impact of low proficiency in English in relation to health Allan & Westwood, 2016; Crowford & Candlin, 2013: 797; Kawi & Xu, 2009: 176; Muller, 2011: 14; Yu & Lualhati, 2018). Yu & Lualhati (2018: 1) studied the impact of English proficiency on migrants' health and education and found that higher proficiency in English improves educational achievement and adult health, and affects fertility behaviour, but does not affect child health, as migrants who moved to the UK at a young age usually have better English skills than those who arrived at an older age (2018: 15). The recommendations made by the researchers are therefore that migrants need to be given more support to improve their language skills, and that specific English learning programs at schools for migrants over eight years old would be beneficial to them and would help them pursue higher academic degrees (2018: 15). Studies about languages and health also described the issues faced by non-native English-speaking nurses in different anglophone countries, including the UK. The literature showed that linguistic competence in health professions is essential as low English proficiency can result in miscommunications and lack of trust from the patient and therefore, potential risks to their safety (Crowford & Candlin, 2013: 797; Kawi & Xu, 2009: 176; Muller, 2011: 14). Nevertheless, Allan & Westwood (2016: 2) pointed out that in the UK, because of the EU employment law, it is only mandatory for nurses educated outside of the EU and EEA to take an English proficiency test. Therefore, they questioned whether requiring English proficiency tests to work constituted institutionalised discrimination (2016: 1), as they also show that discrimination and bullying especially towards non-white nurses are common in the NHS workforce (Allan & Westwood, 2016: 2, Allan et al. 2009: 905).

Therefore, what all the studies presented so far in this section show is that the literature in Britain about migrants and languages tends to focus on how to improve their proficiency in English to help them integrate into society. Integrating usually implies finding a job, but also getting appropriate healthcare for instance. While there are several studies about accent bias and discrimination, most of them only include regional accents rather than foreign accents.

Finally, a few studies have also observed how migrants and foreign languages were represented in British media, such as Wright and Brooke (2019) who looked at right-leaning press representations of people living in the UK with low proficiency in English between the 2011 census and 2016. This study showed that migrants were represented as a threat to the status of English as the dominant language of Britain (2019: 69), a financial and societal burden (2019: 71-73) who should be "forced" and "have a responsibility" to learn English (2019: 78-79). Wright and Brookes (2019) mention that voting "Leave" was often offered as a "solution" to this issue in comments posted by readers in response to these articles (2019: 80) and argue that this kind of discourse could increase linguistic xenophobia and legitimise exclusionary and discriminatory practices (2019: 79). Media representation research is important as migrants reported that media representations and the Brexit campaign had an impact on their wellbeing, as it will be discussed in the next section.

2.4.2 Being a migrant in the UK in the Brexit era

Recently, considerable literature has grown around the theme of Brexit and EU nationals' experiences of xenophobia and linguistic discrimination in the UK after the 2016 UK EU Membership referendum. Virdee and McGeever (2017) and Burnett (2017) published the first major studies on the topic. They revealed that a rise in anti-European hate crimes happened just after the results of the EU referendum in June 2016 (Devine, 2021: 382), including physical assaults, arson attacks, death threats and stabbings primarily targeting Eastern Europeans and Muslims in England, often when they were speaking in a foreign language (Burnett, 2017: 86). In 2017, "Romanian" and other "non-white British individuals" suffered record numbers of assaults, and compared to their population share in the UK, and the number of European migrants attacked during the years following Brexit was also significantly disproportionate (Dalle Carbonare et al., 2020a: 1182).

Most of these incidents included explicit references to Brexit or the message it conveys (Burnett, 2017: 87) such as "taking back our country", the unofficial slogan of the Leave campaign (2017: 89). Although several factors motivated British citizens to vote to leave the EU, anti-EU migrant prejudice was a strong predictor of support for Brexit (Clarke at al, 2017: 64; Goodwin & Milazzo, 2017: 452; Meleady et al, 2017: 804). Several studies (Abranches et al., 2021: 2886; Benedi Lahuerta & Iusmen, 2021: 293; Virdee & McGheever, 2017: 1811) argue that the outcome of the referendum seemed to have legitimised xenophobia, people against immigration felt that now that most British citizens had voted

Brexit, it gave them the right to express freely their hostility towards migrants. The Brexit campaign and pro-Leave media also played a role in the normalisation of xenophobia in the UK around the EU referendum (Laverick & Joyce, 2019: 305). This will be discussed in more detail in 6.4.

Nevertheless, some studies published a few years after the EU referendum however indicate that attitudes towards migrants have improved since the referendum (Braakmann, 2021: 545) for different reasons, including a sense of security felt by leave voters after the outcome of the vote and a wish to distance oneself from the xenophobic attacks that were reported after the vote (Schwartz et al, 2021: 1175-1176). Nonetheless, another study published during the Covid-19 pandemic suggested that the outbreak of Covid-19 in 2020 could have reinforced prejudice towards migrants among Leave voters (Pickup et al, 2021: 2192).

Several studies (Guma & Jones, 2018; Lulle et al., 2018a; Moreh et al, 2016; Ranta & Nacheva, 2018; Turcatti & Vargas-Silva, 2022) focused on migrants' voices, usually using qualitative methods or mixed methods. These studies showed that the Brexit campaign and the outcome of the vote brought feelings of uncertainty about EU migrants' future in the UK (Guma & Jones, 2018: 2206), reconsidering their status, rights and belonging in the UK, notably with the implementation of the EU Settlement Scheme (Turcatti & Vargas-Silva, 2022: 303). This resulted in EU migrants feeling anxious about the uncertainty brought on by Brexit, and therefore reconsidering their options in terms of migration (Jancewicz et al. 2020: 117; Moreh et al, 2016: 4; Trąbka & Pustulka, 2020: 2676). While some of them decided to leave, or are planning to leave, the country (Moreh et al, 2016: 4; Trąbka & Pustulka, 2020: 2676) because of Brexit, others decided to apply for British citizenship to ensure they would not lose the rights and security they enjoyed before 2016 (Godin & Sigona, 2022: 1146; Mcghee et al. 2017: 2123; Zontini and Genova, 2022: 650). While there is to date little information about the migration strategies chosen by French citizens in the UK, 5.4. will show that they tend to reject the idea of applying for a British passport.

Ranta & Nacheva (2018: 2208) argue that EU citizens living in the UK were excluded from taking part in the EU referendum although its outcome directly affected them, which created a sense of insecurity and hostility. As a result, EU nationals, who were faced with their migrant status, started to question their belonging in the UK and consolidate as a group with other Europeans, as they shared this European identity as well as similar experiences. Lulle et al. (2018a: 2130) who worked on the potential impact of Brexit on intra-EU youth mobilities also found that Brexit emphasised a European migrant identity and solidarity with other migrants in the UK.

Some studies such as Brahic (2020) or Zontini & Pero (2019) focused on European families in the UK in the context of Brexit. Brahic (2020: 2179) showed that Brexit affected French mothers' experiences in

the UK, who described feelings of loss and rejection and feared Brexit would have serious implications for their children's future in the country. Some of the participants in this study adapted their mothering practices to what they described as a "hostile context", and either for instance stopped making efforts to speak in English with other parents and only used French with their children, or on the contrary, avoided speaking at all for instance at their local medical practice so as not to be identified as foreign mothers (2020: 2180). Zontini & Pero (2019: 96) showed that Italian mothers also felt unsettled by Brexit and were concerned about their children's future. This study also highlighted the issues faced by EU children to define their identity, especially in the context of Brexit. While these binational children described their experience as "living two parallel lives", Brexit made it necessary for most of them to keep their two lives and languages separated. They started to feel uncomfortable speaking in Italian and felt like they could not express their Italian identity as much as before 2016 (2019: 98).

Most of the literature about EU migrants' experiences in the UK both before and after 2016 focuses on Eastern Europeans (Benedi Lahuerta & Iusmen, 2021; Botterill & Hancock, 2018; Gruszczyńska, 2019; Jancewicz et al., 2021; Johansson, 2016; Kozminska & Zhu, 2021; Lumsden et al, 2019; Martynowska et al., 2020; McGhee et al., 2017; Parutis, 2011; Rzepnikowska, 2019; Rzepnikowska, 2020; Ryan, 2010; Sime et al., 2022; Spigelman, 2013; Temple, 2010; Trąbka & Pustulka, 2020; Tyrrell et al., 2018; White & Goodwin, 2021), and usually more specifically Polish nationals, as they seem to have been the most targeted by hate crime, before and after the vote. Rzepnikowska (2019) studied the hostility towards Polish migrants in the UK in the context of the economic crisis in 2008, and after the EU referendum in 2016. Participants in this study explained that that they experienced racism despite being white, as the "privilege of their whiteness disappears when they start speaking" (2019: 70). While they were already victims of hate crimes before 2016, Polish migrants started to feel anxious and uncertain after the EU referendum, even when they were not directly targeted by attacks, and sometimes even considered going back to Poland (2019: 71). Nevertheless Kozminska & Zhu (2021: 459) showed that despite a feeling of insecurity, there was so far no significant change in their language use in public or at home.

Sime et al. (2022) and Tyrrell et al. (2018) worked on young Central and Eastern Europeans who moved to the UK after 2004 as children and found similar results. They argue that Brexit created uncertainty over their migration status and "reawakened or reinforced their sense of unbelonging to Britain" (Tyrrell et al., 2018: 5). Participants expressed feeling uncertain, worried, and even scared as they noticed an increase in xenophobia after Brexit, and 77% of them experienced xenophobia because of their nationality, accent or appearance (Sime et al., 2022: 6).

Like Rzepnikowska (2019), Sime et al. (2022) argue that being white allowed Eastern Europeans to "blend in" in public places, but that audible markers of difference such as their accent or native

languages made them vulnerable in public as many of them were verbally abused because of their ways of speaking. Many of them, therefore, attempted to get a "local accent" to be included (2022: 10) or even to avoid speaking at all in some public places, such as at the pub or in a taxi so that they wouldn't be recognised as foreigners (Lumsden et al., 2019: 175).

McGhee et al. (2017), Jancewicz et al. (2020) and Trąbka & Pustulka (2020) worked on migration strategies of Polish migrants after Brexit. Jancewicz (2020: 118) and McGhee et al (2017: 2123) found that although Polish migrants had to rethink their options, many of them thought that Brexit would not impact their plan of staying in the UK, and even in some cases convinced them to stay longer as they would apply for a British passport to ensure further stay and work rights. Trąbka & Pustulka (2020) used the metaphors of bees and butterflies to depict Polish migrant orientations post-Brexit. Bees are well-anchored migrants, who feel like they "belong to a hive", whether it be their family or social networks, and who therefore would be less likely to move (2020: 2668). Butterflies on the contrary have fewer anchors in the UK and are networked in a transnational space, which would allow them to easily settle and be successful somewhere else. Therefore, they would be more likely to leave the UK (2020: 2677).

Further information about discrimination against Eastern Europeans in England can be found in 6.4. To date, there is not much information about other migrants' experiences of linguistic discrimination and xenophobia post- EU referendum in the UK, hence the importance of the present research. The final section of this chapter will review the literature about the French language and show and explain why there are very few studies about the French language as an immigrant/migrant's language and French migrants' experiences in the UK.

2.5 The French language

2.5.1 Borrowings and purism

This section will discuss the notions of borrowings, anglicisms, Franglais and purism in France. Although English borrowings in French have received considerable scholarly attention, to date there is still no unanimity about the definition of what an anglicism, or English borrowing, is (Planchon & Stockemer, 2019: 95). The term borrowing is generally used to describe all kinds of transfer or copying processes, whether they are adopted or imposed on the recipient language (RL), or in Onysko's words (2012:14) "a transfer operation from the source language (SL) to the receptor language (RL) performed by the RL speaker". However, it also has a more restricted sense which only includes words that were adopted by the RL. (Haspelmath, 2009:36). Other terms such as *transfer(ence)* or *copying* are used by some linguists to refer to loanwords, but borrowing being the most well-established term in linguistics (Haspelmath, 2009:37), it is the one that will be used in this study.

Thomason and Kaufman (1988) specified that borrowing is the incorporation of foreign features into a group's native language and that this native language is changed by these features but maintained. Borrowings can be lexical, but some structural features such as phonological, phonetic, and syntactic elements or features of the inflectional morphology can also be borrowed (1988:37). Thomason and Kaufman also explained that lexical borrowing, contrary to extensive structural borrowing, usually takes place without widespread bilingualism amongst RL speakers (1988:37). They created a borrowing scale defining the five categories, or stages, of borrowing. In the first stages, culture pressure is not intense, borrowings tend to be mainly lexical and no or minor structural borrowing happens. However, in the higher stages (4 and 5) the cultural pressure is strong and different features are affected, such as the phonetics, morphology and/or syntax of the language. (1988: 74-94).

Another important phenomenon when studying English borrowed words are pseudo-anglicisms (also sometimes referred to as false-anglicisms). They are English borrowings that were reinterpreted by speakers of the receptor language (Furiassi & Gottlieb, 2015:4) such as "baby-foot" used in French to refer to "table football" (2015: 11). A false-anglicism is defined by Furiassi (2010:35) as "a word or idiom that is recognizably English in its form (spelling, pronunciation, morphology, or at least one of the three), but is accepted as an item in the vocabulary of the receptor language even though it does not exist or is used with a conspicuously different meaning in English". Pulcini (2002:163) argues that pseudo-anglicisms are the result of a desire to use an English-looking word for stylistic purposes and limited competence in English.

The last notion to define in this section is "Franglais". This word was popularised by Etiemble's essay "*Parlez-vous Franglais*" published in 1964, in which he denounces the overuse of English borrowings in the French language. Franglais is defined by Thody (1995:16) as "a term which is of visibly English or American origin, but which has not been fully assimilated into the language". He argues that Franglais words are "intruders" but some of them end up being fully assimilated (Thody, 1995:17). Many Franglais words that were assimilated are pseudo-anglicisms, such as *parking* (car park), *pressing* (dry cleaner) or *brushing* (blow drying).

Franglais is often seen in France as a phenomenon that French speakers should "fight against" (Bogaards, 2008:11) as suggested for instance by French linguists Claude Hagège's essay title "*Combat pour le Français*" ("Fight for the French language") in which he argues that we should not let English take over other languages. Two laws were introduced in France in 1975 and 1994, respectively the Bas-Lauriol and Toubon laws, to "protect the French linguistic environment" from anglicisms. These two laws mandate the use of the French language in official texts as well as advertisements and several other contexts (Bogaards, 2008: 161).

Numerous studies have been conducted since the 1960s about Franglais and linguistic purism in France. Several researchers (Gobert, 1975:6; Thody, 1995:27) claimed that Franglais is seen as an issue as it is the representation of the decline of the French language in the world, and therefore by extension France's decline. Consequently, in Thody's words, "Franglais is more about politics than about the language" (Thody, 1995:35). Josette Rey-Debove, who wrote *Le dictionnaire des anglicismes* in 1986, also claims in the introduction of this dictionary that "The independence of a language being linked to the feeling of being in control, the problem of Franglais created a passionate situation where objective considerations are often absent" (Rey-Debove, 1996: V). In this dictionary, Rey-Debove explains that the number of occurrences of anglicisms in newspapers in the 1980s was only 0.6%. Therefore, it can be argued that purist reactions at the time may have been exaggerated as anglicisms only represented a very small percentage of the French vocabulary. A more recent report in 2014 investigated the number of anglicisms in the articles of two major French newspapers and revealed that they represented less than 0.3% of all words (Hofstee & Klapwijk, 2014:13). Therefore, the number of anglicisms in the French written press does not seem to increase, contrary to purists' concerns.

Throughout the years, studies about how French people perceive Franglais have highlighted different attitudes. Following the language planning policy that started in the 1970s that aimed at replacing English words in the French language with French ones, Guilford (1997) analysed how anglicisms were perceived and used by young people. He found out that anglicisms were overall well accepted and welcomed by university students in the late 1990s, who generally preferred using the English borrowed word to its French version (Guilford, 1997: 133). His study confirmed the results found ten years earlier by Goudaillier (1987:110) who had already demonstrated that French people knew the anglicisms better than the French word that was meant to replace them. Guilford's (1997:135) predictions at the time were that the linguistics policies regarding the replacement of anglicisms in French were doomed to failure. A few years later, Oakes (2001) compared language attitudes in France and Sweden and also found that while their opinions were divided, the majority of young French people believed that it was not important to keep the language pure from foreign loan words (2001: 220). These studies about the perception and use of anglicisms in the French population already seemed to indicate that despite the purist policies and institutions such as the *Académie Française*, French people were not always unfavourable of English borrowed words.

In 2016, Walsh conducted research comparing purism in Quebec and France. This study revealed that French people only displayed mild purism towards anglicisms, whereas Quebecois displayed a stronger form of purism. It also showed that French people displayed internal purism rather than external, meaning that they were more concerned about the quality of the language, such as grammar and spelling, rather than the use of borrowed words (Walsh, 2016: 257). Klapuchová (2020: 119) also

argues that Quebecois tend to stigmatise anglicisms more than French people and therefore attempt to replace them more. Therefore, these studies confirmed that despite the purist linguistic legislation in France, French people were not the francophones who displayed the strongest form of purism.

Nevertheless, there is a gap in the literature regarding purist attitudes in French people living abroad and the language they use, or more specifically in anglophone countries. My study intends to look at how French people use the French language in England and the extent to which living in an anglophone country impacts their ability to communicate in their native language as well as their attitudes towards it. The literature does not show for instance how often and in which context French migrants use anglicisms. Otheguy and Stern (2010) for instance argue many Hispanics in the USA proudly claim to speak Spanglish, attaching to it a certain level of covert prestige, whereas in Hispanic countries, Spanglish spoken in the USA is used to denigrate the quality of the Spanish language spoken by migrants living there (2010: 97). French migrants may therefore also use anglicisms proudly as it would represent their identity as francophones living in an anglophone country, or on the contrary fear anglicisms if they perceive them as a sign of language attrition, as it will be shown in 4.4.4.

2.5.2 French as a migrant's language

As mentioned in 2.5.1, the French language is rarely analysed as a minority language, as is the case for instance when spoken by the French diaspora. Huc-Hepher (2021b:1) explains that French migrants are overlooked both in societal and academic fields as they do not fit the stereotypes of the disadvantaged migrant usually pictured in the media. In recent years, only a few studies (Brahic & Lallemand, 2018; Brahic, 2020; Huc-Hepher & Drake 2013; Huc-Hepher, 2019; 2021a,b; Reed-Danahay, 2020a,b, Ryan & Mulholland, 2014; 2023) were published about French migrants in the UK, usually in London. Moreover, most of the studies that will be presented in this section tend to have an ethnographic or sociological rather than linguistic approach. My work, therefore, intends to find its place in this literature about French migrants in England, by also including those living outside of the British capital, who sometimes have different experiences, as my research will demonstrate.

The literature shows that, although it would be inaccurate to think that all French citizens in London are the typical "diplomatic expat" of South Kensington (Huc-Hepher & Drake: 2013: 422) as the French population in England is quite diverse, many of them are from the middle to upper middle class (Reed-Danahay, 2020a:17), 65% of them work in high-level professions, compared to 44% of the whole UK workforce (Brahic, 2020: 2172). Young French people usually move to London, originally intending to remain a short time and sometimes making it their permanent home, to improve their English skills or for work opportunities (Huc-Hepher & Drake, 2013; Ryan & Mulholland, 2014: 598). Brahic (2020) who interviewed French mothers in Manchester showed that some of them followed a partner who secured a position there (2020: 2176). French people also sometimes decided to flee France for various reasons,

including xenophobia and racism, homophobia, sexism, conformism, elitism and lookism (Huc-Hepher & Drake, 2013: 410). Many French in London felt "liberated" there and living in the British capital had a transformative effect on their identities and behaviours (2013: 405). While there are many French associations, businesses and schools in London, most French people do not seek to be part of a "French community". However, most of them have mainly French (and non-British) networks (2013: 403-404).

The French, at least before Brexit, were usually perceived positively in the UK and their language and culture were usually valued (Reed-Danahay, 2020b: 153), conferring them a privileged position in the country (Brahic & Lallement, 2018: 10). Most of them never had to think about their migrant status and would refer to themselves as "expats", or "French in x city" (1.3.1) but Brexit faced them to their migrant status for the first time (Reed-Danahay, 2020b: 24). The term "migrant" being often associated with "poor" (Reed-Danahay, 2020b: 24), they felt a loss of status, realising that they were now "migrants like the others", losing their privilege as "desirable migrants" and free EU movers in the UK (Brahic, 2020: 2183; Mulholland & Ryan, 2023: 608; Reed-Danahay, 2020b: 148).

French migrants in England felt strong emotions after the outcome of the EU referendum, including shock, disappointment, anxiety and even grief (Brahic and Lallement, 2018: 8; Huc-Hepher, 2021b: 242; Mulholland & Ryan, 2023: 608; Reed-Danahay, 2020a: 23). Many were worried about their future in the country and were at first against applying for British citizenship or even EUSS, as they refused to ask for rights they used to have by being EU citizens in another EU country (Brahic, 2020: 2181; Brahic & Lallement, 2018: 22; Huc-Hepher, 2021b: 245; Mulholland & Ryan, 2023: 609). While before Brexit, French citizens tended to maintain a strong attachment to their French identity, they also developed a stronger European identity after the referendum (Reed-Danahay, 2020a: 26).

Migrants who seemed to be the most affected by Brexit were those who were settled and felt integrated into the country (Brahic, 2020: 2178). For wealthy and young migrants who do not have any strong ties to the UK (such as a permanent job or a family) it was easier to consider leaving the country (Reed-Danahay, 2020b: 155). Most of them thought about it, but their preferred (or sole) solution was usually staying in the UK (Brahic & Lallement, 2018: 20).

Brexit had an impact on some families, as some precipitated their marriage (Reed-Danahay, 2020b: 151) to ensure they would have the same rights as a family after Brexit, and some tensions occurred within families when realising some of their loved ones voted for Brexit (Mulholland & Ryan, 2023: 613). Some mothers modified their parenting practices, and for instance no longer spoke in French to their children for fear of being recognised as a foreigner (Brahic & Lallement, 2018: 19) as seen in 2.4.2, impacting the bilingual education valued by most French parents (Brahic, 2020: 2175). Some French mothers also reported being scared their children would be victims of xenophobia (2020: 2179).

Nevertheless, although French migrants reacted strongly to the outcome of the referendum and some of them started to feel anxious to be identified as French, they were usually not the victims of the hate crimes that occurred after the vote (see 2.4.2). Some of them were directly insulted during the weeks around the referendum (Reed-Danahay, 2020b: 148), but they were a minority (Brahic & Lallement, 2018: 21). Huc-Hepher (2019) however argues that microaggressions towards the French pre-existed Brexit and analysed them through Bourdieu's symbolic violence concept lens. This paper argues that microaggressions towards the French tend to be accepted because of their "humoristic pretence" and national reciprocity. It also highlights the British tabloids and right-wing media's responsibility as even before Brexit, they were already "shaping harmful xenophobic attitudes in the collective consciousness through seemingly 'jovial' representations of EU migrant communities" (2019: 22).

According to these studies, early consequences of Brexit are that some French mothers would no longer use French (or English) to talk to their children (Brahic, 2020: 2180), who would therefore not be able to speak their heritage language if it remained the case in the long term, and that some of the French migrants could either return to France or relocate to another European country (Reed-Danahay, 2020b: 149).

While these studies give us a good indication of the status of French migrants around 2016, more work needs to be conducted in the years to come to observe whether these strong emotions they felt tend to settle down with time as suggested in Brahic and Lallement (2021: 21). There are also several gaps in the literature about the French language spoken by French migrants in Britain. First, all the studies mentioned in this section focus on London, apart from Brahic whose participants live in Manchester, another large city. There is very little information about French people living in other places in England, including smaller cities or towns, where they would not have access to any kind of "French community" and where attitudes towards them could differ. Moreover, as mentioned previously, most of these studies tend to have an ethnographic rather than linguistic focus. Huc-Hepher (2019; 2021a,b), for instance, used a Bourdieusian framework to study the French population, focusing on his key concepts, including the notions of habitus (see 2.2) and symbolic violence. These concepts were also used in Reed-Danahay (2020). While these studies are often interdisciplinary and discuss some issues related to the language, more detailed research would be needed about for instance the impact on bilingual education and French as a heritage language, as mentioned in Brahic (2020), or on the languages used by French migrants in different situations before and after the EU referendum. It is necessary for instance to evaluate if they reduced their usage of French after the vote, as in the long term it could lead to language attrition. Consequently, these are the gaps this thesis intends to fill.

2.6 Conclusion

In conclusion, this literature review showed that although there is a consequent amount of published works about migrants in different countries, there are still several gaps, especially regarding foreign languages and linguistic discrimination in the post-Brexit United Kingdom. While more studies are currently being published, it is necessary to continue to observe the impact of the exacerbation of anti-migrant feelings Brexit created could have on languages. Moreover, most of the existing studies tend to focus on Eastern Europeans, it is, therefore, necessary to verify whether they were the only Europeans to be targeted by attacks post-Brexit and if other Europeans in the UK felt a need to change their language habits, whether they were also direct victims of xenophobia or not. There is also very little published research on foreign languages and accents bias and discrimination in the UK post-EU referendum, as most of the literature tends to focus on regional accents only.

Many studies argued that the "defence of the French language" and linguistic pride and purism are particularly strong in France, nevertheless very few observed French as a language spoken by migrants, in a context that might be unfavourable to it such as Brexit. Consequently, this thesis intends to find its place within Brexit and migration studies and to fill the gaps in the literature about French spoken by French migrants during the Brexit era.

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter will describe the methodology used to collect and analyse the data for this research. It will present the methods and explain the different choices made regarding the questionnaire and focus groups, and the recruitment of participants.

This study aims to understand how French migrants in England used and perceived the French language between June 2016 when British citizens voted to leave the EU, and January 2020, when the UK officially left. To do so, two methods of data collection were used. First, a questionnaire was created using Jisc Surveys and distributed online (see 3.3.1). This questionnaire allowed the collection of quantitative data. The results allowed me to evaluate whether certain factors have an impact on the languages used by French migrants. However, as this research focuses on life stories and experiences, it was equally important to obtain qualitative data to give more information and context to the numbers obtained, or, as worded by Vanderstoep & Johnston (2009:163) "to know the story behind the statistics". Consequently, for this research, using mixed methods was the most appropriate option to obtain a comprehensive study. The questionnaire was therefore supplemented by online focus groups in which participants could develop their answers and tell their stories in more detail. It also added to the originality of this research, as early studies about migrants' experiences post-Brexit such as Rzepnikowska (2019) or Zontini and Pero (2019) tended to prefer using qualitative methods only, through for instance interviews, observation, or artwork. The qualitative data collected during the focus groups and in the free speech parts of the questionnaire were analysed in NVivo using thematic analysis (see 3.3.3).

Section 3.2 will explain the choices made regarding the participants' profiles needed for this study and how they were recruited. Section 3.3 will present the questionnaire and focus groups used to collect the data, and the methods used to analyse it. Finally, Section 3.4 will discuss the decision to only focus on French migrants' own perception of British language attitudes and linguistic discrimination in Britain rather than using other methods such as observing British attitudes towards migrants and foreign languages.

3.2 Participants

3.2.1 Nationality and place of residence

Several choices were made about the profiles sought for participants in this research. The first decision regarded whether to include any francophone or only French nationals. Differences in language attitudes can be expected between French people and French speakers from countries other than France. Adamson (2007) argues that the defence of the French language is "taken with greater

seriousness in France than in most other countries" (2007: XIII). Gordon (1975) claims that the French are "obsessed with their language" because it was an integral part of the process of the making of the nation (Gordon, 1978: 32), and Thody (1995) that France has "something of a passion for using the law to impose linguistic norms" such as the law Bas Lauriol and Toubon in the twentieth century against the use of anglicisms in administration and advertisement, or even the Ordonnance de Villers Cotterêts back in 1539 to make French instead of Latin obligatory in legal and official documents (Thody, 1995: 50).

In a study about linguistic purism in French, for instance, Walsh (2016:244) revealed that French and Canadian people displayed different forms of purism, with Quebecois people displaying more external purism than French people for instance (see 2.5.1). Diallo (2018) argues that attitudes towards the French language are also different in former French colonies, where the French language was forced on the population and therefore could result in hostility towards it (Diallo, 2018: 15). Nevertheless, even within French former colonies, how French is perceived varies in each country. Alalou (2009) found that despite its non-official status in Morocco, as Standard Arabic and Moroccan Arabic were reinstated as official languages "to reverse the French colonial influence and to stop the proliferation and dominance of its code" (Chakrani, 2022: 168) the French language was still perceived as important by Moroccans (Alalou, 2009: 570). Chakrani (2022: 170) argues that "the current linguistic realities in Morocco challenge the uniformly dichotomous portrayal of French as representing status traits, while Standard Arabic and Moroccan Arabic are iconic of solidarity traits", as his study revealed that French was not only preferred over Standard and Moroccan Arabic for status traits but also scored higher than Standard Arabic for solidarity traits (Chakrani, 2022: 171). It was consequently important to focus on one nationality and it was decided that only French nationals should be accepted in this research to provide more accurate results. It would be important however to verify in future research whether other francophones in England have similar language attitudes and habits to French migrants. This could for instance help clarify whether discrimination experienced by French-speaking migrants is related to their native language or other factors such as their country of origin or race, as explained in 6.4.3.

Determining who should be considered French was another challenge, as some people may have lived in France without having the French nationality, or on the contrary, have a French passport without having lived in France. Ideally, participants would "identify as French" whether because they had a French passport or had spent time in France, but most importantly, would consider the French language as their native language. Having French citizenship and considering French as their native language were the criteria selected and the information page of the questionnaire specified: "To participate in this study, you must have French citizenship and the French language must be your native

language"[1]. A few French people (about 2%) with dual citizenship, usually Franco-British, participated in this research. Initially, I wondered whether their answers could have an impact on the results, but I decided that they should not be removed as they brought valuable insight into feelings of identity and belonging to a country or another for instance.

After identifying who could take part in this study, it was also necessary to define the exact location of the participants. Any French person over 18 years old (see 3.2.2) living in the United Kingdom was originally accepted, but participants living in England were preferred. Therefore, this study was mostly shared with people who were thought to live in England (see 3.2.4). Only six people out of the 520 who responded to the questionnaire lived in other parts of the United Kingdom, and all the participants interviewed lived in England at the time of the interview. The number of participants living in Wales, Scotland or Northern Ireland was insufficient to provide comparisons between the different British countries, therefore these six participants were excluded and only those living in England were kept.

The decision to focus on participants living in England was based on the hypothesis that language attitudes and attitudes towards French migrants may vary across the different regions of the United Kingdom. While further research is needed to confirm this hypothesis, it was believed that England would be the most appropriate location for studying the impact of negative experiences, such as discrimination, on the way migrants speak. This is because attitudes towards migrants and their languages may be less favourable in England compared to other regions, which would provide a suitable context for observing any changes in language use resulting from these experiences. Several causes led to this hypothesis. First, the number of Leave votes during the EU referendum was higher in England and Wales, with respectively 53.4% and 52.5%, whereas the majority of the population in Northern Ireland (55.8%) and Scotland (62%) voted to remain in the EU (BBC, 2020). Although immigration was not always the motivation for British citizens to vote for Brexit, it was still an important point of the Leave campaign. It can therefore be assumed that the parts of the United Kingdom where people voted to remain in the European Union are more favourable to immigration than areas where the population voted Leave. Doughty & Spöring (2018: 145) also showed that contrary to the other regions of the UK for instance, in Scotland, the number of students learning a foreign language in schools is increasing, and according to a recent survey, 89% of the respondents believed that learning a language was important. Attitudes towards foreign languages may therefore also be more favourable in Scotland.

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[1] Pour participer, vous devez être de nationalité Française, avoir le français pour langue maternelle et vivre au Royaume-Uni.

Finally, due to the long history of complicated relations between England and France (Huc-Hepher, 2019, 31; Roux, 2012: 23), it would also make an interesting and probably more relevant case study to analyse how the French and their language are perceived in England rather than the whole United Kingdom. The relationship between France and England is often described by both academics and the media as a "love-hate relationship" or as "sweet enemies" (Roux, 2012: 23) as their common history is marked by a constant alternance between tensions and alliances. The French and the English being in contact for a thousand years impacted each other's language, as seen for instance with the French language becoming the official language of England for about 300 years after the Norman conquest (Walter, 2001: 4). While previous research indicated that the French accent, for instance, was overall positively perceived in England (Bishop et al., 2005 Giles, 1970), Brexit could have reversed attitudes to more negative ones.

3.2.2 Participants' profiles

This section will present the profiles of the participants of this study. I will discuss at the end why, despite some apparent imbalance in age, gender, education degree or English proficiency, they can be considered representative of the French population in the United Kingdom. Out of the 514 people who replied to the questionnaire, 405 (78.8%) were women, 108 (21%) were men and one participant (0.2%) identified as non-binary. The percentages were similar for the focus groups, with 24 women (73%) and 9 men (27%) interviewed.
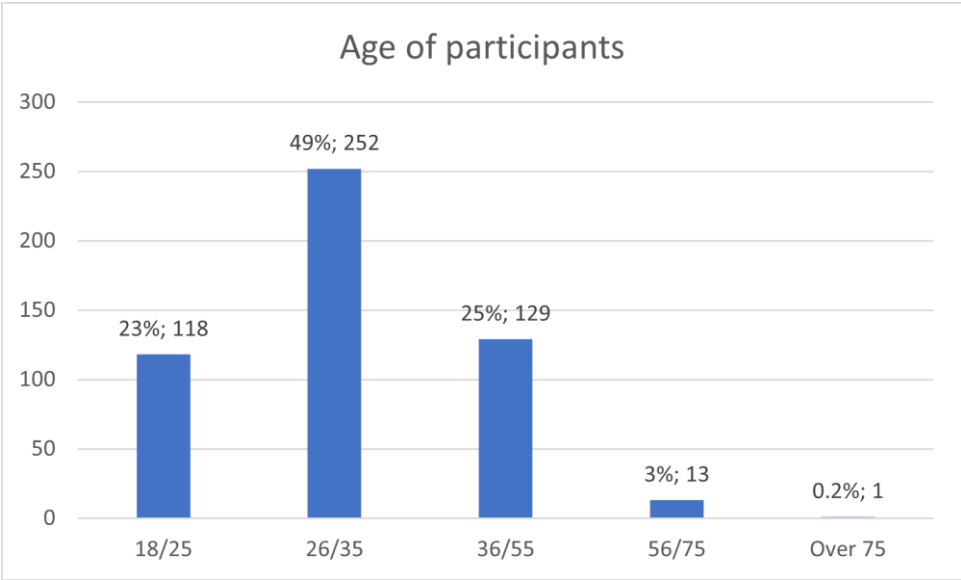
Figure 1: Age of participants

Figure 1 shows the age of the people who responded to the questionnaire. Participants in this study are aged 18 to over 75. People under 18 years old were not targeted as I was interested in participants who settled in the UK as adults rather than children. As demonstrated in 4.5, participants tended to

have different perceptions of their identity and a different relationship to their native language(s) as their children for instance who were born to the UK or moved there at a young age. Therefore, all the participants apart from two who moved to the UK as teenagers (15 and 16 years old) settled once adults.

While a wide age range was obtained when recruiting participants, the majority were relatively young. Almost 50% of the participants are in the 26/35 age range and only 14% are over 55 years old. Participants interviewed were 20 to over 65 years old, most of them being in their late twenties to early forties. According to the French government statistics (France Diplomatie, 2021), one out of three French expatriates in the United Kingdom is aged 25 to 40, and women are more numerous than men.
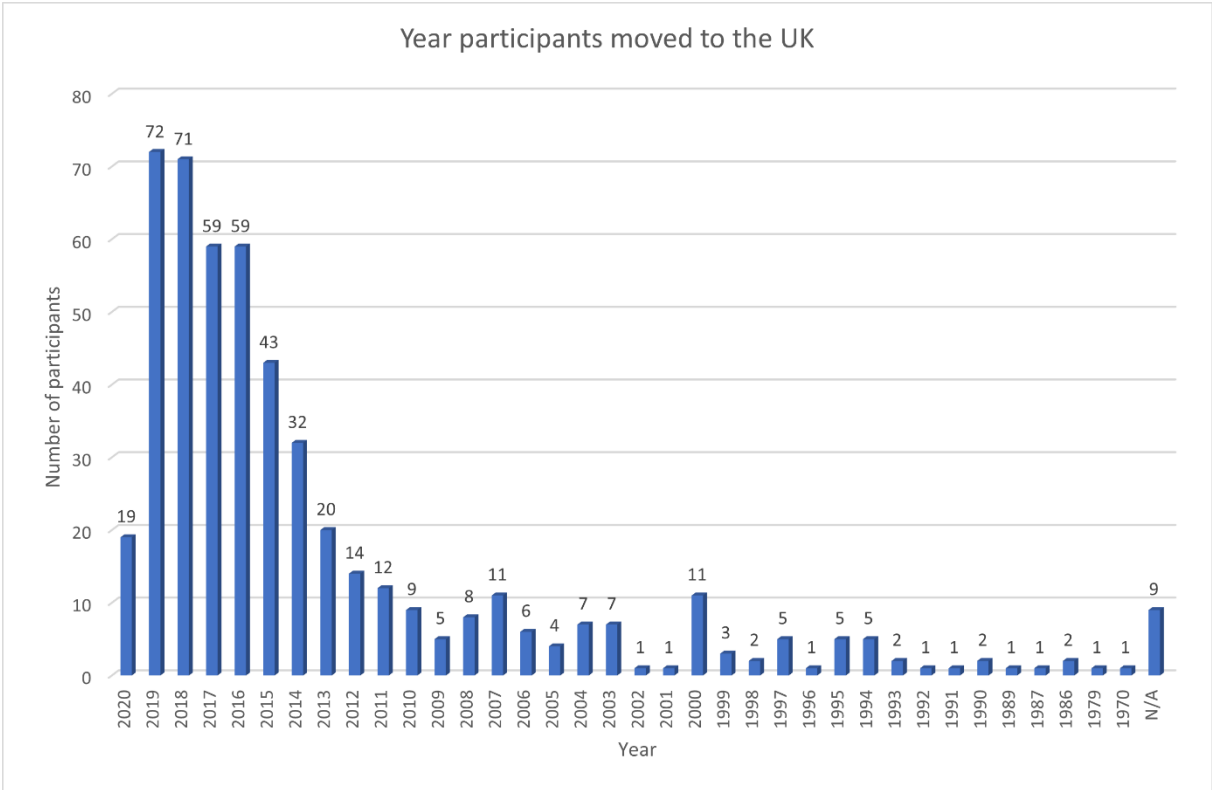
Figure 2: Year participants moved to the UK

Figures 2 indicates that French people tend to remain in the UK for a short time. Almost half of the participants settled in the UK after the EU Referendum (June 2016), and only 104 participants (20%) have been living in the United Kingdom for more than ten years, as shown in Figure 3.2. It corroborates with the French government's reports that estimate that French citizens spend on average five to six years in the UK (France Diplomatie, 2021).

City	Number of participants
London/Greater London	185
Cambridge	36
Bristol	36
Manchester	30
Birmingham	26
Nottingham	24
Liverpool	17
Leicester	15
Brighton	9
Newcastle Upon Tyne	8
Southampton	8
Leeds	6
Oxford	5
Reading	5
Bournemouth	4
Total	**414**
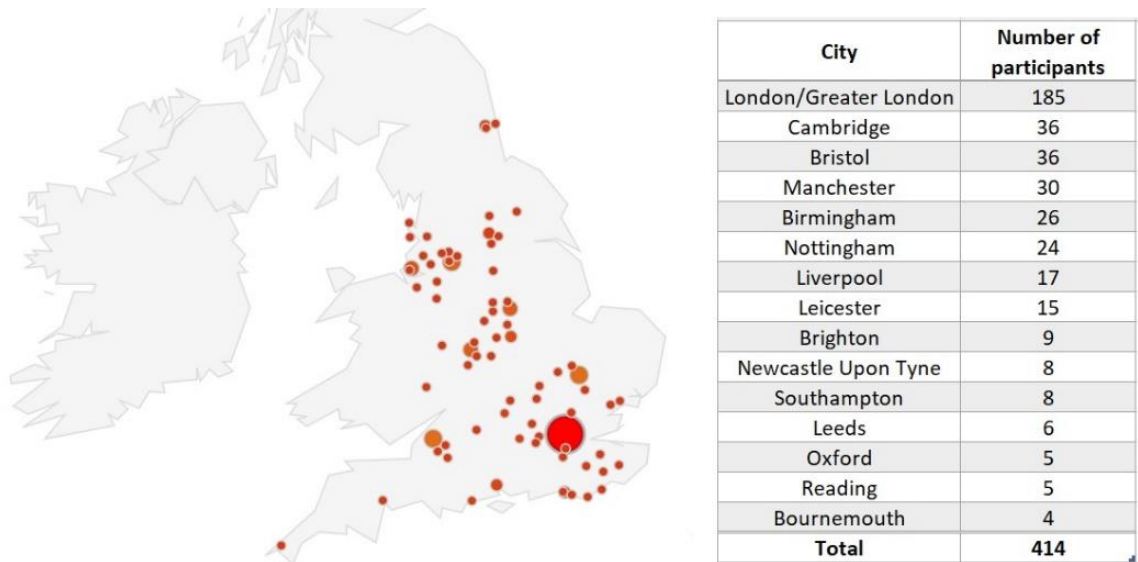
Figure 3: Participants' cities of residence in England

Figure 3 shows the different places in which participants lived when they replied to the questionnaire and the 15 cities in which most participants resided, alongside the number of participants for each of them. People living in 95 different cities of different sizes all over the country responded to the questionnaire. Over 35% of the participants reside in London/Greater London. 63% live in London and the others tend to live in the main major cities in England (Birmingham, Coventry, Leeds, Manchester, Oxford, Cambridge, and Southwest of England). All the cities can be found in appendix 1. Most of the participants (378, 74%) lived in cities in which people voted in majority to remain in the EU, only 133 participants (26%) resided in "leave areas". All the cities in which participants lived, with leave percentages, can be found in Appendix 1.

Occupation	Number of participants	Percentage
Education/Research	107	20,8
Customer services/Business/Marketing	92	17,9
Hotels/Catering services/Tourism	40	7,8
Industries	32	6,2
Student	32	6,2
Computing	29	5,6
Other	25	4,9
Audiovisual/Information/Communication/Translation	20	3,9
Health	20	3,9
Insurance/Bank	18	3,5
Administrative management/Transports/Logistics	18	3,5
Social/Caring professions	16	3,1
Unemployed	14	2,7
Law/Economy/Management	12	2,3
Arts/Design/Culture/Crafts	10	2
Energies/Environment	8	1,6
Retired	6	1,2
Sports	5	1
Sustainable Construction	4	0,8
Architecture/Urbanism	3	0,6
Agriculture	3	0,6

Figure 4: Occupations of participants

Figure 4 shows that different professional areas are represented; however, it seems that the sectors preferred by French people in England are education/research (21%) and business/marketing (18%). As reported by the Office of National Statistics (ONS, 2016), most French people in the UK are employed, only 10% are students, unemployed, or retired.
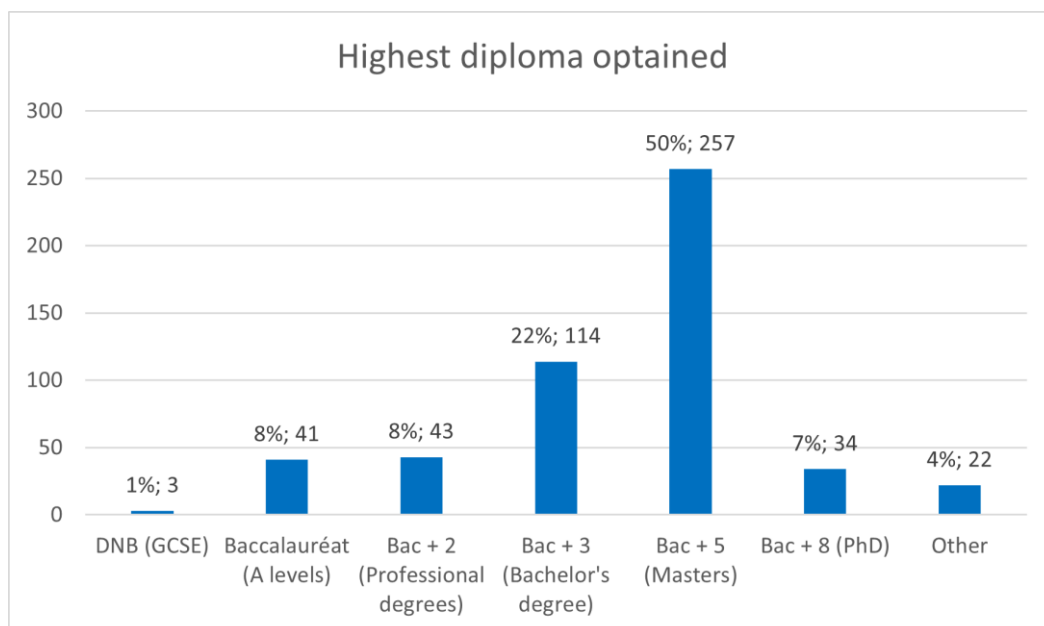
Figure 5: Participants' highest diplomas

It can be seen on Figure 5 that most of the participants in this research are university educated, over 90% hold a university degree, and 57% studied a masters or PhD. In 2020, 25% of the population in France held a university degree (Insee, 2020). However, the report conducted by the *Direction du Trésor Général* in January 2021 (Vie-Publique, 2021) showed that 58% of the French expatriates have university diplomas. A study about the "French brain drain" published in 2017 estimated that almost 60% of French PhDs who worked internationally after graduating stay remained abroad, with one out of three either in the United States or the United Kingdom (Groves, 2017). Therefore, although this graph is not representative of the French population in France, it can be considered representative of the French population settled in the United Kingdom.
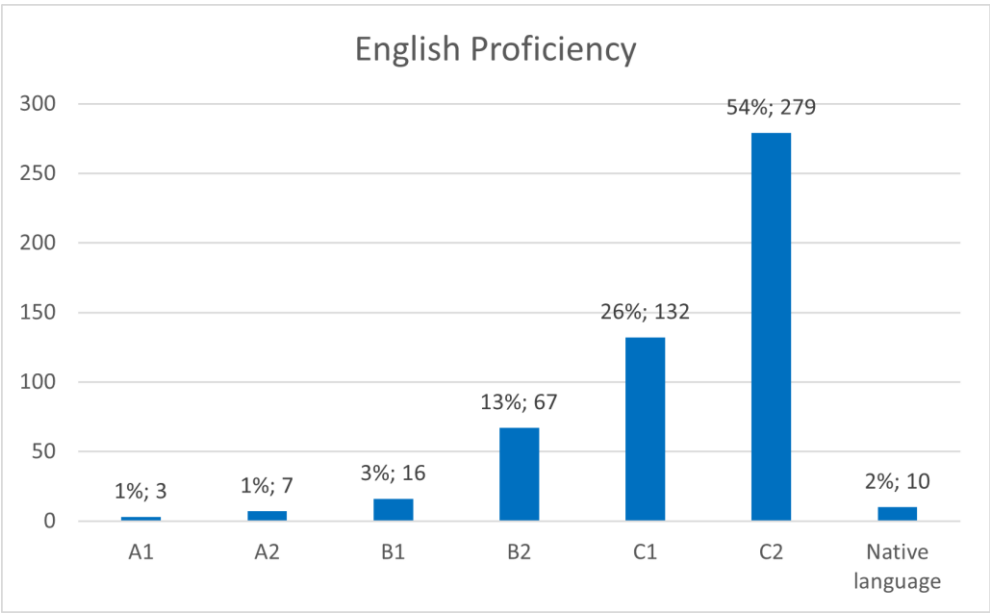
Figure 6: Participants' English proficiency

Figure 6 shows that French people who live in the United Kingdom tend to have an excellent level of English. In the questionnaire, participants were given the official CERF descriptions for each level (A1 to C2) to help them determine what their level on the CERF scale was. Only 5% of the participants thought their level in English was B1 or inferior, and over 55% declared being fluent in English (C2 or bilingual). This is once again not representative of the French population in France, but not unexpected for this research considering that as seen in the previous graph, the participants are university-educated and live in an anglophone country.

In conclusion, the participants recruited are mainly young university-educated women with high proficiency in English. Reinikainen et al. (2017: 238) found that "entrepreneurs and white-collars and highly educated individuals had the highest participation rates" in research surveys, whereas retirees and people "with low educational level" were under-represented, which could partially explain the very high percentage of highly educated young participants in this study. Nevertheless, previous

reports indicate that this sample is still overall representative of the French population in the UK, which tends to be in their thirties to fifties and be university-educated.

It is also important to mention that the very high number of participants with a university degree and working in areas such as education could have an impact on the results of this research. The hospitality sector for instance was not as represented as expected, possibly because 92,000 workers from the EU are estimated to have left the UK's hospitality sector in 2020 (when the study was conducted), due to Brexit and Covid-19 (Price, 2021: 5). In 6.5.3, I argue that the professional and social environment of participants has an impact on their experience of xenophobia, and some participants do mention friends working in this sector who were victims of prejudice after 2016. Consequently, it is necessary when interpreting the results to remember that there may be under-represented populations who could have had different experiences.

3.2.3 Participants recruitment

The questionnaire was shared from June to October 2020 online. I contacted the *Alliance Française*[2] and the *Institut Français*[3] in the United Kingdom and asked if they would be interested in being involved in this research. The *Alliance Française* and *Institut Français* are two major organisations promoting the French language outside of France and have offices in different cities in the United Kingdom and around the world. They for instance offer French classes and organise various cultural events such as food, literature or arts workshops and conferences, French film screenings and festivals. Both offered their help and sent the questionnaire to their own database.

The questionnaire was then shared on my personal Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook accounts. It was also advertised on Facebook pages and groups created by and for French people living in different cities/regions in England. I typed keywords on the Facebook search bar such as "français à + city/region" or "French in + city/region" and found groups for French people living in or around Manchester, Cambridge, Nottingham, Leicestershire, Bath, Oxford, London, Leeds-Yorkshire, Liverpool, Brighton, Hove, Newcastle upon Tyne, Coventry, Bristol, Plymouth, Southampton and Bournemouth[4]. Being a French migrant myself, I was already in some of these groups, and was easily accepted into the others. My post advertising my research was accepted in all these groups and was rejected by the moderators in only two groups that therefore do not appear on this list. Recent studies have shown that social media and especially Facebook were efficient recruitment tools for researchers (Whitaker, 2017: 290). A study comparing Facebook with more traditional advertising methods such as print media, showed argues that Facebook "provides researchers more advanced, user-friendly, and data generating

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[2] Alliance Française d'Oxford : https://af-oxford.org/
[3] Institut Français : https://www.institut-francais.org.uk/
[4] See 5.3.3 for more information about the online French community.

recruitment platforms" than traditional media and has the advantage of having "users all over the world representing a range of demographic" as it has 1.5 billion active users over all ages and genders (Frandsen et al, 2016: 161). This method indeed proved to be particularly effective, as posting the questionnaire on groups specifically directed to French migrants in different English cities allowed the recruitment of the population needed for this project in a short amount of time; over 400 participants were recruited through these groups between June and August 2020.

Finally, some participants sent the questionnaire to their own circles and convinced friends to fill it out or be interviewed with them. It was for instance the case in Focus Group 3, where, contrary to the other focus groups in this study, all the interviewees knew each other as they had been invited to participate by one of them. The questionnaire itself was the main method of recruitment for the focus groups, as the participants were encouraged to write their email addresses at the end if they wanted to be contacted to be interviewed. Participants who accepted to give an email address were contacted in September 2020 and the focus groups were conducted in October and November 2020 (see 3.3.2).

3.2.4 Languages used with participants and translation

The French language was used for the recruitment, questionnaire, and interviews for several reasons. As will be demonstrated in this study (see 4.2 and 5.3.2), unless non-francophones are around, French people do not tend to speak in English with other francophones. Since all the participants and the researcher were French, it may have felt unnatural and uncomfortable for some participants to use English to communicate (see 5.5). Moreover, although they live in an English-speaking country, not all French people are fluent in English. As seen in 3.2.1, the questionnaire showed that while a large majority considered that they had excellent skills in English, 5% estimated that their proficiency was inferior to a B2 level and therefore might not have been able to fill the questionnaire in English.

Another important reason for choosing to communicate in French with the participants was that the research itself is about attitudes towards the French language. Research showed that the language of participants helps them define issues related to their identity (Squires, 2008: 265). The participants would therefore feel more comfortable using their native language to describe how they felt about it. Allowing the participants to express themselves in the language of their choice is a solution chosen by many researchers in sociolinguistics, such as Rzepnikowska (2019: 67), Kliuchnikova (2015: 181) or Johansson (2016: 300).

Finally, communicating in French with my participants also created a sense of belonging to the same community which probably motivated some of them to be involved in this research, as some mentioned being glad to have an opportunity to speak in French during the focus groups. I had observed how other researchers shared their questionnaires on Facebook before starting mine and

noticed that those advertising their study in English when targeting French people did not seem to have as much engagement as those who used the French language (fewer likes, comments and sharing).

All the participants replied in French but code-switching and anglicisms occurred, both in the questionnaire and during the interviews. Most of the time it was only a word or phrase that was written/said in English, but some participants in the questionnaire sometimes replied to a question fully in English (see 4.3).

Communicating in English with the participants would have been useful to avoid the translation step, which has several disadvantages such as the loss of some of the meaning, and therefore has a "potential to produce inaccurate data" (Esposito, 2001: 576). As I am a French native speaker and fluent speaker of English with a background in translation studies, there was no major risk of miscommunication or misinterpretation during the focus groups (2001: 578). It also means that as I was able to translate the data, there was no need for a translator who would not have been familiar with the research and could have missed some subtle but useful details in the answers of the participants (2001: 576).

Nevertheless, the main risk of the researcher being the translator is over-subjectivity, especially if the data is translated before being analysed, as the words chosen by the researcher may influence the tone or style of the transcripts, and therefore impact the analysis (Qoyyimah, 2023: 7). One of the decisions I made to reduce this risk was to code my data in the source language (French) and translate it during the analysis process. Esfehani. & Walters (2018) argue that while the data can be translated before coding or after the analysis, translating after coding during the analysis phase is the "preferred practical option for the bilingual researcher seeking an epistemologically, methodologically and ethically sound justification for when to translate during thematic analysis" (Esfehani. & Walters, 2018: 3163). It is particularly of good practice when doing thematic analysis (see 3.3.3) as the first phases are about gaining familiarity with the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006: 87; Esfehani. & Walters, 2018: 3165; Furber, 2010: 98), by translating before these phases, I could have risked losing the equivalence of meanings between French and English (Esfehani. & Walters, 2018: 3265). Moreover, by translating at this stage of the research, I was able to reinforce the credibility of the translation, as not only could I regularly check the accuracy of my translated codes in the source language and remain familiar with my data both in French and English (Esfehani. & Walters, 2018: 3166), but it would also allow other researchers to use the raw data and be able to find similar results.

Furthermore, Van Nes et al. (2010) argue that language is an aid to thinking as when we read in a language, we tend to think in this language, therefore they recommend working with the original language "as long and as much as possible" to avoid potential limitations in the analysis (2010: 316).

One of the main limitations I wanted to avoid was being unable to capture nuances that could have been erased by translation if translated before analysis. For instance, two words with a similar meaning could have been translated using the same English word although it could have been useful to know what exact word or phrase was used in French for some parts of the analysis. Therefore, by translating after analysis, I was able either to find different words in English to highlight these nuances or to give the words used in French by participants in footnotes, as can be seen for instance in 4.4 when discussing the pressure faced by parents raising children in multilingual homes.

Finally, translating during the analysis process allowed me to choose the appropriate style of translation for each quote separately when using them. For Newmark (1988), translating is "rendering the meaning of a text into another language in the way that the author intended the text" (Newmark, 1988: 5), and Esposito (2001: 572) argues that researchers are faced with the "challenge of producing meaning-based translations rather than word-for-word translations", as not all concepts are translatable. Nida and Taber (1982) defined the concepts of formal and dynamic equivalences to translate the Bible. Formal correspondence intends to reproduce the stylistic specificities of the text (1982: 1), whereas dynamic equivalence is about reproducing the impact of the message on the reader (1982: 28) even if it often means "sacrifice[ing] certain formal niceties for the sake of the content" (1982: 5). Nida and Taber (1982) argue that although a translation can never be identical to the source text, there should be "a high degree of equivalence" to accomplish its purpose (1982:24) and that dynamic equivalence should be preferred over formal correspondence (1982:14) as the latter can be "quite misleading" and "so stylistically heavy as to make comprehension almost impossible" (1982:2). In my research, dynamic equivalence was therefore usually chosen. However, in some cases, formal correspondence was a more adequate approach if I needed to highlight the way participants were talking rather than the meaning of their messages.

In cases where it was estimated that the translation failed to retransmit all the information necessary, for instance, when showing that a specific word in French was used by several participants, the original quote will be in the footnotes. When a word or quote was in English already, it will also be specified in the footnotes. With these different strategies, I could as much as possible maintain the integrity of the original text, minimise the risk of misinterpretation, and ensure the accuracy of translations.

3.2.5 Ensuring data quality and trustworthiness

To ensure data quality, as many participants as possible were recruited using different methods. Posting the research only on social media used mostly by young adults such as Instagram would not have allowed us to reach many participants over 40 years old for instance (Statista Research

Department, 2022). Therefore, Facebook being more and more used by all generations and especially by people over 30 years old allowed the recruitment of people not only from different places but also different ages. The *Alliance Française* and *Institut Français* were also crucial to gaining access to people who for instance do not use social media. The *Institut Français* was particularly helpful to recruit parents, who were precious participants in this research, as it is an organisation that works with French schools in the United Kingdom. These different ways of advertising this research made it possible to have participants from different places, including people living in villages for instance and not only in London or big cities. Most of the participants in this research do come from London and other major English cities such as Bristol, Manchester, or Birmingham; however, this should not be considered an issue as it is representative of where most French people live in the UK, as explained in 3.2.1. Moreover, there are enough participants who live in smaller towns and villages, and in parts where the population voted either Leave or Remain to make interesting comparisons, as seen in 6.5.5.

As developed in 3.1.3, focus groups were preferred to one-on-one interviews as they allowed a more natural discussion between participants, which could generate more reliable data. I tried to provide a safe place for my participants where they could share any positive or negative experiences without being judged. They all signed a consent form in which an information sheet was provided, and the researcher's email address was available so that they could ask for additional information if needed.

The questionnaires were anonymous, and the participants were informed that the interviews would also be anonymised. As a large number of participants (514) took part in this research, it was decided that instead of giving each of them a pseudonym, a code would be used to refer to them. Each participant had a unique number. When this number is preceded by a Q, it indicates that the quote comes from their response to the questionnaire. When it is after a I, it means that the quote comes from their interview in the focus groups. "Focus Group" is abbreviated as FG. The number after "FG" is the number of the focus groups (10 in total). One participant was interviewed alone as, contrary to the other French people in this research, she had left the UK when she replied to the questions. She is referred to as "I0".

For example:

Q233 (Questionnaire 233) / I233, FG3 (Interviewee number 233 in the third Focus Group)

As participants do not have a pseudonym, information about them will usually be indicated between brackets, as shown in the example below:

I233, FG3 (Gender, Age range, City, Occupation, Year of arrival to the UK)

For more clarity, usually, not all of them will be in the brackets but only the information relevant to the quote. For instance, the year of arrival will be mentioned if the quote is about the differences between before and after the EU referendum, or their occupation when discussing speaking French at work. Sometimes information about the participant is given in an introductory sentence before the quote, therefore the element mentioned there will not be repeated between parentheses. A table containing information about the participants interviewed can be found in Appendix 2.

Because this project involved participants, it also had to get ethical approval before its commencement from the College of Art, Architecture, Design and Humanities (CAADH) and the Centre for Academic Development and Quality (CADQ) at Nottingham Trent University. The ethical approval form consisted of questions about the project and a checklist to ensure that my investigation complies with published codes of conduct, ethical principles and guidelines of professional bodies associated with my research discipline and that appropriate steps have been taken to mitigate any potential risks associated with my project. This ethical approval was granted in March 2020, allowing me to start contacting my participants during Spring 2020. A data management plan was also written with the help of NTU's data manager in February 2020 to ensure any data generated would be safely stored during the project and after its completion.

Group management skills are required when organising a focus group as some challenging participants may be encountered. Therefore, I followed a training at Nottingham Trent University in November 2019 about how to conduct focus groups and deal with potential conflicts before starting them. However, no intervention was needed as all the groups had a friendly atmosphere. Even when the participants disagreed, no conflict or tension occurred. All participants also had the same opportunity to speak, there was no occurrence of one participant overshading the others as will be shown in 3.3.2. In conclusion, the number and variety of participants as well as the ethical measures taken allowed for the collection of quality and trustworthy data.

3.3 Research methods

3.3.1 Questionnaire

Questionnaires are practical tools to reach a relatively large number of participants at the same time who will respond to the exact same questions, which therefore can produce a trustworthy study. A long history of research about social desirability showed that it has an impact on the reliability of participants' answers (Edwards, 1953; Joinson, 1999; Booth-Kewley et al., 2007). Therefore, the questionnaire used for this study was anonymous (the participants could choose not to give their contact details, or use an email address with a pseudonym), as it is often considered a solution to improve the quality of the responses (Barnett, 1998:64). Any sensitive questions were also avoided for

the same reasons. Nevertheless, since there were questions about the participants' experiences of discrimination, for instance, some of them may have stories or opinions that they would have felt less comfortable telling if they knew their answers would not be anonymised.

In order not to discourage the participants, the questionnaire was designed to take less than 20 minutes to complete, as it is the maximum amount of time most respondents will be willing to spend on a questionnaire (Burchell, 1992:234; Ross, 2015:2). Most of the questions were closed rating scales, which are less time-consuming than open questions. Participants could choose between All time/Most of the time/ Several times/ Never/ I do not know/ NA. or Strongly agree/Agree/Do not agree nor disagree/ Disagree/ Strongly disagree/ I do not know / NA. These closed questions generated quantitative data.

Several researchers such as Nemoto, & Beglar (2014) claim that participants should not be given a neutral option in Likert scales as "neutral categories are inherently illogical in that they do not conform to the fundamental continuum of the scale" (Nemoto, & Beglar, 2014: 2) and when given a neutral option in Likert scales, many participants who do not want to make a choice would usually take it (Brown, 2000: 27). Chimi and Russell (2009) argue that "neither agree or disagree" when the participant is knowledgeable about the topic of the research should not be considered as "neutral" but "indifferent" as "the subject of the study is of so little importance to him or her that no response has been developed relative to them" (2009: 3). Moreover, Johns (2010) explains that the purpose of this option is "to avoid forcing respondents into expressing agreement or disagreement when they may lack such a clear opinion. Not only might this annoy respondents, but it also risks data quality" (2010: 6). Chyung et al (2017) therefore think that "simply omitting a midpoint from the scales [...] is not the best practice" (2017: 18). Therefore, I wanted to give my participants the choice to not have an opinion on a question, as I thought it could be interesting to analyse in the context of my study. For instance, if participants do not agree nor disagree with "I feel proud to speak French", it does not indicate a strong linguistic pride, otherwise, they would have replied "agree".

Nadler et al. (2015: 85) found that there were several interpretations for "neither" such as "social desirability", "confusion" or "not applicable", but the most common ones were "no opinion", unsure" and "neutral". Raajmakers et al (2000: 208) suggested adding an "undecided" option. Therefore, my options also included N/A and I don't know, to differentiate people who did not have an opinion from those who could not answer the question for other reasons, such as being unsure of their answer or the meaning of the question. These two options were usually chosen by less than 1% of the participants, implying that participants who chose "neither agree nor disagree" were indifferent.

Overall, my questions received a smaller percentage of "neither agree nor disagree" answers than "agree" or "disagree" answers. The only question that received a majority of "do not agree nor disagree" was Q26.1 "Do you agree with the following statement: It is more important for me that my children speak French rather than English". At the end of each section, a free-text box was added to allow the participants to add any comment, remark, or additional information about their answers. This was proven particularly helpful for this question as many participants answered that the wording of the question made it difficult for them to answer as it was important for them that their children could speak both English and French and not one over the other. These free-speech sections were analysed qualitatively in the same way as answers in the focus groups (see 3.1.4). The full questionnaire can be found in Appendix 5.

The online questionnaire was created on JISC Online Surveys, which was designed for education and research purposes, it had the advantages of being easy to use and offering different options for questions and presentations. Questions were first tested on a sample population of five French citizens living in England to ensure that all the questions were clear and that no misunderstanding would occur. A total of 520 responses were received over these four months (see 3.2.4 for information about the recruitment of participants). The survey constituted of four sections.

The first section collected meta data about the participant: their gender, city of residency in the United Kingdom, year they moved to the United Kingdom, occupation, age, highest diploma obtained, and level of English, using the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) known by most French people. A description of each level was available to help the participant choose the most accurate answer. All these details were asked to determine whether certain factors such as age, gender or proficiency in English seemed to have an impact on language attitudes and potential discrimination. Their city of residency was important to see if language attitudes and perceptions were different in cities where most of the population voted Remain or Leave in the UK EU membership referendum of 2016. The year in which the participant moved to the United Kingdom was also essential as some of the questions were only targeting people who had been living in this country before the EU referendum. Findings for instance also revealed a difference in French people's perception of Brexit between those who were already in the United Kingdom before the EU referendum, and those who arrived after (see 6.5).

France is a multicultural country; therefore, the ethnicity of the participant also could have been interesting information to obtain to see if some ethnicities seemed to feel more discriminated against when speaking French than others. However, while it is common to ask for ethnicity in the United Kingdom, it is not in France. Although some exemptions are granted in the context of research, the

Law on Immigration of 1978 states that it is illegal in France to collect data about participants' ethnicity. This is therefore a question that tends to make French people feel uncomfortable (Simon, 2010:159). Consequently, as sensitive questions should be avoided in questionnaires when not necessary (Ross, 2015:3) I decided not to include them for this research. Nevertheless, data could be collected about it as some participants mentioned some issues related to their ethnicity themselves.

In the second section of the questionnaire, participants were asked about the frequency of their use of French and English, as well as other languages when applicable, in different situations (in general, at home, at school/work, on social media, with their circle of acquaintances). They were also asked if there were situations where they would speak in English with other francophones. It was important to understand which languages the participants used, as someone who never speaks in French would have fewer occasions to be discriminated against because of their native language than someone who would express themselves in their native language often and everywhere. It also offers valuable information to gain knowledge about the languages spoken by French speakers in the United Kingdom in general.

The third section asked the participants who were already in the United Kingdom before the EU referendum of June 2016 to compare British attitudes towards languages as well as their own attitudes pre- and post-EU referendum. Questions such as "Have you ever felt uncomfortable speaking in French in public places?", "Have you ever felt discriminated against because of your native language/accent?" or "Have you ever spoken in French as an act of provocation?" were asked for "before the EU referendum" and then for "after EU referendum". There were also questions about their attitudes towards French and their identity such as "Do you feel proud to be a French speaker?" and "Do you consider that your native language represents an important part of your identity?". Participants who had settled in the United Kingdom after 2016 were invited to only fill the section about attitudes towards languages post- EU referendum.

Finally, participants with children were invited to complete an additional section about the languages they used with their children. In this section, they could explain how important they thought it was for their children to speak French, and if they thought that Brexit had any impact on the languages they used with them. Although this study does not focus specifically on children of migrants, these are central questions to address in this research. Brexit can have an impact on heritage languages if parents believe that it would be safer for their children not to express themselves in another language than English for instance. Therefore, research about heritage languages in the United Kingdom post-Brexit is necessary.

3.3.2 Focus groups

At the end of the questionnaire, participants were encouraged to leave an email address if they wished to take part in a focus group in which they would be able to develop their answers. All the participants who did so were contacted in September 2020; 33 of them replied and were interviewed in ten online focus groups during the same period. Only one participant, I0, was interviewed alone as, contrary to the other participants, she had already left the UK.

Focus groups are group interviews of ideally three to eight people coming from similar backgrounds, led by a trained moderator (Morgan and Krueger, 1998:1). Compared to individual interviews, the multiplicity of views in focus groups generates new ideas, enables the participants to communicate and ask questions to each other, and "reconsider their own understanding of specific experiences" (Gibbs, 1997:3). At the end of FG3 for instance, one participant compared her experiences to those lived by the other participants in her group and said: "I had never thought about all of this, I realise while talking to you that I might live in a bubble" (I509, FG3). Focus groups were therefore an interesting option in the context of this research as it was less time-consuming than observation and would generate more opinions and self-reflection from the participants than individual interviews (Leung and Savithiri, 2009:218; Krueger and Casey, 2015:21). During my focus groups, participants often said phrases such as "I can relate to what you are saying" (I161, FG2) or "It's true, to come back to what you were saying" (I464, FG2). This demonstrates that some ideas formulated during these focus groups would not have been expressed in individual interviews as they were triggered by another participant's experience. They often asked questions to each other ("I don't know if you feel the same way but…" (I263, FG2)) which also led to conversations that would not have happened in an individual interview, as explained in Morgan (2019: 6).

Moreover, using focus groups was an original contribution to the literature about the impact of Brexit on migrants as most studies published so far used surveys (Kozminska & Zhu, 2021; Martynowska, et al., 2020) interviews (Abranches, et al., 2021; Botterill & Hancock, 2018; Kozminska & Zhu, 2021; Lulle, 2018a; Martynowska, et al., 2020), or a combination of observation and interviews (Brahic, & Lallement, 2018; Rzepnikowska, 2019; Zontini & Pero, 2019). Tyrrell et al (2018) and Benedi Lahuerta & Iusmen (2021) chose methods similar to those in my research as they used a combination of focus groups, as well as individual interviews and a survey. Tyrrell et al (2018) noted that during the focus groups they organised with young Eastern Europeans new issues emerged about "feelings of identity and belonging, access and use of local services, and the implications of Brexit" (2018: 4). Benedi Lahuerta & Iusmen (2021) worked on Polish migrants' vulnerability in the context of Brexit and used a survey for the collection of quantitative data, interviews for qualitative data about Polish migrants' experiences of vulnerability. The purpose of their focus groups was to determine whether different

demographic and socio-economic groups had different experiences (2021: 289), which was also one of the main purposes of my own focus groups.

My focus groups were originally supposed to take place physically in different cities in the United Kingdom, however, because of the national lockdown in place during the Covid-19 crisis in 2020, they had to be held on Microsoft Teams instead. It had the major advantage to make it possible to interview people living in different parts of the country together who were, therefore, able to compare their experiences, which would not have been feasible face-to-face (Stewart, 2014: 157). Archibald et al. (2019) have noted those benefits in a study about the usefulness of online interviews for qualitative data. This study revealed that most of their participants preferred online to in-person interviews as they were easier to fit into their schedule (Archibald et al., 2019:4). Stewart (2014) also argues that it is usually easier to reach "busy professionals" for instance online than face-to-face (2014: 158). Nevertheless, there are also some challenges when conducting online interviews, such as rapport building with the participants, computer illiteracy, unstable internet connections and poor recording quality (Leemann et al., 2020:12). A minor part of the data for this research was indeed lost in some of the interviews because of unstable Internet connection and poor quality of sound, however, it was not a major issue overall. Stewart (2014: 159) also warns moderators of focus groups that it may be more difficult to quiet dominant participants and encourage the quiet ones to answer questions. As explained in 3.2.5, I attended a training session prior to starting my focus group to learn how to ensure that all participants get the same opportunity to develop their ideas. My experience in teaching university online seminars also helped me using techniques such as asking the participants to answer each question one by one or calling the names of quieter ones to ask for their opinion when necessary. No issue related to this therefore happened during the focus groups.

The interviews were recorded directly via the software (image and sound) and transcribed and anonymised within two months. As I knew I would have to delete the recordings at the end of my research, I chose to use verbatim transcription and therefore wrote any gap filler, pauses and laughter, as they can sometimes give valuable supplementary information about the participant.

Two to five participants took part in each focus group. Parents were interviewed together in four groups, then participants who were already in the United Kingdom before 2016 in three groups, and finally those who moved to the United Kingdom after 2016 in three groups. They were grouped this way as parents and people who moved to the United Kingdom before 2016 had more questions to answer than those who arrived after 2016. Each session lasted between 20 to 50 minutes, according to the number of participants and questions. The interviews were semi-structured, participants were asked to develop their answers to the questionnaire by for instance giving specific examples of times

they may have heard remarks about their language or accent and were also encouraged to add any information they deemed relevant.

Participants were assigned to groups according to the criteria above as well as their availability and were therefore from different cities and did not know each other. The only exception is the fourth group where the three participants all lived in the London area and were friends. Clifford et al. (2016:145) argue that people who already know each other make an ideal focus group. Here, it did not seem to have any major impact on the quality of the interview, but the group of people who knew each other did appear to be slightly more comfortable and confident from the beginning of the interview than the others.

The questions asked in the focus groups were the following:

- Introduce yourself: when did you move to the UK, and why, are you planning to stay?
- Do you have many opportunities to speak French both in your professional and personal life?
- When would you speak in English with another francophone?
- Have you ever had any experience, or anecdote, whether it is positive or negative about your native language in the UK? Have you ever received any kind of comments about your language or your accent for instance?
- Did it happen before or after the EU referendum? Did you notice a change in British people's attitudes towards languages and migrants after the EU referendum? (*Only for groups with participants who were already in the United Kingdom before 2016*).
- Studies have demonstrated that French people are particularly attached to their language and that they consider that it represents an important part of their identity. Do you agree with this?
- If you were a victim of discrimination because of your language, would you be willing to no longer use it?
- Which languages do you speak with your children? Which one(s) do they prefer using? Have they ever expressed doubts about their identity/language, before or after the EU referendum? Do you think Brexit had any impact on the languages you use with your children? (*Only for groups with parents*).

As the interviews were semi-structured, additional themes were discussed in some groups, and not all groups spent the same amount of time answering each question. Some teachers for instance developed their argumentation on the impact of Brexit on language learning in schools, some participants spent more time talking about the impact of living abroad on the quality of their mother

tongue and their use of anglicisms, and others insisted on the part about their strategies to teach French to their children.

3.3.3 Thematic analysis

The data collected through the questionnaires and focus groups were analysed using a thematic approach. Reflexive thematic analysis was developed and popularised by Braun and Clarke. They describe it as "a method for identifying, analyzing, and interpreting patterns of meaning ('themes') within qualitative data" that can be used to "identify patterns within and across data about participants' lived experience, views and perspectives, and behaviour and practices; 'experiential' research which seeks to understand what participants think, feel, and do" (Braun & Clarke, 2017: 297). Alhojailan (2012: 40) argues that it provides a "systematic element to data analysis" as it enables the analysis of the frequency of a theme, and "gives an opportunity to understand the potential of any issue more widely". Therefore, it was a suitable method for this research, as it deals with qualitative data about participants' experiences, views and attitudes. Moreover, thematic analysis is flexible (Alhojailan 2012: 41) and therefore is adapted to both questionnaires (Milner et al., 2021) and focus groups/interviews (Auer & Tetlow, 2022; Lumsden et al., 2019; Penuela O'Brien et al, 2022; Trąbka & Pustulka, 2020; Tyrrell et al., 2018).

Braun and Clarke (2006:77) argue that although looked down on by some academics in the early 2000s who thought its flexibility could make it difficult to demonstrate the reliability of findings and that it could be too subjective or interpretive, it is a valuable tool to analyse qualitative data, and reliable when used properly. Therefore, over the last thirty years, researchers have worked on the assessment of quality in qualitative research, resulting in the development of a 'quality' framework, checklists, and guidelines (Ritchie, 2013: 30). Recent studies have demonstrated that a rigorous and trustworthy thematic analysis was possible with appropriate guidance (Castleberry & Nolen, 2018: 823; Nowell et al, 2017:17). Therefore, I carefully followed these six phases as recommended by Braun and Clarke (2006:87-93) when analysing my data:

Phase 1: Familiarizing yourself with your data

Phase 2: Generating initial codes

Phase 3: Searching for themes

Phase 4: Reviewing themes

Phase 5: Defining and naming themes

Phase 6: Producing the report

The first phase of reflexive thematic analysis involves the immersion of the researchers in the data to familiarise themselves with it (Furber, 2010: 98). The fact that it was the same person who collected, transcribed, and analysed the data for this research was therefore an asset for this phase as I had read my data several times before starting to analyse it. The qualitative data from the focus groups and free speech parts of the questionnaire were analysed separately but using the same method in NVivo. NVivo is often used by researchers doing thematic analysis (Castleberry & Nolen, 2018; Penuela-O'Brien et al., 2022). Castleberry & Nolen (2018) explain that they used NVivo for different projects using thematic analysis:

> "We have used NVivo® for several projects and found it easy to use while creating beautiful graphical displays for the data. These software tools assist the researcher in looking at patterns of codes and links between codes across large fields of data. Linguistic and semantic algorithms detect sequencing and co-occurring phrasing in a reliable and systematic manner. A common misconception is that CAQDAS software can analyze the data for you–this cannot be farther from the truth. While software can assist researchers with organizing large amounts of qualitative data, the researcher's mind is the power behind analysis and not any software program" (Castleberry & Nolen, 2018: 809).

Therefore, I first downloaded all my transcripts and questionnaires in two separate NVivo projects and proceeded to a close reading of my data. Then, I manually coded it in an "engaged and systematic" way (Braun & Clarke, 2021:53) on the software. As I was interested in my participants' experiences, I chose a more inductive orientation for my coding, which means that the dataset, and therefore my participants' experiences, were the starting point for my coding and theme development (Braun & Clarke, 2021: 56). All the segments that could potentially be relevant to the research questions were coded, which represented the majority of the data. I identified a total of 27 codes for the questionnaire and 39 for the focus groups. Then, I developed initial themes, by looking for similarities of meaning within my codes (Braun & Clarke: 2021: 79). Themes, contrary to codes that capture "a single or particular idea", capture multiple facets that contribute to the same core idea (Braun & Clarke: 2021: 80). To generate my themes, I drew thematic maps by hand, using colour coding to identify how my provisional themes could relate to each other, and start to think how my overall analysis would look (Braun & Clarke: 2021: 85), and finally, I refined my themes and their titles.

All the codes identified were used in the research. A whole section in analysis chapters will generally be dedicated to the most frequent ones, such as "French accent" (4.3) or "Other Europeans and languages" (6.4). Less frequent codes will only be mentioned within these sections, often introduced by phrases such as "one participant said…". The number and/or percentage of participants will also

often be provided throughout the analysis, which will give an indication of the frequency of a theme/code. All the codes can be found in Appendix 3, the final 7 themes are the following:

Theme 1: Speaking French in the UK.

In this theme, codes such as "anglicisms", "accents", "French accent", "losing French language", "speaking French", "speaking English" can be found. It focuses on how the French people reported using their language in different context, attitudes they had towards their accent and language and perceived attitudes from British people towards accents.

Theme 2: Identity and integration

The codes in this theme are "binational identity", "European identity" "French identity and culture", "integration", "British passport", "French community UK", "culture shock" and "perception of things in different languages". This theme is about how French migrants described their national identity and the place their language had in this identity, but also their thoughts on migrants' communities and integrating into their new country while maintaining their culture and language.

Theme 3: Children's language and identity

This theme investigates codes related to children, bilingualism and identity, it gathers testimonies from French parents about their thoughts on the different languages their children should speak, and their strategies to ensure they can speak these languages.

Theme 4: Representations of French in the UK

This theme gathers codes about how participants thought French people and their language were perceived in the UK, it includes "British and languages", "Language attitudes UK", "French representations" but also "European representations" or "Other Europeans and languages representations", as many participants compared how the French language was perceived in the UK with other foreign languages.

Theme 5: Brexit, xenophobia, and linguistic discrimination

All the codes directly related to Brexit were gathered in this theme, such as "Brexit and alcohol", "Brexit and region/entourage", "EU referendum results", "Brexit and economy/jobs", "Brexit not about expatriates", "other issues related to Brexit" " positive experiences post-Brexit", "negative experiences post-Brexit", "discrimination post-Brexit", "incidents before/after Brexit" as well as codes such as "UK nationalism", "feeling like a foreigner" or "latent racism".

Theme 6: Staying or leaving the UK

Codes such as "something is broken", "stay", "leave", "stay short term" or "uncertain future" can be found in this theme about French migrants' migration strategies post-Brexit.

Theme 7: Other impacts of Brexit on languages

This theme mainly gathered codes about language teaching and linguistics policies in the UK.

These themes were then gathered to form chapters. Themes 1 and 3 will be discussed in Chapter 4, Themes 2 and 4 in Chapter 5 and Themes 5 and 6 in Chapter 6. Theme 7 did not have enough data to be analysed with the others, but it will be mentioned in the conclusion of this thesis as it provided some useful insights into the future of languages in England.

Finally, to obtain a quality analysis, I also followed the good practice checklist from Braun & Clarke (2021: 264-265) which involves:

- Ensuring the analysis does not shift from the original questions, and if so, revising the research questions.
- Having a clear distinction between each theme, although they all relate to each other, and a clear purpose for each theme.
- Interpreting the findings rather than simply describing them, by for instance having a good balance throughout the thesis between the analysis and carefully selected compelling data extracts to support it.

3.4 Perception and representations vs reality

This research focuses on French migrants' attitudes towards languages as well as their perception of British attitudes towards languages and migrants. One participant (Q427) mentioned that a perceived change in attitude is not the same as a change in attitudes and therefore is not necessarily a "reflection of reality". It is correct that to evaluate whether British attitudes towards migrants and foreign languages changed after the EU referendum, it would have been necessary to for instance interview or observe British citizens instead of French migrants. Nevertheless, what I was interested in for this research were migrants' perspectives and experiences. I chose to focus on perceptions as one of my hypotheses was that changes in migrants' language attitudes could occur only based on how they felt, even though they were never physically or verbally assaulted. On the other hand, participants could have been attacked because of their native language for instance and still refuse to give it up.

Other early studies about Brexit and migrants such as Botterill and Hancock (2018), Rzepnikowska (2019) or Zontini and Pero (2019) chose this approach as well and looked at migrants' perceptions of British attitudes towards them. Botterill and Hancock (2018) for instance interviewed Polish migrants in Scotland, a "welcoming environment" (2018: 3) as a report from the Scottish government found that

"migrants' contributions may be welcomed and appreciated" and "no evidence that migrants are a burden on Scotland's economy and public services" (Scottish Government, 2016: 74). Nevertheless, a participant in this research reported that she stopped using Polish in public transport even though she lived in Scotland and never experienced violence or xenophobia. In Rzepnikowska (2019) as well, some Polish migrants pointed out that media reports about increasing aggression towards Polish people worried many of them even when they lived in what they described as a "safe" environment and did not experience xenophobia themselves (2019: 71). I will show in 6.5.5 that some of my French participants described similar feelings.

It is therefore more important here to consider migrants' representations of the situation than only looking at the number of attacks reported in police records for instance. Including British attitudes towards languages could also have given valuable data. However, following the same logic, this probably would not be that relevant for this specific study. As mentioned above, whether British people actually have positive attitudes towards migrants' languages would not necessarily change the migrant's perception of the situation.

The first three chapters of this thesis introduced the research's context and the methods used. The following chapters will provide an analysis of the data collected. In Chapter 4, I will present and discuss my findings about French migrants' language habits in the UK, including the languages they use regularly, their attitudes towards their own accent and the French language in general and the languages they speak with their children.

Chapter 4: Speaking French in England

4.1 Introduction

This chapter will present and discuss the findings from the data collected through questionnaires and focus groups about the way French migrants in England use and perceive the French language as well as other languages. Several studies were recently conducted about Eastern European, East and South Asian or Arabic-speaking migrants' language practices and maintenance in the UK (Alawfi, 2019; Babaee, 2013; Bichani, 2015; Ferguson, 2013; Gruszczyńska, 2019; Meddegama, 2020). Alawfi's research, for instance, demonstrated that Lebanese migrants tended to adapt to the English language and culture and did not think it affected their identity, native language, or beliefs (Alawfi, 2019:238). Ferguson (2013:132) highlighted differences in the use of Arabic between generations in the Yemeni community in the UK. Gruszczyńska's study about Polish migrants' language maintenance after Brexit showed that migrants were often influenced more "by the family- and local-level interactions than the larger-scale social mechanisms" (Gruszczyńska, 2019: 592). Gruszczyńska (2019: 577) also discussed the difficulties encountered by Polish migrants to transmit their language to their offspring, although most of them considered it as a "medium of cultural heritage and patriotism".

Nevertheless, as seen in 2.5, although French migrants are in the top ten nationalities in the United Kingdom (Vargas-Silva & Rienzo, 2020: 6) there is to date only a small number of studies about French migrants' language habits and attitudes, and how living in an anglophone country could affect their native language.

Therefore, this chapter aims to answer the first two research questions of this thesis:

RQ1 a) How do French migrants use the French language in different contexts in England?

b) What are their attitudes towards it and the way they speak it, how do they perceive their translanguaging and accent, and what is their experience of accent bias before and after the EU referendum?

RQ2 a) How important is it for French migrants to transmit the French language to their children?

b) Did Brexit seem to have an impact on their views about this matter, did it reinforce or weaken their wish to transmit their language?

Section 4.2 will describe the languages spoken by French migrants in England. I will first provide the results of this research about the frequency of use of French as well as other languages in personal and professional contexts. It will show that most participants in this study still have various opportunities to use the French language in England, and those who do not make an effort to continue

using it by reading or watching TV in French for instance as they fear language attrition. In sections 4.2 and 4.3, I will focus on attitudes towards two specific aspects of the French language. The first one is the way they use English words or phrases when speaking in French, while participants often referred to it as "using too many anglicisms". I will argue, like Huc-Hepher (2021a: 77) and Cacciatorea & Pepe (2019: 521), that their translanguaging is a marker of their new migrant identity, connecting migrants, but distancing them from their loved ones in France. The second aspect of the French language that will be discussed in 4.3 is the "French accent" in English. I will show how their attitudes towards it changed after 2016 and explain the different potential causes. Finally, section 4.4 will observe and discuss the strategies used by French parents in England to transmit their native language(s) to their offspring, and the role Brexit might have played in French parents' language education strategies.

4.2 Languages spoken by French migrants in England

4.2.1 In general

This section will present the findings about French migrants' language habits in England. It aims at giving an overview of the frequency of their use of French as well as other languages in different contexts. In the first section of the questionnaire used for this research, the participants were asked to evaluate how often they thought they used the French language in their daily lives. The questions included the following situations: in general, at home, with family and friends in the UK, on social media and at work/school.
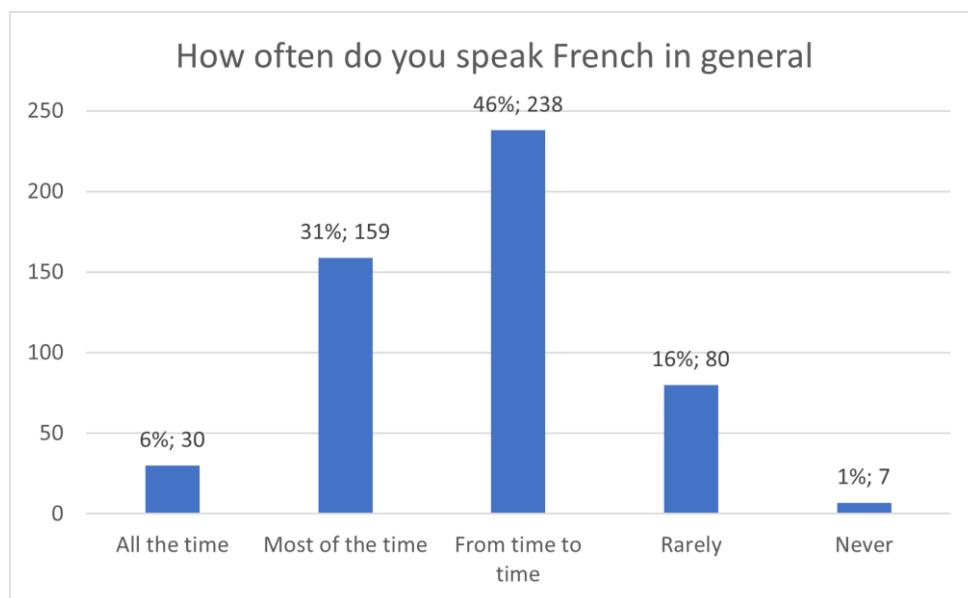
Figure 7: Question 8.1-How often do you speak French (in general)

Figure 7 shows that only 1% of the participants never speak French at all when they are in England. While results between men and women were similar for these questions, about 19% of men and 17% of women never or rarely use the French language, and the majority use it from time to time to most

of the time. Some participants, such as I464 explained that the wording of the question confused them as they spoke French and English equally: "I struggled to fill out the questionnaire because I speak in French as much as in English" (I464, FG2). Therefore, "half of the time" should probably have been added for more precision, and some of the participants who replied "from time to time" or "most of the time" may speak French as often as English.

English proficiency seems to have an impact on the frequency of the use of French. The 26 participants with a beginner to low-intermediate level of English (A1 to B1) all responded that they use French 'from time to time'(n=6), 'most of the time'(n=16) or 'all the time'(n=4). On the contrary, the seven participants (1%) who never use French all have a C1 or C2 level (advanced/proficient level). Consequently, it indicates that the lower their English proficiency, the higher the chances are that the participants will prefer using French instead whenever they have the opportunity.

However, although they live in an anglophone country and English is one of their mother tongues, none of the ten participants who said English was one of their native languages answered that they never use French, and half of them speak French all the time or most of the time. I263 (FG2), a Franco-British woman based in Leicester explained that she "always felt more British in France and more French in Britain". She also said that as a student in the UK she only spoke in French rarely, but that she decided to make the effort to use the French language more often when her baby was born so that he could learn the language (see 4.4). Therefore, it shows that she may have felt more comfortable using English after moving to the UK, but it was important for her to transmit both languages to her children. It may also be because these participants have always spoken both English and French, therefore moving to the UK did not completely change their language habits, compared to someone who would have been raised in a monolingual French family in France. As I263 decides to teach French to her child born in the UK, she reproduces the way her own parents educated her by teaching her their two languages. She indeed explained that she is bilingual as her mother is British and her father French, she grew up in France with the two languages and went to an international college before moving to England 20 years ago.

4.2.2 In the private sphere

How often do you speak French at home

- All the time: 25%; 130
- Most of the time: 17%; 85
- From time to time: 18%; 94
- Rarely: 21%; 110
- Never: 17%; 88
- N/A: 1%; 7
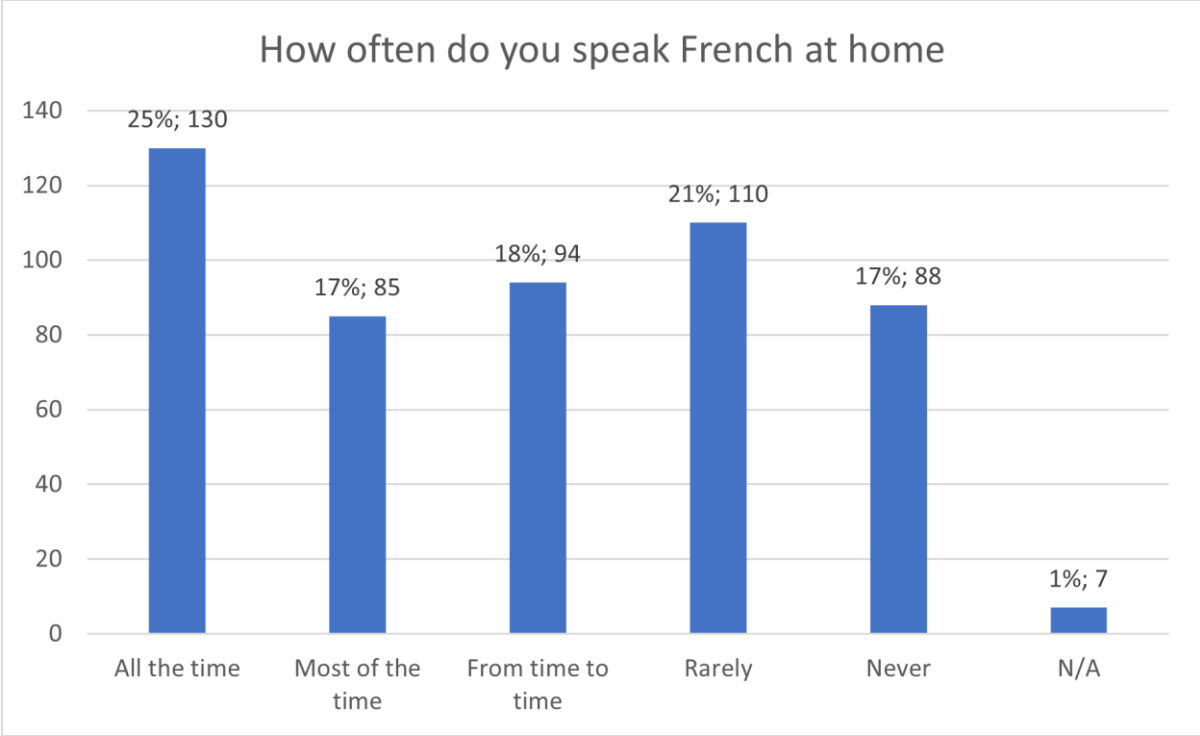
Figure 8: Question 8.2-How often do you speak French (at home)

Figure 8 shows that most of the participants declared speaking French at home to some extent, only about 17% never use French in their household. Almost all the participants who had children said that they used the French language with them (see 4.5). Seven of the participants interviewed explained that they had a francophone partner (I269, FG1; I464, FG2; I390, FG2; I154, FG8; I228, FG9; I148, FG10) or housemates (I122, FG8) with whom they could speak French at home. For 25% of the participants, French is the only language they use at home. In this section, differences can be observed between men and women. While results for women are equally distributed between the different categories (All the time, most of the time…) with between 17% and 23% in each, results for men show that 35% of them speak French all the time at home and 24% rarely, and around 13% for the other categories (most of the time, from time to time and never). It could imply that French men tend to have a French family or housemates living with them in the UK more than women.
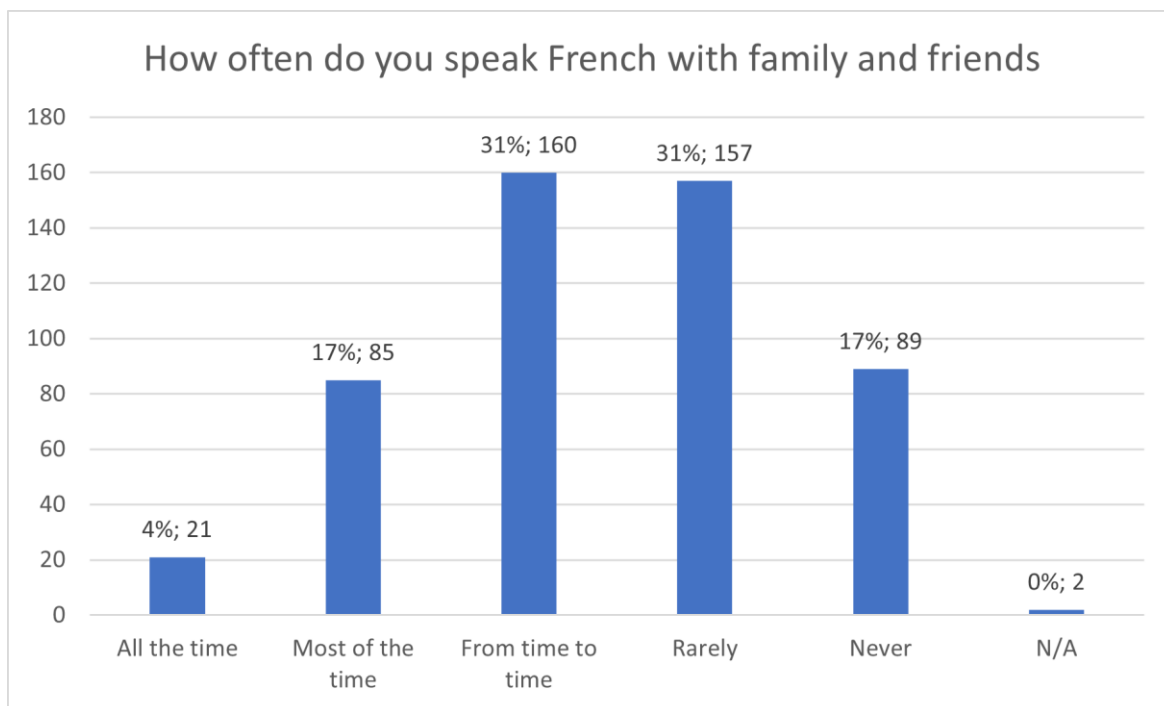
Figure 9: Question 8.5-How often do you speak French (with family and friends in the UK)

Figure 9 shows that the answers to the question "how often do you speak French with your family and friends in the UK" are similar to those to the previous question, with 17% who never speak French with their acquaintances in the UK. The results of this question as well as the previous one seem to indicate that most French people in England have family and friends with whom they can speak French at least occasionally. The idea of a French community in the UK will be discussed in more detail in 5.3. It will show that many participants avoided meeting other francophones at first but realised after a few years that their closest friends in the UK were often French, as explained by I25: "The people I'm the closest to ended up being French" (I25, FG8).

As will also be discussed in 5.3, where participants live often has an impact on their opportunities to speak French. Almost 80% of the participants living in London replied that they spoke "often" (48%) or "all the time" (29%) in French with their family and friends in the UK, and only three participants (less than 2%) said they never or rarely do. On the contrary, over 50% of the participants who live outside of the capital reported never (19%) or rarely (33%) speaking French with their family and friends in the UK, while less than 20% do it often (15%) or all the time (4%). It will therefore be argued in 5.3 that only the French people living in large cities, and especially in London have access to a sort of "French community", whereas those in smaller towns usually do not have many francophones around them. Consequently, they may not use French as often if they do not have a francophone partner or a job requiring the use of the French language.
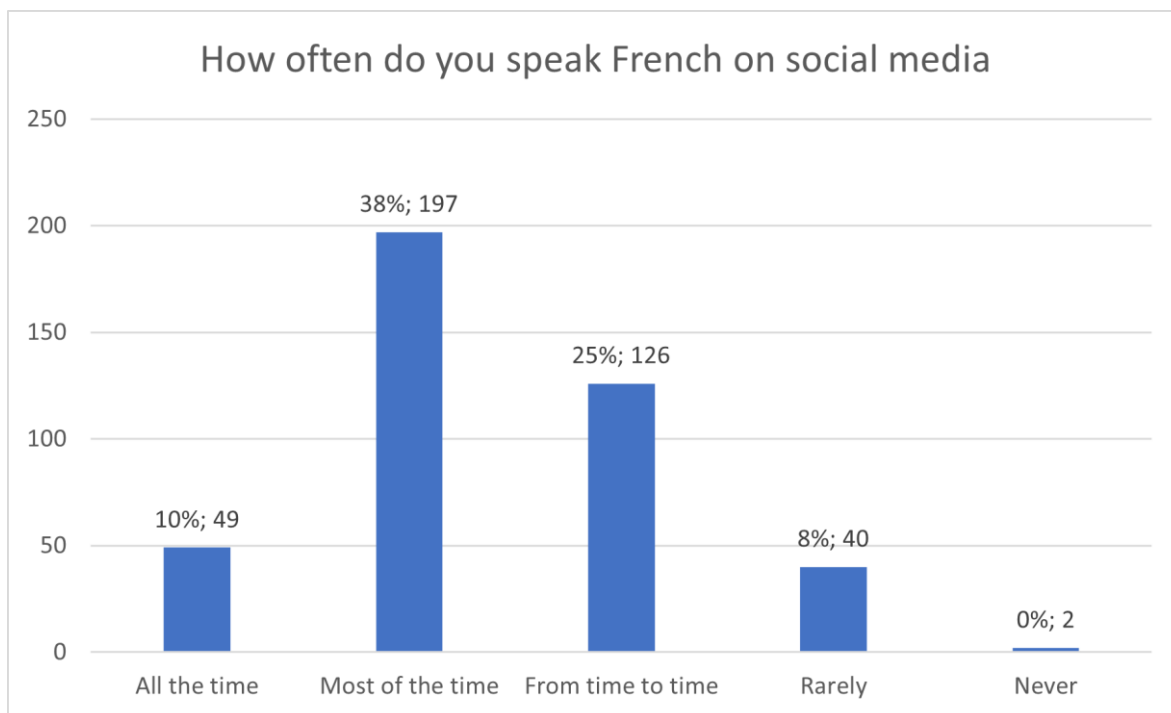
Figure 10: Question 8.6-How often do you speak French (on social media)

As seen in Figure 10, when it comes to using French on social media, no participant declared never to use it, and only about 8% use it rarely. About the same percentage of participants on the contrary only use French. The majority use French about 50% of the time when online. For some of them, like I228 and I358, two women in their late twenties/early thirties, communicating with their family and friends in France on social media is their only opportunity to use the French language: "At work, it's completely in English, so the only time I speak French is here with my boyfriend, or when I interact on social media with my friends and family" (I228, FG9); "I speak in French with my son, but otherwise I only speak in French with my family on social media" (I358, FG4). I500 (FG4), a retired language teacher, also mentioned how especially during the Covid-19 lockdown, her interactions in French were limited, but that in general, she talked to her family and friends in France on social media, on which she "writes in French or speaks in French". Therefore, social media platforms are a way for French people to continue using the French language both spoken and written, but also to remain in contact with both their family in France as well as the French community in the UK. Facebook in particular is often used for these two means, as also argued in a study about how the Vlax community in Leicester uses this social media (Hajská, 2019: 152). The way French migrants connect with each other online will be developed in 5.3.3.

4.2.3 In their professional environment
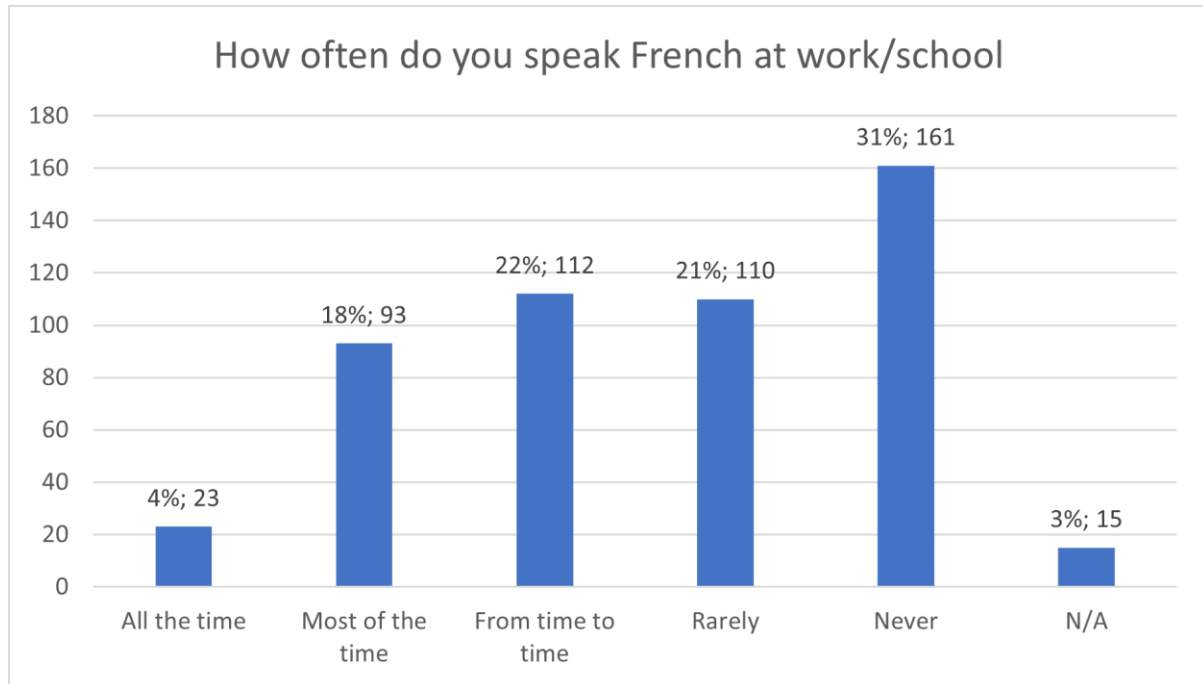
Figure 11: Question 8.3-How often do you speak French (at work/school)

As displayed in Figure 11, almost 66% of the participants use the French language to some extent in their professional life, with 22% who speak French all the time or most of the time. The reasons for using French at work given by the participants are that they either work with other francophones, in French companies or in jobs that require them to speak French. Men seem to use French more often at work than women, as 35% of women declared never to use French at work for only 19% of men. This could either imply that women work in sectors where speaking French is not required or do not have francophone colleagues or as will be seen in 6.5, that they are more likely to adapt to their environment and avoid using the French language in a professional context.

Most participants who responded that they spoke French most of the time or all the time work in the following sectors: insurance/ bank, audio-visual/ information/ communication/ translation, education/ research, tourism, business/ marketing/ customer relations, which are also the areas where most participants in general work. These are jobs for which speaking a second language is an asset or sometimes even a requirement. Many participants specified that they were French teachers for instance, or that dealing with clients in francophone countries was a key part of their work. It is therefore interesting to note that French people in England seem to choose professional occupations where their native language is seen as an asset, or that the job revolves around it.

Although it may seem logical, it is not a phenomenon that we can observe with all migrants in the UK. For instance, studies about Polish migrants in England showed that they tend to work in agriculture, construction, food processing, hospitality and social care (Bachan & Sheehan, 2011: 109), which are

areas that are not necessarily linked to the Polish language. Studies have also demonstrated that many migrants tend to live in communities and use ethnic professional and non-professional networks to find a job in the UK (Thondhlana, 2016: 583) and therefore may also use their native language at work. However, contrary to what can be observed in my research, their jobs may not always be directly related to their language.

This could mean that French migrants have a special relationship with their language and see it as an asset when abroad, but it also highlights another reality. French migrants and their language are seen as "desirable" in the UK (Brahic, 2020: 2177). It can be seen by the fact that French alongside Spanish and German are the most learnt languages in schools for instance, and that French was voted "the most important language for the UK post-Brexit" in a recent British Council survey (British Council, 2017). Consequently, French migrants may have more opportunities to work in areas where their linguistics skills are needed than other European migrants, since if their language is not perceived as desirable or "useful", they will not find occupations related to it. The fact that, as mentioned above, many migrants in the UK rely on communities could also indicate that without the help of their community, it would be more difficult for them to find a job.

Studies (Beckhusen, 2013: 307; Thonghlana, 2016: 583) have shown that migrants who move to the UK without speaking English especially needed these communities, as it would be difficult or impossible to be hired by a company where other employees do not speak their language. Migrants with low proficiency in English also tended to rely on employment agencies to avoid interviews in English (Hopkins, 2012: 134) and therefore usually could not occupy a position equivalent to the one they would occupy in their native country (Johansson & Sliwa, 2016: 306). It is not a phenomenon that can be observed in the present study as the participants almost all have at least an intermediate level in English, and most of them consider themselves fluent. Moreover, as seen in 3.2.2, most of them are also highly skilled professionals, who are less likely to need to rely on migrant networks (Ryan, 2014: 252).

However, although no participant mentioned using a "French community" to find their job, many worked for French companies or knew other French people around them who did, sometimes referred to by participants as "the expats". I253, who works in education explains that there is a French community in Bristol as some big French firms such as EDF and Airbus were based in the city. This was also mentioned by I214 who said that she had opportunities to speak French as there was a "huge French community in Bristol" because there are French companies there. A French computer game company was also often mentioned by participants as recruiting many French people. A young woman (I464) and man (I493) interviewed worked there themselves in Newcastle-upon-Tyne and described it as an "international environment", I464 explained that eight languages were spoken in her department

and that she also had French colleagues with whom she communicates in French. I493 said: "I have a good balance at work, I work for the French market, for a French firm whose hierarchy is mostly French, my colleagues, I'm in a French team, well no, we're from everywhere but there are five French people in my team, so yeah I work in French, I speak in French with my colleagues, but my work is also half in English." (I493, FG10).

Although many participants have opportunities to speak French at work, the majority specified that they also often speak in English with their francophone colleagues. Speaking English at work is a way to include everyone, and it is also convenient when using technical terms that they sometimes only know in English, as explained by these participants:

> "In a professional context, I never speak French with two colleagues, although they are francophone, everything is in English. It is mostly for the other colleagues to understand, moreover, the terms that we use are in English, so it is easier, and since I met them in an anglophone context it doesn't feel strange." (I239, woman, Bristol, computing/Internet)

> "I had French colleagues back then […] we always spoke in English because anyway, it was a specific terminology, so I was stuck […] because I did not have the equivalent words in French." (I161, woman, Loughborough, procurement manager)

I201, a PhD student who teaches at university also agrees that on a professional level, she found talking about research in English easier since it is the language she uses in her PhD thesis. She also mentions that she does not speak in French with her francophone students unless they initiate it as she does not want it to be seen as "preferential treatment".

In conclusion, most participants agree that although they may occasionally speak in French at work, they find it easier, more professional, and polite to use English in this context, especially when non-francophone colleagues are around.

4.2.4 Other languages spoken by participants

It should also be mentioned that one out of five participants reported also speaking languages other than French and English in their daily lives.
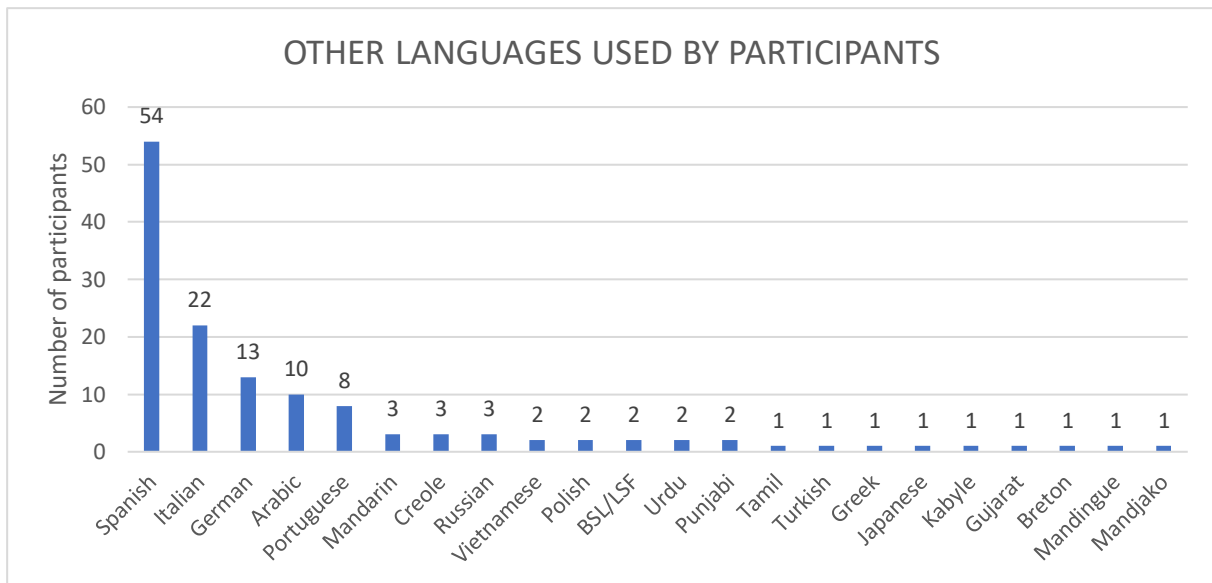
Figure 12: Question 11-Other languages used by participants

Figure 12 shows the other languages frequently used by the participants in this research; Spanish, Italian, German, Arabic and Portuguese were the most cited ones. These results are not unexpected since they are the languages learnt in school by most French people (Senat.fr, 2021) and spoken by most migrants in France (Insee, 2012: 161).

Many participants specified that they spoke these other languages in a personal context, whether it is at home, with their partner, family and/or friends in the UK, or when on the phone with their family in France. Some participants are themselves children of migrants in France, or have family outside of France, and speak a heritage language. Q362, Q369, and Q485 for instance are three women who respectively speak Polish, Portuguese, and German with their mothers. Q41 and Q58 stated that they spoke Arabic with their families, Q124, a student in London, specified that he used Arabic with family and friends because he is Franco-Algerian. Q203, Q349, and Q520 also explained that they had a "second native language", respectively Creole, Spanish, and Urdu. Some of them may have family in the UK, others mentioned that they used these other languages on the phone or social media. For instance, Q73 and Q174 both use Russian to communicate with Russophone friends in the UK, as well as on social media and during "weekly calls" with their families; Q272 also said that she used "Kabyle on the phone" as well as Spanish and Italian with friends. Therefore, these participants try to maintain both the French language and their other native language while in the UK.

Some participants also use these languages as they are learning them, such as Q2 and Q194, two men based in the Midlands who respectively speak Chinese and Spanish during language exchange events, Q514 who is taking German classes and teaches herself Spanish, or Q496 who learns Italian because her partner is Italian. Like Q496, several participants in this research had a non-francophone or anglophone partner and therefore used different languages at home, especially when they had

children. In the third focus group, for instance, Q157 (M,36/55, London) and Q509 (F, 36/55, London) were parents and in a relationship with respectively a Mandarin speaker and a Spanish speaker. Both explained that it was important for them that their child could speak French as well as the language of their partner and therefore tried to use the two languages at home.

Most of the participants who speak another language frequently use this third language in a professional context. It is for example often required for language teachers in secondary schools in the UK to teach at least two languages. Therefore, many French teachers in this study reported that they often use the Spanish language at work, as they teach it and sometimes speak it with colleagues, as shown in the following statements: "Spanish, I teach it as a secondary school teacher (with French)" (Q332); "Italian with my colleague who teaches this language in the school I work at, Spanish for the same reason" (Q321): "Spanish that I teach and when I talk to our Spanish Language Assistant. Also, when I talk to Hispanic friends" (Q473). Q519, a man working in the sector of catering/tourism also explained that many Spanish people work with him and some of them have a low level of English when they start. It was often mentioned by participants that "taking into consideration people's linguistic abilities is just the common decency and is a quality" (Q122), we can therefore assume that some of them may choose to speak in the language their interlocutor feels the most comfortable with if they can.

4.2.5 Languages used with other francophones, code-switching and politeness

Most of the participants declared not to use French when non-French speakers are around, not only at work but in most situations, as shown in Figure 13 below.
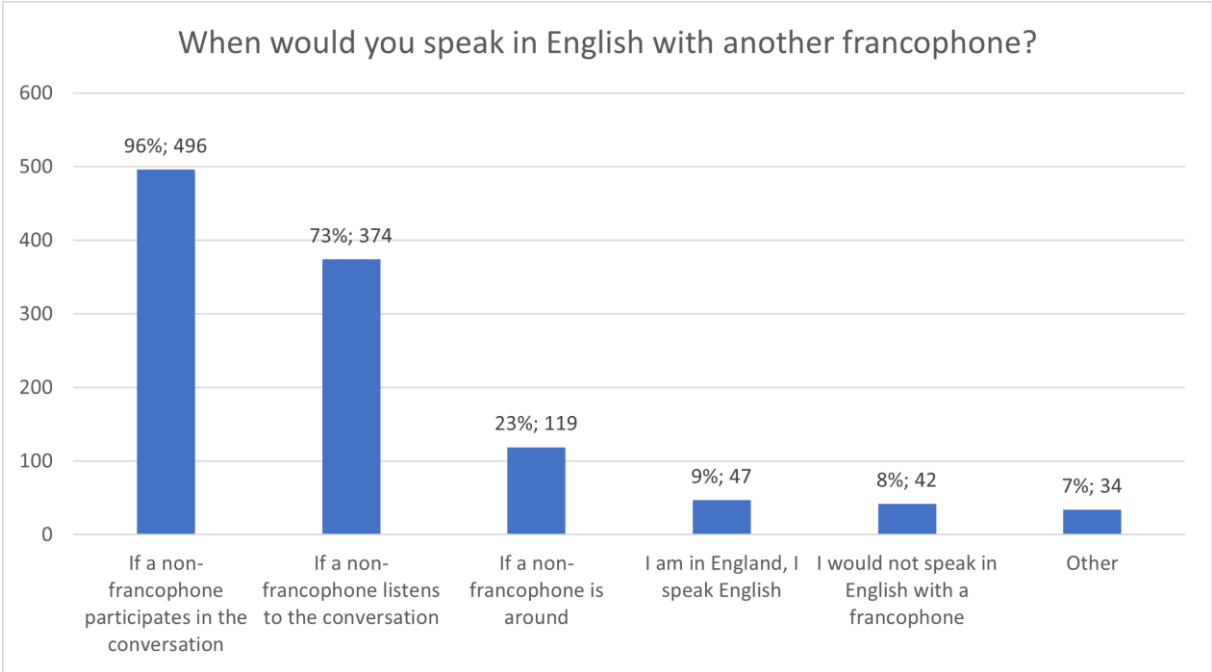
Figure 13: Question 13-When would you speak in English with another francophone? (Multi answer)

Figure 13 shows that almost all the participants agreed that they would use English if non-francophones were trying to participate in the conversation, 73% of them if they were listening to it, and 23% even if non-francophone were just around without necessarily being involved in any way in the conversation. Participants also had the opportunity in the next question to explain their choices or add other situations in which they would speak in English with a francophone.

The majority used this question to specify that they would use English with other francophones in a professional context, as seen in 4.2.3. For instance, Q503, a woman aged 26/35 working in administrative management/logistics, speaks in French with her French colleagues when discussing personal matters but switches to English when the conversation is about work. In their research about code-switching, Blom and Gumperz (1972:127) give the example of clerks who used a dialect to talk about personal affairs and the standard language when discussing business. Most participants explained that for certain topics, especially work-related ones, it was easier to use English words. Using English at work is not only a way to include their colleagues but that it is also convenient as this way, they do not have to translate work jargon, as shown by these examples: "Technical vocabulary for a project where English is used, the discussion oscillates between English and French" (Q231, M, 18/25, Energies/Environment); "In the field of education, some 'jargon' words are easier to use in English, even when exchanging between French speakers. The sentences will be mostly in French, but with some English expressions related to education". It was noticeable during the focus groups, participants often used English words when talking about their job, whether it was their job title such as "procurement manager" (I161) or "community management" (I464), or words related to their work environment, such as "GCSE" and "A Level" often used by teachers.

Some participants also preferred switching to English for certain topics that they usually discuss in this language, but also when they felt English words "describe better what [they] want to communicate" (I36, F, London) or if "English idioms are more suitable" (I277, F, Leicester). Some who have been living in the UK for a long time, such as Q516 who moved to this country in 1993, reported that they now feel more comfortable speaking in English because they have "lost the habit of speaking French". Q157 (M, London) and Q422 (F, Old Windsor) who moved to the UK in 2006 and 2008 also explained that they have French friends who "have been living here for 20 years so sometimes it's easier to speak English" (Q157), as some of them "no longer speak French fluently" (Q422). Others identified "laziness" (I336) and "the simple pleasure of speaking French" (I472, FG6) as reasons to mix languages. Many also admitted that they sometimes switch to French if they want to keep a conversation private and do not want non-French speakers around to understand (I472, Q292, I269, I161, Q307). It could therefore be argued that French people code-switch as a way to bond with other francophones (Gardner-Chloros, 2012: 111) as will be discussed in further detail in 4.3.1.

Participants often explained that they found speaking French in front of non-French speakers rude, and therefore would switch to French when a non-francophone enters the room for instance. This is similar to what is described by Blom and Gumperz (1972: 126) as situational code-switching, speakers start the conversation in French as there are only francophones involved in the conversation but will switch to English when a non-French speaker joins the conversation or simply is around, as explained by I154 in FG8: "I have some French friends and it happens that we speak in French sometimes if we're between us for instance, but as soon as there is a third person who joins and doesn't speak French, of course, we speak in English". Participants will then tend to switch back to French if this person leaves, but not necessarily immediately after as explained by I189 (FG7), a French teacher based in Birmingham:

> "For instance, we have a conversation in English, so there are two French people and one English person in the conversation in English, the English person leaves and we keep speaking in English for a little while and then we realise and we say 'well no, we're going to continue this conversation in French!' this happens often." (I189, FG7)

Although most of them said they would not speak in French in the presence of non-francophones, as implied for instance by I154's use of "of course" when explaining he would switch to English if a non-francophone joins a conversation, some claimed that they sometimes hear other French people do it, as reported by Q493 (M, Newcastle-upon-Tyne) for instance: "French people between them tend to easily switch to French even when non-speakers are present. Which can be seen as rude in my opinion".

I25 (FG7), a woman who moved to the UK in 2008 also noticed that some French people constantly switch back to French even when non-French speakers participate in the conversation. She said she did not know if it was because of a "lack of manners", "habit", or "just because they know some people in the conversation will understand" but observed that they were generally people who had not spent much time in England. It would therefore be possible that French people who moved to England recently are not used yet to speaking English more often than French, it could also be because of a lack of proficiency in English. As seen in the results presented in 4.2, the lower their proficiency in English was, the higher the chances were that participants would choose French over English whenever possible. Q511, a woman who moved to London in 2018 explained that "a word in French can slip" because she is unsure of the translation, but that it was "becoming rarer and rarer". This would confirm the hypothesis that after a few years in England, French people improve their English proficiency and therefore no longer need to constantly switch to French as they did when they first moved to the UK.

Other participants also noticed that migrants from other nationalities in the UK such as German people tended to find it easier to speak in English between themselves than French people (I493, FG10). This could also be explained by the fact that Germany is ranked among the countries with the highest

proficiency in English whereas France only has moderate proficiency (EF, 2022), therefore French people may feel less comfortable speaking in English, especially whenever other francophones are around. In 4.3.2, I will argue that many French people are insecure about their accent in English, which could also be a reason why they prefer using French with other francophones.

I239, a woman aged 26/35 based in Bristol also explained that when she meets francophones in an "anglophone context" such as work, it does not "feel weird" to speak in English with them. However, it does not feel natural at all for her to speak in English with people she met in "francophone contexts", such as friends she had in France before moving to the UK. I263, a binational (British/French) woman, attributes a language to each person and finds it difficult to talk to them in another one. She says:

> "When I have chosen a language for someone, it is very difficult to speak to them in another language. For instance, my mother sometimes she forgot and spoke in French to me, and I thought 'why do you speak to me in French?', it was like being slapped. To me, it is something really personal like, I would really have to force myself to change that, so if it's only a few words it's normal but if we are three people and only one doesn't understand the other language, I'd force myself but it's not natural." (I263)

This could be because of what Edwards (2005: 12) refers to as the simultaneous acquisition of "one person one language" education she may have received like many other bilingual children, where they speak a different language to each parent. It could therefore be especially difficult, as she mentions in this example to use another language than the one she was raised with for each parent.

Therefore, according to the responses given by the participants of this study, French people in England seem to avoid using French when they feel it could make people around them feel uncomfortable, as shown by the following statements: "I think it's a question of respect to speak a language that everybody understands so that no one feels excluded"(Q87, F, 26/35, London); "Out of politeness, otherwise I wouldn't speak English with a French person" (Q358, F, 26/35, Liverpool), "I speak English even with francophones so that it does not create discomfort in public places" (Q52, F, 36/55, London), "I avoid speaking French at work with my French colleagues so that it doesn't make the other colleagues uncomfortable, out of respect and also not to be criticised by other colleagues" (Q74, F, 26/35, London).

In the final quotes, words such as "discomfort", "uncomfortable" or "criticised" are found, implying that they might have experienced criticism when speaking in French, or heard complaints about people speaking in their native language, as will be developed in 6.4.2. While these participants did not give more information about it, Hopkins (2012: 385) found that British workers felt excluded when colleagues used another language than English in the workplace, which often resulted in hostility

towards them. This would explain why many French migrants refuse to use French, especially at work, out of politeness, but also to avoid hostile behaviours from their co-workers.

This first section presented the findings about the different languages spoken by French migrants in both professional and personal contexts and therefore provided an answer to the question "what are French migrants' language habits?". It demonstrated that most French migrants in England still have various opportunities to speak their native language and found they had what they often referred to as a "good balance" (I464, FG2; I493, FG10) between French, English, as well as other languages. Consequently, it proves that the French language is important and present in French migrants' daily life. This section also showed that participants acknowledged code-switching and using English borrowed words in different situations such as when they must discuss work matters and use jargon related to it, and that they felt uncomfortable speaking English with other francophones, as well as speaking French in the presence of non-francophones. It also indicated that some of them who settled in England long ago sometimes felt more comfortable using English than French. The next section will therefore describe attitudes towards the French accent and anglicisms, French migrants' concerns about losing their mother tongue, as well as how their translanguaging could be a way for them to express their migrant identity.

4.3 Attitudes towards the French language and accent

4.3.1 Anglicisms, translanguaging or language attrition?

Section 4.2.5 showed that participants often used English words when speaking in French. This section will discuss French migrants' mixed attitudes towards their "Franglais" language, their fear of language attrition, and how their translanguaging is a marker of their new migrant identity, facilitating their integration within the French migrant community in England, but distancing them from their peers in France. As seen in 2.3.3, translanguaging is a term that, contrary to code-switching, goes beyond the boundaries of named languages and focuses on actual language use and "privileges the language of speakers as a semiotic system of linguistic and multimodal signs that together make up the speaker's own communicative repertoire" (García & Li, 2018: 1). In this context, it is the most appropriate terminology, as it focuses on migrants' experience of mixing the languages, rather than creating boundaries between English and French.

Several participants explained that after living abroad for a long time, it had become easier for them to speak in English rather than French, as described by I509 (FG3), a woman who moved to London in 2011 after also living in Australia:

> "After ten years you forget French a bit, there are lots of things in fact that I can't explain in French like my work, there are lots of things, I... I'm stumbling over words it's not fluent, and so for me, English has become the language of... it's simple... it's easy." (I509, FG3)

Participants in almost all focus groups also discussed their use of English words when speaking in French, although no question about anglicisms was asked by the researcher. Most of them shared their concerns about using "too many anglicisms" and often forgetting words in French. The expressions "*galérer*" and "*avoir du mal*" (struggling) were often used by participants to describe how they felt about their fluency in French, especially after spending hours or days speaking in English only (I154, FG8; I316, FG8; I201, FG9). I201, who has been living abroad for several years and writes a PhD thesis in English talks about this: "I feel like I'm struggling so much in French sometimes [...] when I speak to my [francophone] friends [...] I struggle and I think if I had to speak in French in a professional context that would be even more difficult" (I201, FG9). I154, a young man who moved to Nottingham in 2020 also says: "I realise that I'd need to speak French more often, with my housemates sometimes when we only speak in English for several consecutive days, I struggle to get back to French after" (I154, FG8). The phrase "I would need to" (*j'aurais besoin de*) reveals this perceived necessity to speak his native language as he is worried about no longer being fluent in it otherwise after noticing that he finds it difficult to speak French again after a few days of using only English.

Indeed, many participants have lived in the UK for over ten years and still seek to continue using their language. I146, a woman who moved to Nottingham in 1971, explains that back then she did not have many opportunities to speak French as she did not know many French people in her city. Consequently, she only used French in her job as she used to teach French, or when going back to France for holidays. Even with her French friends or her daughter she mostly communicated in English. Now that she retired from education, she joined the University of the Third Age where she participates in French conversation classes every week, which is almost the only time where she speaks in French.

Most participants interviewed agreed that the French language was a part of who they were and the only way to communicate with their family and friends in France. Therefore, many mentioned that they were trying to continue using French, whether it was by talking with other francophones both in France and England, joining French discussion groups such as I146, reading (I122, FG8), writing (I100, FG7), or watching French TV for instance (I161, FG2). Participants seemed mindful that they could "lose their language" if they no longer used it at all and were willing to make efforts to prevent it from happening, as mentioned by I161:

> "I moved to the UK in 1994, the telephone was very expensive when we phoned internationally, I had no [French] TV, there was no Internet and after two years I found myself forgetting my language, and after a year I went back to see my parents and I was

actually translating from English into French with very bad French and my mum was horrified, so that's when I told myself yes, you have to practise a language and you can lose it." (I161, FG2, F, Loughborough)

Many also described a feeling of "frustration" or "uneasiness" related to the "quality" of their language. I122 (FG8), who teaches French in secondary schools, explained that he must repeat "basic expressions" in French all day so that his students can memorise them, and sometimes, therefore, uses them outside of the classroom. This makes him feel uncomfortable as he feels like he is "losing his French and becoming stupid" because of the way he speaks. I263 who moved to the UK to study in 2000 explained that she felt frustrated, especially when she must speak French in professional situations. She thinks her French did not evolve since she was 18 and that she still speaks "like a teenager" in French.

In terms of anglicisms, during the focus groups, the number used by participants was relatively small (about 0.25% of the total words), but 25 out of the 32 participants interviewed used at least one. Participants who had spent the longest time in the UK were more likely to use English words. If even in the formal context of an interview, where participants paid attention to their language and often prepared their answers, they still used some English words, we can assume that in more casual situations this number would be much higher. In her research on Italian migrants in London, Pepe (2020) found that some of the participants perceived mixing languages as "inappropriate" in the context of a research interview, especially for those who had negative attitudes towards these practices, considering it was "degrading their Italian", whereas those who knew the researcher did not see these interviews as formal and freely mixed Italian and English during the conversation (Pepe, 2020: 219). When seen as inappropriate, the use of English words was "highlight[ed] [...] by giggling, pausing and pointing their realisations out" by participants, while in less formal contexts, mixing was usually more "natural" and "unnoticed" (2020: 219). Similarly, during my focus groups, participants who mentioned being worried about their language mixing habits were more likely to highlight English words they used, whereas for instance in FG3 where all the participants knew each other it was more natural.

As also argued by Pepe (2020: 224), due to the linguistic prescriptivism and negative perceptions of language mixing in Italy, like in France (see 2.5.1), participants seemed to be mostly concerned about the judgment of others, especially of those in their home country. Some participants in Cacciatorea and Pepe (2019: 520) clarified that translanguaging could only be used with other migrants, as "Italians in Italy" would not understand and would judge their way of speaking negatively, which can lead them to also evaluate these practices negatively. My participants explained that although using anglicisms was often perceived as a form of "snobbism" (I201, FG9) by their peers in France, they were sometimes

ashamed of it and did not necessarily perceive it as a way to display their bilingualism but as a sign that they were struggling to speak their mother tongue.

Huc-Hepher (2021a:76-77) whose French participants living in London also mentioned this notion of "snobbery", argues that "inadvertent translanguaging in the premigration space triggers a process of unmotivated symbolic transformation […] Confirming Bourdieu's 'perceived-being' notion, the same translanguaging that serves to connect the migrants in London functions as a divisive force in France". Participants in Cacciatorea & Pepe (2019) who feared being judged by their peers in Italy admitted using translanguaging in a more relaxed way with other Italians in England (2019: 521).

Like Huc-Hepher (2021a: 77) and Cacciatorea & Pepe (2019: 521), I found that participants in my focus groups tended to bond over the way they used and mixed languages, whereas it created distance and incomprehension from their peers in France. As mentioned, in focus groups where participants knew each other, they tended to use English words more naturally, but it can also be noticed that towards the end, usually after discussing anglicisms, participants were using them more freely.

In the questionnaires, Q112, a woman who moved to London in 2011 used translanguaging to answer one of the questions: "J'ai tellement l'habitude de parler anglais que je mix les deux and feel more confident and comfortable in English même avec mes amis francophones"[5]. This quote is a good example of translanguaging as a performative act, displaying migrants' new identities (Pepe, 2020: 220). No longer just French, not British either (see 5.4), but French migrants in an anglophone country, translanguaging is a way for them to express their new transnational identity, bond with other migrants, and separate themselves from those who remained in France (Cacciatorea & Pepe, 2019: 520).

The following section will focus on the French migrants' attitudes towards another important aspect of their language and identity: their accent. It will also discuss perceived British attitudes towards it, and how these attitudes may affect the way French migrants speak.

4.3.2 French attitudes towards the French accent
This section will discuss accent bias in the UK and how participants in this research perceived their own foreign-accented English when applicable. Munro (1998: 139) defined foreign-accented speech as "nonpathological speech produced by second language (L2) learners that differs in partially systematic ways from the speech characteristic of native speakers of a given dialect". An accent refers to "aspects of pronunciation as well as a series of traits including rhythm, intonation, and speech rate" (Freynet & Clément, 2019: 497).

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[5] I'm so used to speaking English that I mix the two languages and feel more confident and comfortable in English even with my francophone friends.

(4) [pʰḷiiːz kʰɑlˠ stɛlə æsk ɚ rə bɹĩŋ ðiiːz θĩŋz wɪθ ɚ fɹɑ̃m ðə stɔɹ] (English)

(7) [pʰliʑ kʰɔl stɛla æsk hɜɹ tu bɹĩŋ zɪs θɪːŋks wɪθ hɜɹ ɹɛ̃m d̪ə stɑɹ] (French)

Figure 14: "Please call Stella, ask her to bring these things from the store" pronounced by an American English speaker and French speaker (Côté & al, 2016: 161)

Figure 14 from Côté & al. (2016:161) analysed how the same text in English was read by native and non-native speakers displays some characteristics of French accentuated English. For instance, the French speaker in this example substituted [z] and then [d] for [ð] in "these" and "the" and used a [iː] instead of [ɪ] and devoiced the final consonants in "things". The study also highlighted other characteristics of French-accentuated English, such as those in the figure below.

Rank	Word	Score	Characteristic forms	Native forms
1	to	1.26	tu (20/34 : 11/181)	ɾə (0/34 : 112/181)
			tŭ (5/34 : 8/181)	
2	into	1.05	ĩntu (21/34 : 25/181)	ĩntə (1/34 : 56/181)
			ĩnt̪u (4/34 : 0/181)	ĩnɾə (0/34 : 29/181)
3	call	0.88	kɔl (14/34 : 12/181)	kʰɑlˠ (0/34 : 48/181)
			kɔːl (3/34 : 0/181)	kʰɔlˠ (1/34 : 13/181)
4	small	0.78	smɔl (22/34 : 33/181)	smɑlˠ (1/34 : 59/181)
			smol (4/34 : 1/181)	smɔl (22/34 : 33/181)
5	can	0.50	kæ̃n (13/34 : 3/181)	kɔ̃n (1/34 : 82/181)
			kæn (4/34 : 0/181)	kʰɔ̃n (0/34 : 23/181)

Figure 15: Characteristic words of French native speakers (Côté & al., 2016:163)

Figure 15 shows that French speakers for instance tend to use the fuller form [tu] for the word "to" instead of [ɾə] preferred by American English speakers, which is explained by the fact that in French unstressed vowels tend to be pronounced (2016: 163). French speakers also tend not to aspirate the initial consonant, as aspirated consonants do not exist in the French language. The initial glottal fricative /h/ for instance is often omitted by French speakers as it does not belong to the French phonemic inventory, however, they tend to insert it where it normally should not be, Capliez (2011: 45) gives the example of "I'm happy" that will often be pronounced /hajm aˈpi/ by French native speakers. Côté & al. (2016) conclude that most of the characteristics of the French accentuated English can be traced back to the phonology of standard French (2016: 164).

Studies (Bishop, 2005; Giles, 1970) from the late twentieth century and early twenty-first century showed that the French accent was perceived as prestigious in the UK. In 1970, Giles established a framework to evaluate attitudes towards regional and some foreign accents in the UK. British participants were asked to rank different accents based on aesthetic (how pleasant-unpleasant they thought a particular accent sounded), communicative (how comfortable-uncomfortable they would feel if interacting with the accented-speaker concerned), and status content (how much prestige or

status was associated with speaking this accent). In these three categories, the French accent was ranked second to RP and the Northern American accent, and therefore was perceived as having a higher status than any other British regional accent (1970: 223). Over thirty years later, another study (Bishop, et al., 2005) using a near-replication of Giles' research found that the French accent was this time ranked 6th/16 accents presented in terms of prestige and social attractiveness, behind RP, "accent identical to your own", Scottish, London, and North American. The French accent in 2005 still had higher prestige than other British accents such as Irish, Welsh, Lancashire, Liverpool or Birmingham (ranked last in both studies), as well as other foreign accents such as Spanish, German or "Asian" (Bishop, et al., 2005: 140).

As explained in more detail in 2.4.1, studies about accent bias in the UK tend to focus on regional, and there is little data to date about attitudes towards different accents after the EU referendum. Studies about Eastern Europeans (Benedi Lahuerta & Isumen, 2021; Rzepnikowska, 2019; Sime, et al., 2022) indicated that they felt self-conscious of their accent, especially after Brexit. They showed that Eastern Europeans, because they are white could pass as 'non-migrants' unless identified by other markers, such as their accent (Sime, et al., 2022: 4530; Rzepnikowska, 2019: 74). A participant in Benedi Lahuerta & Isumen (2021) for instance considered "taking lessons to learn [the British accent]" as he thought he would receive a "better treatment" than he does with a Polish accent. Participants in Brahic (2020) reported that some markers of identity such as their accent had often been commented on before Brexit, but never interpreted them negatively. On the contrary, they saw them as funny and as a way to connect with people (2020: 2178). It indicates that at least before Brexit, attitudes towards the French accent were still positive. If this is the case, French migrants in Britain would not necessarily feel ashamed of their accent or feel the need to hide it. However, to date, there is limited research on French migrants' attitudes towards their own accent and British attitudes towards the French language and accent after the UK EU referendum of 2016. This section will therefore offer an analysis of how French migrants' attitudes towards their own accent, as well as their perception of glottophobia in England evolved before and after 2016.

The participants were asked two questions about their accents in the questionnaire: "Have you ever felt ashamed of your French accent in English" (Q16.6 before Brexit & Q19.6 after Brexit) and "Have you ever tried to hide your French accent when speaking in English" (Q16.7 before Brexit & Q19.7 after Brexit). These questions aimed to observe French people's attitudes towards their accent in English when applicable, and whether these attitudes were impacted by Brexit. First, I will present the quantitative findings for these two questions. Then, I will show that the qualitative findings are crucial for the analysis of these numbers. While we could initially conclude that Brexit had an impact on French

migrants' attitudes towards their accent, it is necessary to consider other potential causes than Brexit that could also affect these attitudes over time.

Figure 16: Questions 16.6 & 19.6-"Have you ever felt ashamed of your French accent when speaking in English?" before and after the EU referendum

Figure 16 compares the results to the question "Have you ever felt ashamed of your French accentuated accent" before and after Brexit. All the participants were living in England when they replied to the questionnaire (May to October 2020) therefore all of them answered the question for "after the EU referendum of 2016". The participants who had lived in England before June 2016 also had to answer the same question but this time only taking into consideration the period they lived in England before June 2016. Therefore, I chose to highlight the percentages rather than value numbers for Figures 16 and 17, as only 275 participants out of the 507 who replied to this question lived in England before the EU referendum. Figure 16 shows that before 2016, 45% of the participants experienced feeling ashamed of their accent when speaking in English at least once. For "after 2016", this percentage increases, with 50% (+5%) who felt ashamed at least once, including 7% feeling this way all the time for only 4% before the EU referendum.
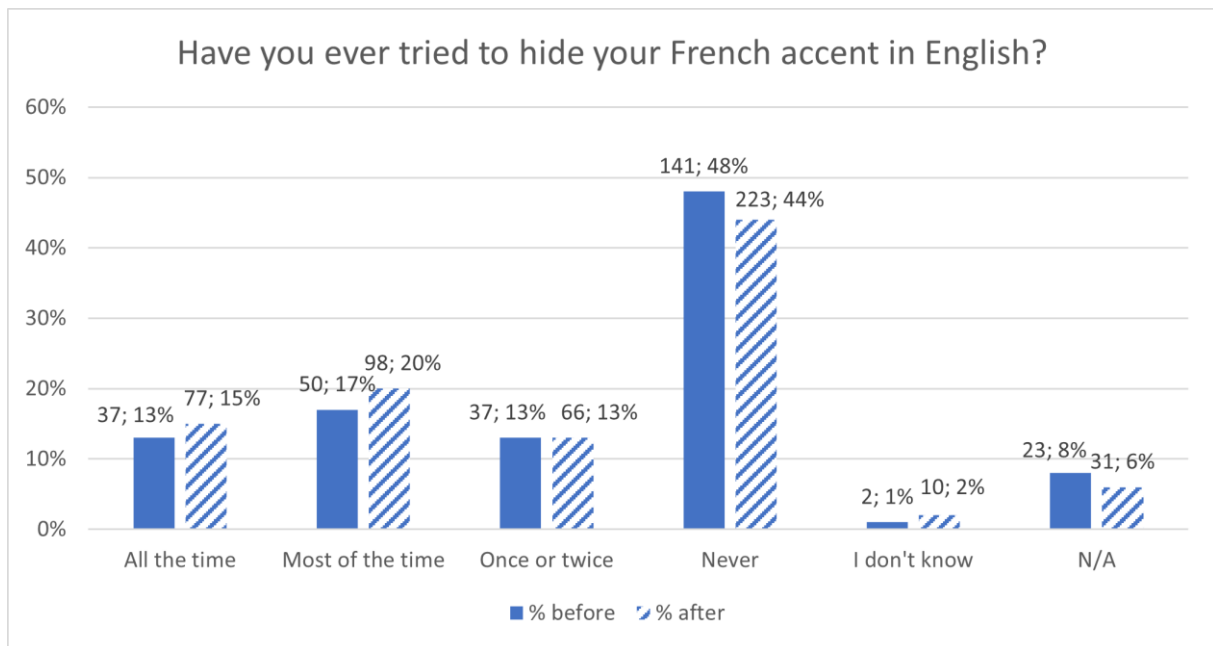
Figure 17: Questions 16.7 & 19.7-Have you ever tried to hide your French accent when speaking in English before and after the EU referendum

Similarly, for Q16.7 and 19.7 shown in Figure 17, a rise of 6% in the number of participants who tried at least once to hide their accent when speaking in English can be observed after 2016 (42% before for 48% after), and a higher percentage of participants (+2%) tried to do so all the time after the EU referendum.

An initial analysis of these percentages would indicate that more participants started to feel insecure about their accent after the EU referendum, implying that it could directly be the cause. Nevertheless, before discussing these results, I would like to share these same charts, this time taking into consideration both before and after 2016 only the participants who already lived in England before 2016. Doing so will clarify whether participants who lived in the UK before the EU referendum changed their attitudes towards their accents after the EU referendum, or if the differences between before and after Brexit come from people who moved to the UK after 2016.

Have you ever felt ashamed of your French accent in English?
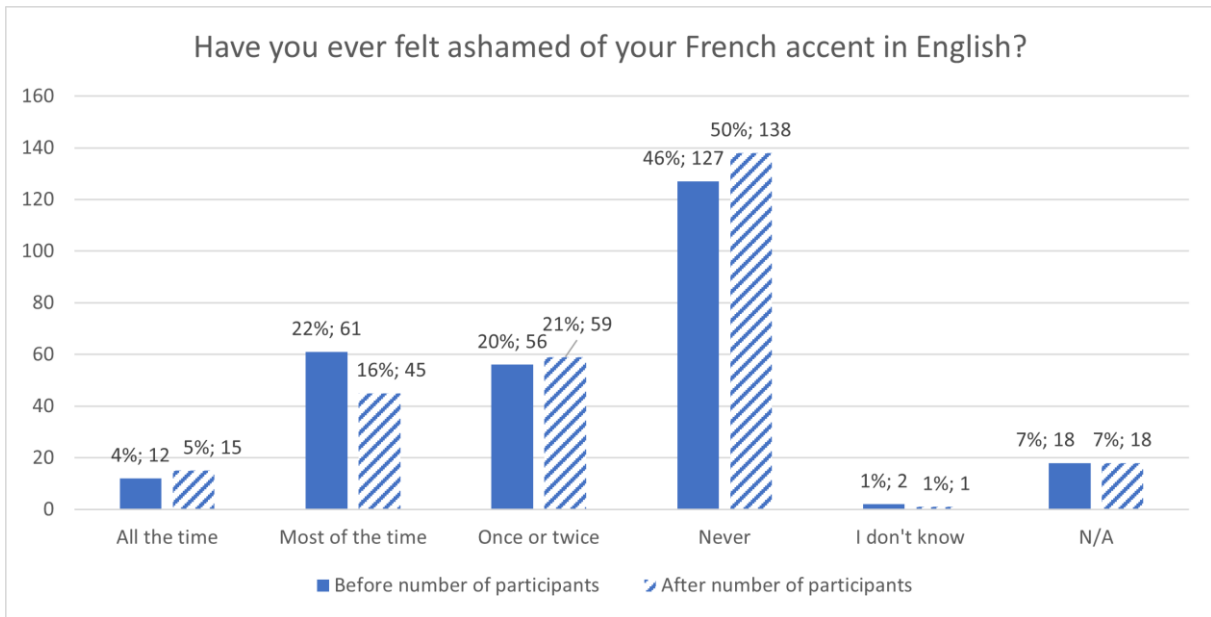
Figure 18: Questions 16.6 & 19.6-Have you ever felt ashamed of your French accent when speaking in English before and after the EU referendum (only participants who moved to the UK before 2016)

Figure 18 shows that the participants who moved to the UK after the EU referendum have slightly different attitudes than those who moved before 2016. It is particularly interesting in comparison to Figure 16 to notice that more participants felt ashamed of their accent before 2016 (46%, 129 participants) than after (42%, 119 participants). While three participants started to feel ashamed of their accent all the time after the EU referendum, which will be discussed later, it seems like most participants started to feel less ashamed after 2016.

Have you ever tried to hide your French accent when speaking in English?

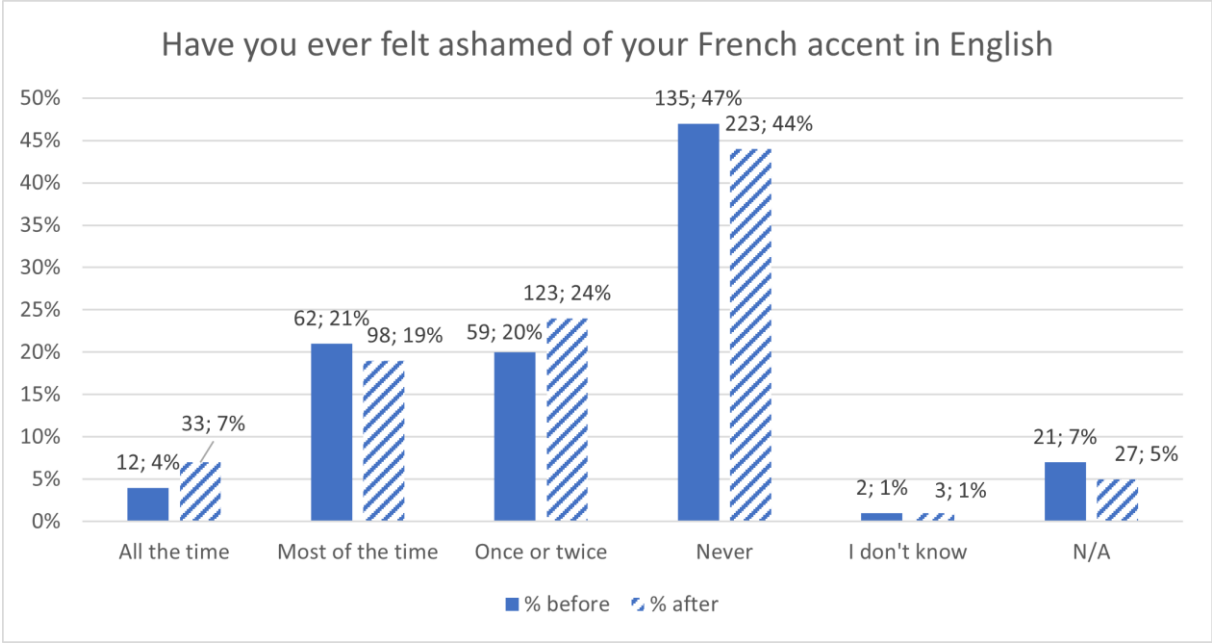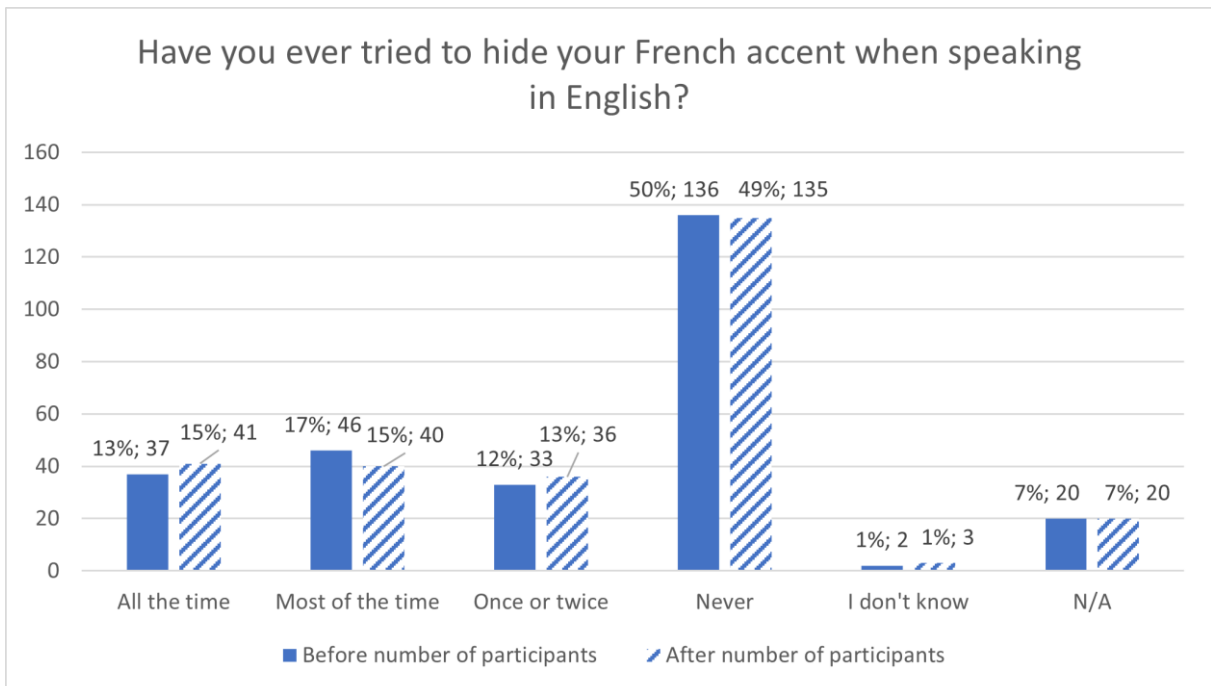*Figure 19: Questions 16.7 & 19.7-Have you ever tried to hide your French accent when speaking in English before and after the EU referendum (only participants who moved to the UK before 2016)*

The percentages for the question "have you ever tried to hide your French accent when speaking in English?" shown in Figure 19 are very close before and after the EU referendum. Almost the same number of participants tried to hide their accent before and after 2016; however, four more participants (+2%) admitted doing it all the time after the EU referendum. Consequently, for these participants, Brexit could be the reason for their sudden need to hide an accent that could identify them as French when speaking in English.

The qualitative data will be particularly important to interpret these findings and understand French people's attitudes towards their own accent in English and give a more nuanced analysis. Almost 40 participants added valuable information about their answers during the interviews and in Q21 "Write any comment/information you would like to add to this section".

Many participants explained that they were ashamed of their accent and/or tried to hide it not because of Brexit or even British people, but because they did not like it. A depreciative language was often used to describe the French accent, highlighting the participants' negative attitudes towards it. Two participants interviewed mentioned being lucky not to have a French accent or unlucky to have one[6]. Others described their accent as "a dirty accent"[7] (I390, M, 56-75, Cambridge, FG2) or "horrible"[8] (I464, F, 26-35, Newcastle-Upon-Tyne, FG2), or used phrase turns such as "despite my French accent"[9]. Two participants also expressed trying but being unable to lose their accent: "I'd like to lose my accent but I can't" (I134, M, 26-35, Derby, FG5; I358, F, 26-35, Liverpool, FG4).

Participants associated the accent with fluency in English, considering that being proficient in English meant "not having an accent", as explained by Q506, a woman aged 26-35 based in Manchester, and Q380, a woman aged 36-55 who lives in a village near Cambridge: "Even before Brexit I was trying my best to speak a good English, which to me means without a strong accent" (Q506); "I am ashamed of my accent because I would like to have a better level of English not because I am afraid of being made fun of" (Q380). As will be developed in 5.3 and found in Huc-Hepher & Drake (2013: 423), many French people move to the UK intending to improve their proficiency in English. For instance, especially during their first months/years in the UK, many participants tried to avoid spending time with other francophones (see 5.3.1), hoping that being immersed in the English language will help them "become bilingual" as expressed by I100: "I thought I might as well work in England […] I'd learn and return bilingual" (I100, F, 36- 55, London, FG7). The same reasoning seems to apply here, participants seem

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[6] « J'ai la malchance d'avoir un accent français très fort » (I134, M, Derby, FG5); «Je dois dire que j'ai de la chance j'ai pas d'accent quand je parle en anglais » (I189, M, Birmingham, FG7).
[7] « un sale accent » (I390, FG2).
[8] « J'ai un accent français mais c'est horrible je m'entends mais je me déteste ! J'ai l'impression que j'ai appris l'anglais hier c'est horrible ! » (I464, FG2).
[9] « Malgré mon accent français » (I464, FG2).

more self-aware and willing to work on erasing their French accent when they move to England and then give it less importance with time.

This would explain why when looking at the answers of participants who lived in England before and after Brexit, more participants felt ashamed of their accent and tried to hide it before 2016. It would probably not necessarily be a consequence of Brexit, but because after living in the UK for a few years their French accent either became less perceivable, or they stopped feeling self-conscious about it.

Dewaele & McCloskey (2015: 235) found that people who have spent time abroad or have been exposed to ethnic diversity at work for instance are less bothered by their foreign accent than those who have not. I500, a retired language teacher who moved to the UK in 1986 explained that she was often asked why her accent never improved after over 30 years in an anglophone country: "Well, I've never wanted to improve it, I'm happy with my French accent in English" (I500, FG4). Q54, a 36-55 woman who moved to London with her family a few years ago also seems to link her accent to her identity: "I am who I am. I speak English with a French accent, it can be charming sometimes. And I don't forget that English people who speak French have an accent as well". Then, she added that there was a multitude of accents in the UK, and therefore no reason to be ashamed of her own accent, confirming Dewaele & McCloskey's (2015) findings that multilingual people who are used to hearing accents are more accepting of their own accent in their LX.

Another finding from my research validating the theory that French migrants' negative attitudes towards their own accent were usually developed in France rather than in the UK is that several mentioned feeling ashamed of it in presence of other francophones. Three women in their late twenties/early thirties for instance explained: "I only feel embarrassed by my French accent when a francophone is around." (Q262, F, Leicester, 2014); "It's not natural at all to speak in English with a francophone, moreover I'd be afraid that they would judge my accent" (Q346, F, London, 2016); "I'm Franco-British and grew up in France until 18. Before moving, I used to force a French accent when I spoke in English because I was told that I was 'showing off' if I spoke English with a good accent…" (Q104, F, London, 2010).

According to these participants, French people seem to often criticise other francophones' accents in English, even when they are English native speakers like Q104. In their study about accents and linguistic insecurities in English classes at a French university, Wharton & Wolstenholme (2019) found similar results. Participants in their research praising the French accent were rare (2019: 9) and most of the students interviewed did not like it, were embarrassed by it, and often felt uncomfortable when they had to speak in English in the classroom, because of their accent (2019: 6). Students and teachers in this study also mentioned that students who were native speakers or had an accent sounding like a native one also often felt embarrassed for, as mentioned by Q104 in my study, others would think they

were pretentious (2019: 7). It confirms that learners of English in France feared being judged or ridiculed by other francophones when speaking in English (2019: 7).

Consequently, for a part of the participants at least, Brexit and British people in general are not identified as the reason for their negative attitudes towards the French accent, because of linguistic insecurity and negative attitudes that exist in France about the French accent in English. After living in the UK for a few years, many participants still associated not having a French accent with having good proficiency in English but started to feel less embarrassed by their foreign accent. In 4.3.3, I will focus on how participants perceive British attitudes towards their accent, and any experiences of discrimination or SAE they may have had before and after 2016. This will allow a better understanding of some of the numbers seen in this section, such as the participants who started to attempt to hide their accent after the EU referendum.

4.3.3 British attitudes towards French

The data collected about accent perception in the questionnaire and the interviews confirm those of the studies mentioned in 4.3.1, attitudes towards the French language and accent still tend to be positive in the UK. Q506 for instance explained that anglophones did not understand why she did not like her French accent, as they usually like it: "Quite often anglophones ask me why I don't like the French accent that they love" (Q506, F, 26-35, Manchester). Other participants also mentioned that they often heard that the French accent was perceived as "sexy", "glamourous" or "chic" (I214, FG4; I263, FG2; I160, FG6). They explained that British people were generally able to recognise the French accent, therefore they often tried to say a few words in French when hearing a French accent or someone speaking in French: "If I spoke in French with someone we were often stopped in the street, it was often young people, students, they would come to us and say "ah you speak French!"[…] some of them even spoke quite fluently in French to us or sometimes they were students who just wanted to say '*Je m'appelle blablabla*'. That's it, only positive things." (I316, F, 18-25, Reading, 2018, FG8).

A few participants also mentioned that speaking French, or a second language in general, was usually an advantage in England, primarily because most English people are monolingual: "The French accent and the fact that you are able to speak other languages is usually valued by the local population who is often monolingual" (Q493, M, 36-55, Newcastle Upon Tyne, 2013).

Nevertheless, some participants also felt that having an accent could be a handicap, as they were taken less seriously, and perceived as less intelligent or hireable when people heard that they had a non-native accent: "I think that according to your profession you will tend to want to hide your French accent to show that you are just as good as an English person" (Q389, F, 26-35, Cambridge, 2017). Some participants described how their accent affected their professional life, such as I390 who lived in different English-speaking countries but describe his accent as "strong": "I had head-hunters who

were interested in my CV 'the guy went to the US, to Singapore' but then suddenly they talked to me on the phone and ouhlala it's not going to work at all!" (I390, FG2, M, 56-75, Cambridge). Q410, a woman aged 56-75 working in education/research in London stated that although attitudes towards the French accent were positive, she describes it as a "distraction" sometimes in serious situations such as scientific seminars:

> "I used to make more efforts to speak English correctly by minimising my French accent. The French accent can be charming and/or a distraction, which is not always a good thing! During a scientific seminar, for instance, the next time I started by stating that my accent was French to clarify it and be able to move on to the serious part!" (Q410)

Others, such as Q485, a Master's student in Manchester and I376 who has been teaching in Liverpool since 2005 also mentioned that they sometimes felt their interlocutor thought their accent reflected their intelligence:

> "English people, my ex, for instance, they make a lot of fun about our accent (every day), whereas most of them do not speak any other language apart from English. Our elocution, imperfect according to them, makes them think I'm less intelligent." (Q485, F, 18-25, Manchester)

> "There will also be people who are perhaps a little less educated and who think that because you have an accent you don't speak English as well as they do, that you are less intelligent than they are, and who look down on you a little bit and make a little comment [...] or they ask me 'do you know this word?' well yes it's a very simple word, so yeah it happens sometimes." (I376, FG7, F, 35-56, Liverpool)

Q487, a man aged 26-35 working in business/marketing in Manchester since 2018 and Q334, a woman aged 36-55 working in education/research in London shared two experiences of receiving poor services allegedly because of their accent:

> "I think on some occasions we can be taken less seriously if our interlocutor hears an accent (on the phone for example). It can be embarrassing. For example, today I received a phone call about a visit to potentially buy a house. I could feel a change in the attitude at the other hand of the line when they heard my accent (no longer interested)." (Q487)

> "Two years ago, I think I was taken for a fool by a health specialist because of my accent and my bad English (due to stress given his condescension) during a hospital appointment. This bad relationship with this doctor made me decide to have the operation in France as I had lost all confidence in the English specialist who treated me so badly. This forced me

to register with the CFE and spend a lot of money, but I didn't regret it. I received fabulous care in France." (Q334)

These two occurrences happened after the EU referendum, but these participants did not mention directly if they thought it was related to Brexit. However, Q334 who has been living in the UK since 1997 replied "never" to the question "have you ever felt discriminated against because of your native language before Brexit" and "once or twice" for the same question after Brexit. Therefore, it may not be related to Brexit and seem isolated, but it also shows that before the EU referendum, she never had a similar experience in almost 20 years.

A few participants also mentioned that they wanted to feel integrated into the population. Bourdieu (2005: 45) claims that altering a regional accent requires considerable effort, and that it is even more difficult to erase a first-language accent in a second language (2005: 65). Huc-Hepher (2021a: 66) argues in her analysis of the autobiographical work of a French national in London that his French accent is a marker of his foreign origin and despite his desire to integrate in England, he is othered whenever he speaks. Some of my participants explained that they tried to "adopt a British accent" (Q375) because of a personal desire to integrate, as mentioned in 5.3.2, and was not related to Brexit as they were already feeling this way before 2016: "I moved to England as a teenager, so I have almost no French accent. Perhaps unconsciously, out of a desire to integrate, I adopted a more pronounced British accent. For me, speaking French is for the family only." (Q375, F, 26-35, Cambridge). Q473, a doctoral student in Newcastle also explained that speaking French in public was already not well perceived before Brexit and did not notice any change after, therefore her wish to hide her accent to integrate was not linked to it: "Masking an accent is a form of adaptation from my point of view and this desire was in no way linked to the Brexit" (Q473).

Others explained that their accent sometimes made it more difficult for them to interact with the local population. Q516 who worked in different sectors in the UK since 1997 explained that sometimes hiding her accent was a "matter of survival" to be integrated:

"Because I work in an English primary school, I've worked a lot to lose my French accent. These jobs are sought after by moms, so I wanted to hide a little bit the fact that I am a foreigner. Sad, but it's a matter of survival. Feeling accepted is important. Nevertheless, I like to organise French clubs for children, where I can legitimately feel like I belong and flourish." (Q516)

I376 also shared an experience where her accent made her feel excluded:

"I remember once at the pool I had a woman talking to me, well in Liverpool people talk to each other very easily about anything and everything, that's what's great about this

city, and so a lady talking to me in the pool, I reply to her, and she hears my accent, she says 'oh you're not English?' and I say 'no' and she says 'Oh okay sorry!' and swam away […] but it doesn't happen that often, my accent isn't that bad, just from time to time!"(I376, FG7)

These two examples illustrate what is also described in Huc-Hepher (2021a: 66), despite these participants' will to assimilate into the country, their accent excludes them from full integration. A few participants said that they were made feel like they did not belong (see 6.2) after Brexit and understood why some people want to hide their accent. Since Brexit, many participants mentioned that their accent led to conversations about their future in Britain as European migrants. Most of them explained that these interactions were usually compassionate: "With my accent, people ask where I come from, tell me that my first name sounds Welsh. Some of them tell me they are sorry about Brexit et some ask about how I feel about the future" (Q513, F, 26-35, Belper, 2016). A few however had conversations with British citizens after the EU referendum who heard their accent that sounded more confrontational, as explained by Q317:

"I have met a few clearly pro-Brexit Brits who heard my accent and started to question me about my future plans here, about my post-Brexit residency status, about how it's going to be 'complicated for me here after Brexit, right?'. I totally understand that in this climate you might want to 'blend in'." (Q317, F, 26-35, London, 2019)

A few participants mentioned they felt a change in British attitudes towards the French language: "When I was in England in 2014, most of them were Francophiles, but not anymore." (Q485). Therefore, for some participants, the perceived change in British attitudes towards the French and their accents did lead them to wish to modify their own accent, as seen in 4.3.2.

This section answered RQ2a "Were French migrants' attitudes towards the French language and accent impacted by Brexit?". It seems that many French migrants carry their attitudes from France. In France, the French accent in English is often criticised and results in many French people despising their own accent. Attitudes towards the French accent and language were perceived as overall positive in Britain both before and after 2016 by most participants who see their accent and language as an advantage overall. Nevertheless, some participants did experience glottophobia, especially after 2016, which led some of them to want to "blend in" more, by for instance trying the hide their accent. As argued by Rzepnikowska (2019: 70), white migrants are "invisible" until they start to speak, their foreign accents are what marks them as "the Other", hence the desire felt by some migrants to hide this accent when feeling hostility towards them, in times such as Brexit for instance.

The next section will focus on French migrants' strategies to transmit the French language to their children.

4.4 Heritage language: teaching French to children

4.4.1 Bilingualism

As seen in the previous sections of this chapter, most French people in the UK seek opportunities to speak in French and would find losing their native language unfortunate, it was expected that they would also attempt to transmit it to their children. Nevertheless, one of the questions this research aimed to answer was whether Brexit has any impact on the way French parents spoke to their children. The anti-European attacks that followed the EU referendum in 2016 may make them feel reluctant to speak in French with their children in public places as found in Brahic & Lallement (2018: 18) or could even make them reconsider whether they want their children to speak French if it could make them targets of hate crimes. For instance, in a paper about Mongolian women in Australia, Dovchin (2019) reported that mothers often felt discriminated against because of their native language and therefore perceived it as a burden rather than an asset and even sometimes as a "source of shame". Consequently, many of them did not want their children to learn it as it was "not worth it" (2019: 347).

Another hypothesis about French parents was that, on the contrary, those who were considering leaving the UK because of Brexit may want to prioritise the learning of the French language over English for their children. This section will therefore describe the strategies used by French parents in England to ensure their children can speak French and the difficulties they encountered in this journey. It will also discuss differences in the expression of national identity between parents and children in this study. Finally, it will analyse whether Brexit had an impact on the way French parents in England speak to their children.

Among the participants who replied to the questionnaire, 124 had children they were raising or raised in the UK, and 13 of them were interviewed. Most of these participants had one or two children, and most of these children were born in the UK or moved there when they were infants or young children (under ten years old). Only ten participants had children who were in secondary school (aged between 11 and 16 years old) when they moved to the UK. Their children were aged between 1 month old to over 30 years old, which therefore made it possible to compare the strategies and attitudes of several generations of parents and observe the language learning journey of children of French migrants from childhood to adulthood.
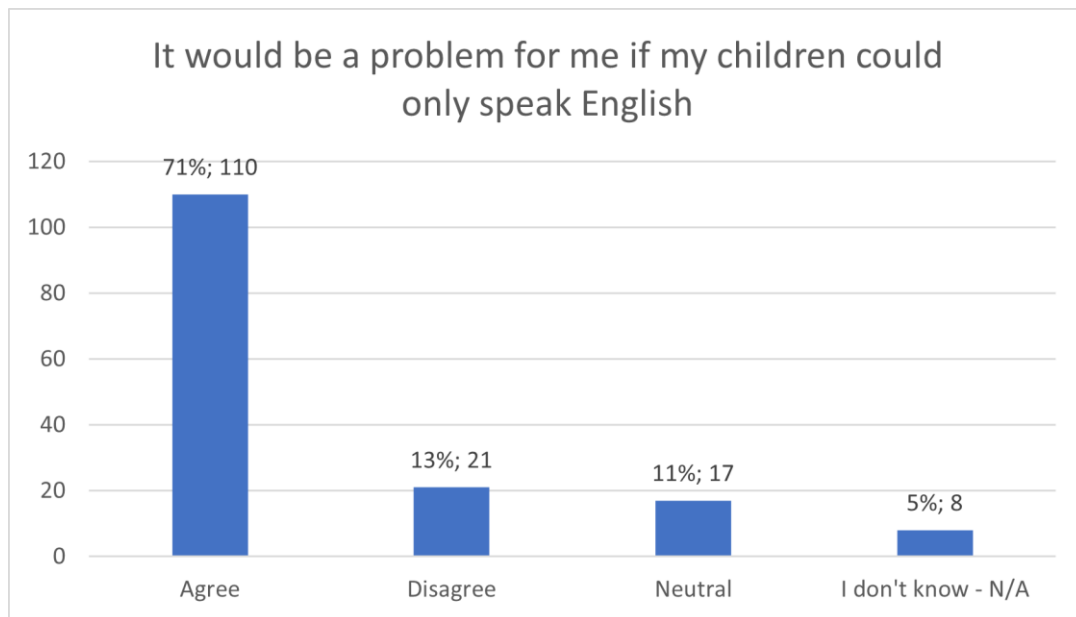
Figure 20: Question 26.2-If my children only spoke English, it would be a problem for me

Figure 20 shows that for the majority of French parents, it is important that their children do not only speak English, as only 13% disagreed with the statement "If my children only spoke English, it would be a problem for me". The words "important" (17 occurrences) and "primordial"[10] (three occurrences) were used by participants to refer to what they thought about teaching French to their children, as seen in the following examples: "It was very important that my children speak French" (I146, FG2), "To me, it's essential that my children speak French" (I376, FG7), "Yes, for me it's still important that he speaks French"(I509, FG3).
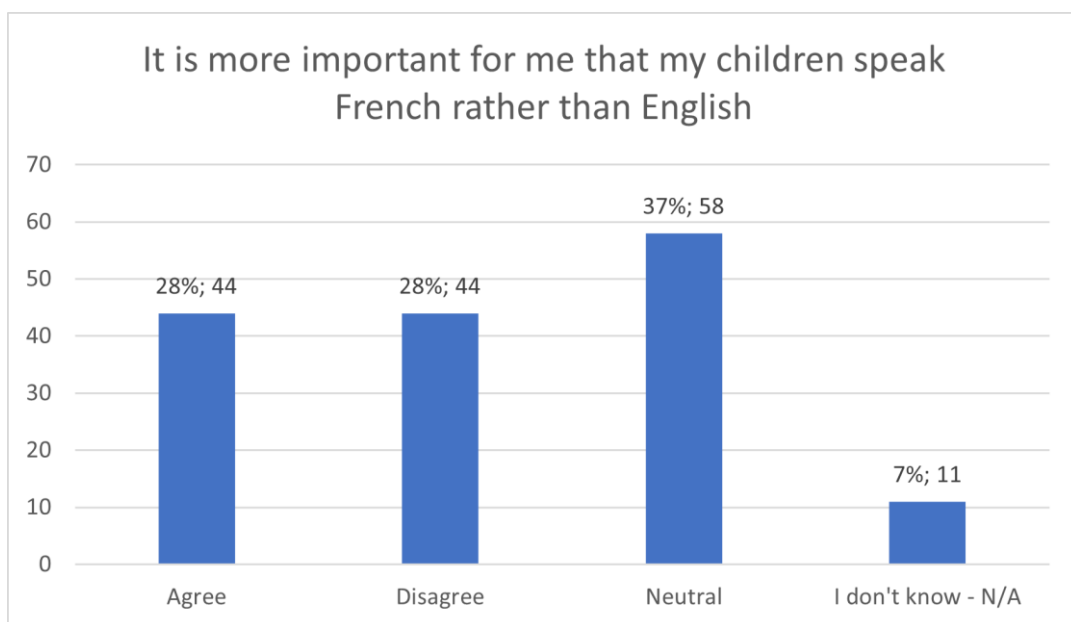
Figure 21: Question 26.1-It is more important for me that my children speak French rather than English

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[10] Essential, crucial.

Nevertheless, it can be seen in Figure 21 that it is also important for French parents that their children can speak English in addition to French. To the question "It is more important for me that my children speak French rather than English", 40% of the participants replied either "neutral" or "I don't know", 28% agreed with the statement and the same percentage disagreed. Many participants explained that they found this question difficult to answer as both languages were equally important to them for different reasons, as shown in the comments added by some of the participants after Question 26.1:

> "This question must be nuanced. It is important that the children can speak French so that
> they can settle in francophone countries if they want to and keep their culture. However,
> I insist that they master the English language and even another one such as Spanish."
> (Q417)

> "I think it's important that my children speak the languages equally." (Q319)

> "I'd like to specify for this question that it is important that he speaks/masters English.
> Nevertheless, it is important that my child only speaks French to me." (Q286)

> "For this question, it is essential that my daughters master French as well as English and
> use the appropriate language at the right time." (Q415)

> "It is important for me that my daughter speaks French, but not 'instead of English'. She
> must know both languages." (Q422)

Parents explained that English was not only the language of the country they were living in but also the lingua franca of the world and consequently a language that would always be useful to their children. Almost all parents who participated in this research wished their children could speak both English and French, as well as the language of their partner when it was another one. As explained in 2.3, the concept of bilingualism is still debated in linguistics studies. Some researchers argue that to be called bilingual, having minimal skills in the second language is enough, while others consider that "native-like" skills (sometimes including the absence of a foreign accent) are required (Hamers & Blanc, 2008:7). According to the testimonies collected in this research, parents seemed to refer to bilingualism as the ability to understand and be understood in two languages, at least at an intermediate level, with often one dominant language that would be the mother tongue of the child.

Parents of babies usually showed great determination and confidence in their ability to help their children become bilingual. They tended to make assertive statements using the simple future tense (which would be translated by "will" in English) or phrases such as "the rule is" or "she must[11]" as seen in the following examples: "He's only 20 months old so only starting to speak. The rule is[12]: English for

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[11] "Il faut"
[12] "La règle c'est"

social and professional life/French for personal life" (Q224); "My child will speak French at home and English outside" (Q463); "She must speak both [languages]" (Q422).

These examples also show that French was often described by parents as "the language of the home", in opposition to English which was the language of "outside" or of the "professional life". Most participants explained that it was important to them that their children speak French so that they could communicate with their families in France, the word "*famille*"[13] was used 19 times during the interviews and in the section about children in the questionnaire. The lexical fields of "*comprendre*"[14] (12 occurrences) and "*communiquer*"[15] (six occurrences) were also often used by parents in this study, showing that what matters the most to them was that their children would be able to understand enough French to communicate and therefore bond with their family members in France, as shown in the following examples: "to be able to communicate with their cousins in France" (Q263); "to communicate with the family in France"(I376, FG7); "I'm the only person in my family in England, my whole family is French and they don't speak English so it was very important that my children speak French" (I161, FG2). For the same reasons, binational families wanted their children to know the languages of both parents. I161 also mentioned that it was important for her that her children not only could communicate but also be independent in France on their own: "so that they can go on summer camps, to visit their grandparents, and be independent" (I161, FG2).

Parents also thought that it was important for them to teach French to their children as it was a way to transmit their culture (see 5.2): "so that they understand their origins and the French culture" (Q263). They believed that knowing about the French language and culture was necessary for their children's construction of their identity (see 2.3). I157 for instance whose partner is from Singapore explained it was important for them that their new-born would be able to speak the languages of his parents in the future as "it is part of his identity […] to come from different nationalities" (I157, FG3), I500 whose children are now adults also thought that it was "still important that they keep their identity through the language, but not only the spoken language, but also written, and everything that is related to the culture" (I500, FG4).

Finally, most participants agreed that being exposed to more than one language from an early age would be beneficial for their children. As seen in 2.3, studies showed that it is easier to learn a language as a child and therefore being bilingual could offer them future professional and personal opportunities (Bialystok, 2018: 675) and that bilingual education had a positive impact on children's cognitive development (Bialystok et al., 2004: 299; Bialystok & Viswanathan, 2009: 499). The words "*chance*",

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[13] family
[14] understand
[15] communicate

"*opportunité*"[16] and "*bénéfique*"[17] were respectively used nine, twice and three times by participants when talking about giving their children a bilingual education: "Most people used to tell me 'what a chance you're offering them, even before they start attending school', and they are right" (I0). Several of them such as I500 (FG4) or the three participants in FG3 had read about the cognitive benefits of bilingual education on young children:

> "Of course, there's the family, my parents don't speak a single word of English […] but also the number of books we read in our friends circle […] if he has the chance to have two or three languages for the development of the child, it's so beneficial for him to have this, it will open a part of his brain […] if he wants to speak another language, maybe one day he'll think 'I'd like to work in South America' and it will be easier for him to learn Spanish, Portuguese, to learn anything it will help him and be so useful for him I think."
> (I508, FG3)

Some of them, such as I509, specified that their main motivation to transmit the French language was therefore not necessarily because it was French, but because it was a language they were able to teach them and that would be useful to them in the future: "It's to give him this chance to be exposed to several languages, it's not a question of French because it's French, but being exposed to different cultures, different languages, but yes for me it's still important that he speak French" (I509, FG3). Several referred to not transmitting their native language to their child as a "missed opportunity" for their cognitive abilities as well as their future: "I think it would be a missed opportunity if they didn't speak French […] even for the development of his brain, it's a chance, so it's in this sense that it would be a problem for me if he didn't speak French" (I509, FG3).

The next section will therefore review the different strategies used by parents in this research to teach languages to their children.

4.4.2 Language acquisition strategies

Parents discussed the different strategies they used or were planning to use to ensure their children could "become bilingual". Most of these strategies involved only speaking in French to them and using French books and TV shows: "Exclusively French. Radio, DVD, everything is French at home. At 20 years old they're both perfectly bilingual" (Q187); "She was born here but since here it was 100% French, books, TV, conversations, she spoke French before speaking English" (I269, FG1); "Our two children are small, they're only two and three years old and I religiously speak to them in French" (I263, FG2).

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[16] opportunity
[17] beneficial

These strategies were easier and more effective when both parents were francophone as French was the only language spoken at home (see 4.5.3). Binational families often chose that each parent would use their native language with their child, as is the case for I508 who is in a relationship with an English woman, and I509 whose partner speaks Spanish: "He'll talk to his mom who speaks in English, we try to mark a separation, she speaks to him only in English and I only speak to him in French so that he understands that there are two languages to learn" (I508, FG3, M, Colchester);

> "That's something I was told from the start you really, really need to talk to him in your mother tongue, and so my husband in Spanish too, that's something I've been doing ever since he was a little baby […] for now he understands […] well he replies in English but we start to see that in his sentences he uses some little words in French and Spanish" (I509, FG3, F, London)

Another strategy used by some families in this research, especially when French was not the main language spoken in the household, was to have a nanny or au pair who speak to the children in their parents' languages. It was for example the case for I157, a French man whose partner speaks Mandarin, or I500 a French woman married to an Irish man: "The objective is to have a nanny at home who basically only speaks Chinese, so they talk in Chinese and that's great because I also get to improve my Mandarin [laughs]" (I157, FG3, M, London); "I insisted to have au pairs for many years, which of course made it easier for them to be bilingual" (I500, FG4, F, Southampton).

Several mentioned that their children were taking French classes: "They've been attending French classes ever since they were little and can completely understand French" (Q171). In this study, 32 families (26%) lived in the London region and therefore had access to more French or bilingual schools than participants in other cities or towns. Out of the 15 French schools in the UK certified by the French government, 13 are in London (Institut Français Royaume-Uni, 2022). I509 for instance who lives in London would like her son to attend one of these French schools: "We're trying to enrol him in the *Lycée Français*, well in a French school, because for us it's important and we also think that the education that will be given to him in this school for the future, it's good for him" (I509, FG3). There is also a network of French schools called "*Petites Ecoles FLAM*", which welcomes Francophone children at weekends and after school; half of these schools are also based in London (Parapluie FLAM, 2022). This is another solution that was chosen by some parents in this research, such as I508:

> "There's a school in Colchester just near where we live, once a week they have little classes in French to teach him the basics, so that's something I'd like to do for him, he's going to hate me because it's every Saturday morning [laughs] but I think that when he understands that he has this chance to speak two languages he'll thank me!" (I508, FG3)

Some parents who participated in this study decided to open their own French school in their city for their children. It is the case of I269 and I263 who opened *La Petite Ecole de Leicester*[18] in 2021 and I0 who founded *Les Petits Mousses de Plymouth*[19]. I269 explained that her children were now too old for the school she's opening with I263 in Leicester, but would have liked to have it for her own children and therefore was doing it for other parents in her situation:

> "Having bilingual children, sometimes we lack French resources. I used to buy French books often when they were little, when I was going to France I would […] buy books, DVDs, but we don't need them as much now, it's easier to watch French TV, on Netflix we can set it in French. They no longer read in French, obviously, they prefer reading in English now, so the French school of Leicester is a project, if I had had time to do it when they were little it would have been good that my children grow up with the school, but now I'll do it with other people's children." (I269, FG1, F)

Enrolling their children in French schools is a way for them not only to learn French there but also for them and their parents to build a francophone network. I0 for instance explained that one of the opportunities to speak French she had was through her French school: "I founded the association and then the school *'Petits Mousses de Plymouth'*, so I had opportunities to speak French with families who came every week" (I0). Some parents such as I263 did not use the French language often in England and started to speak it for their children (see 4.5.3). She explained that it was initially not easy for her to speak in French again, but that she wanted to make this effort for her son:

> "When I had my first little boy, I told myself that I really had to speak to him in French and I struggled at first, I really struggled, I couldn't find my words, I was halfway through my sentence and I couldn't remember, that's when I thought 'I need to build a French network'. I started to talk to people around me, contacted a French mom and we created a group […] so we have a Whatsapp group with about ten French moms in Leicester now, we all have small children, so we help each other, we talk. This morning you talked to I269, we started this little French network so I try to see them as often as possible, and to talk to them, especially so that my boys can hear other people speaking French" (I263, FG2).

However, some parents had different strategies and decided to teach English first, or sometimes only to their children. There were 13 parents in this research who only speak English with their children. Some of them explained that raising a child with two languages also had disadvantages and decided that only using one language was more suitable for them. One of the reasons mentioned was that

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[18] https://www.lapetiteecoledeleicester.co.uk/
[19] https://moussesdeplymouth.wixsite.com/french

bilingual children had learning difficulties: "It's important to consider learning disabilities and language difficulties. My son functions best in one language, it is better if it is the language of the country where he's living in now" (Q193). Barac & Bialystok (2011: 36) argue that early research tended to support that bilingualism was harmful to children because they relied on IQ scores, which are influenced by factors like socioeconomic status. Barac & Bialystok's work proved on the contrary, bilingualism benefits several aspects of children's development, such as their metalinguistic awareness and cognitive development (2011: 36). However, whether bilingualism is an additional burden for children with specific language impairment or learning difficulties is still debated in the literature. Most researchers tend to argue that it is not (Park, 2014: 127), but as each child is different, parents like those in these examples may judge that using one language may be better for their child, at least at first. They explained that their child however would still have opportunities to learn French later:

> "I decided when my son was born that English would be his mother tongue because I had noticed that bilingual children had learning difficulties at school. He's six years old and reads and expresses himself like an 8-year-old child. Since the lockdown, I teach him French every day. His progress is huge in 12 weeks. And this is thanks to his fluency in English." (Q177).

Q283 also mentioned that their children made progress in French during the 2020-2021 lockdown[20], because they were mainly in a French environment since the schools were closed and parents had more time to help them learn the language: "English… Since they started school, but some changes with the lockdown. They both speak French better and more often" (Q283). In a somewhat similar way, as they were also more exposed to French than usual and had more time to learn, some French parents explained that their children mainly learnt French during the holidays (I146, FG1; I161, FG2; Q516).

Some parents also explained that although they also wanted their children to speak some French, they prioritised English. They believed that it would be the most important and useful language for their child's future and that they would still be able to communicate with their French family even if it had to be in an "imperfect French". For instance, I464, whose toddler juggles between French and English but usually prefers English, explains that even though both parents were French, she chose to teach him both languages but prioritise English:

> "I preferred English because I thought […] having good written and spoken English would always be more useful for him. If he can speak French, that's even better, and he speaks it, it's his mother tongue, the language I use to talk to him […] but I thought if he doesn't

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[20] Covid-19 lockdown regulations in place in the UK between March 2020 and December 2021. Most "non-essential" businesses, including schools, were shut down during Spring 2020, and children were studying from home.

perfectly master French it's okay, he'll still be able to learn if at least he can understand

what we say in French and make himself understood it's fine, but I preferred [to prioritise]

English, I thought it would be stupid to miss this opportunity" (I464, FG2).

She also explained that she was worried it would have an impact on his relationship with his French family, as both parents are French, but that they managed to adapt: "I was a bit scared that at some point speaking English would be a problem for him on a family level because my family it's okay they can speak some English, but on his father's side not at all […] but it's quite funny to see how they adapt." (I464, FG2).

The different reasons to teach French to their children and the strategies used by participants are similar to those of other migrants (Brahic, 2021; Lee et al., 2015). Parents usually think that bilingualism will give their children opportunities in the future (Lee et al., 2015: 508). Brahic (2020) also found that French mothers in Manchester tended to want a bilingual education for their children, some of them re-engaged with their French identity and language after the birth of their children (2020:10) and many therefore started to use French-speaking networks to socialise while offering a French environment for their children, and in bi-lingual families, each parent spoke their language to the child (2020: 9). The next section will show that despite their efforts, many parents found it difficult to get their children to speak French, and some of them even decided to only speak to them in English for different reasons.

4.4.3 Difficulties encountered

Some parents, especially those of older children, also acknowledged the challenges of bilingual education. Almost all parents who tried to teach both languages to their children shared similar concerns and experienced the same difficulties. In most cases, parents described bilingual education as challenging. The semantic fields of pressure and insistence were present in the answers to questions about teaching French to children, with words such as "*insister*"[21], "*imposer*"[22], or "*forcer*"[23] occurring several times. These verbs show that speaking French for most of these children is not natural and requires effort. As mentioned in 4.5.2, it was usually slightly easier to transmit the French language when both parents were French. For families in which the other parent spoke either English or another language, it was usually more difficult, as explained by I269 for instance: "It was easier because my husband speaks French, my friends who have non-francophone husbands don't have the same experience at all, I263 will probably tell you about it, her husband isn't French so it is more difficult for her to get her children to speak French" (I269, FG1, F, Leicester).

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[21] To insist
[22] To impose
[23] To force

As mentioned at the end of the previous section, for parents who mostly used English in their daily life and household, having to speak French with their child could be challenging. It was often the case for bi-national families in which English was the language used between the parents to communicate, such as I157 and I509 who reported that they had to "make an effort" or "force themselves" to speak French: "We made this effort, that is more difficult for me than him actually, to talk to him [their child] in our mother tongues" (I509, FG3); "I speak in French to him but I can also speak in English, I know he's still too young to understand but it's true that I 'force' myself because for me it's easier [to speak English] because my partner speaks English, we're in England" (I157, FG3, M, London). Some participants also mentioned that they or their partners felt excluded when they were using French with their children and that it felt natural in their family dynamics. In a research paper about bi-national families (Polish-British) living in the UK, Ogiermann (2013: 481) found that raising children with two languages could create tensions in the couple when the English native speaker parent did not speak Polish. She argues that "language choice is mainly determined by two conflicting factors, namely the immigrant parent's concern for their children to acquire and maintain their native language and the need to include (and feel included by) all members of the family in the conversations" (2013: 480). I157 for instance mentioned someone he worked with who was in this situation:

> "He's French and married to an English woman […] so his two boys are English, speak English […] he didn't speak French with them, so they don't speak French at all […] I asked him 'that's too bad why didn't you speak French with them?' and he told me 'I started to do it, but they didn't understand what I was saying, and I felt left out because she's English, they go to an English school […] so I stopped speaking French […] to feel closer to them'."
> (I157, FG3, M, London).

A clear theme that emerged from this study was the pressure put on these parents, either by themselves or their families which often resulted in a sense of guilt, as several of them seemed to consider the fact that their children were monolingual as a failure. Words such as "*regretter*"[24] or "*malheureusement*"[25] were used by participants when mentioning that their children did not speak French. Other studies showed that migrant parents often felt "embarrassed" that their child does not speak their heritage language (Lee et al., 2015: 510). Several parents mentioned arguments they had with their families because of the languages spoken (or not spoken) by their children. I0 explains that she "saw too many families suffer and sometimes tear themselves apart because their children do not speak French due to lack of exposure to the language". The following conversation between the three

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[24] To regret
[25] Unfortunately

mothers in FG4 was a good example of these feelings of pressure and guilt put on French mothers raising their children abroad, as well as the work and efforts raising bilingual children represents:

"I214: I had started to speak French to them and then I must confess that I stopped not because I didn't want to but because I was working a lot and so I came home very late at night and… no, I don't even have any excuses but they are lazy with their French, it's a French, really… as they say in English 'pidgin French', so I don't really have any [excuse] but they learn it at school and everything they do well but I couldn't say that they are bilingual and I take full responsibility for that […]

I358: It's especially important for the family, well I don't know how your families react, but for my family […] it's important that my son speaks French well, I don't know how they deal with the fact that your children don't speak...

I214: Oh no, but you're right, my mother, my parents are very angry with me because I didn't force them and it's complicated.

I500: They don't speak English?

I214: No, my parents speak Arabic, Kabyle, French, but not English, it's difficult for them and I know that my mother yells at me all the time, she says 'I don't understand why you didn't teach them French!' But they speak it but if you want it's easier for them to speak English. Their dad speaks English to them, and I don't have... No, it's true, it's a big problem. I'm always being told off by my parents. Oh no, but my mother is really, and then there's my father too, who adds to it, but my mother is not happy at all! It's true that it's a problem and I realise now that it's a pity but I hope that at school they'll be able to improve because they're taking French lessons but they're not there yet, they're not bilingual and they're 10 and 12 years old, I should have started really young, well I did it but I didn't, I gave up, it's not easy at all because I was working a lot, I came home very late at night and I had three jobs but afterwards I have no excuses either, it's not, it's possible, it's feasible, there are lots of mums who have done it....

I500: It's not an excuse anyway, we do what we want, what we can, and children always manage to communicate with their grandparents.

I214: No, but the children manage to communicate with their cousins, there's no problem, now with google translate and all that, they can do things and they can understand each other, no, but it was really complicated and then the father spoke English all the time, so they were together all the time at home in the evening, so I come home, I don't want to speak French, so it's easier for me…"

For bi-national couples, pressure sometimes also came from the non-francophone side of the family when the child's first language was French:

> "Her English grandparents, my husband's parents were frustrated because she was speaking in French more than in English" (I269, FG1)

> "My ex-husband's parents were disagreeable about the fact that the boys spoke better French than English, expressing regret that they had difficulty communicating with them, supposedly. And that this might cause them problems when they entered primary school. The problem is that when faced with ignorance bathed in beliefs, you can put out all the figures and studies you want, but there is no one deafer than the one who does not want to hear." (I0)

Although some participants seemed to perceive the "non-bilingualism" of their child as a failure, as mentioned at the beginning of this section, transmitting a heritage language is challenging, and most parents had similar experiences with their children's language journey. Usually, before going to school, or nursery, children being at home with at least one parent who speaks French with them tended to start speaking French before English. Nevertheless, almost all parents reported that as soon as their child started to attend school, they started to mix the two languages (I509, FG3; I464, FG2), speaking "franglais" (I161, FG2) and then using English more often than French (Q516; Q511; Q410). Most parents reported only using French to talk to their children, but that although they understood, they would often or always reply in English. Even children who were born in France once in an English school tended to rapidly start to feel more at ease in English. It was particularly the case in families who had more than one child, as siblings, even when both parents were French, tended to speak in English together: "Between them, in English, in French with us most of the time" (Q329); "They tend to naturally switch to English (mainly between them) and we sometimes have to insist for them to switch back to French"(Q294); "English is starting to take over when they talk to each other BUT they always address me in French"(Q266). I161's testimony is particularly interesting as it seems to echo the experiences lived by many parents in this research:

> "They were quite flexible when they were little, but it changed when they went to school, both around five or six years old. My son used to go to an English nursery, so he spoke English all day, not French. When I got pregnant with my daughter, they are three years apart, I stayed at home so that's when I forced him to learn French, but once they started school, they didn't want to be different […] so they didn't want me to speak in French in the playground. I don't have these problems, I've always been very self-confident, so I was shouting in French 'come here!' […] but they felt different and didn't like it. From six,

seven, when they started to write we started […] the *cahiers de vacances*[26] , I bought very fun and colourful ones, as they knew how to speak French but didn't know how to write… Complete mental block. So that's around five or six years old that it changed and afterwards, I stopped as I didn't want them […] to be put off by French. So, we speak in French, but it's the school that taught them the grammar and spelling." (I161, FG2, F, Loughborough).

Other participants also explained that their children studied French for their GCSE and A-levels, and some of them, therefore, learnt French, especially writing, at school: "My daughter took French at school because she had to, but she dropped out for GCSE she took German, she still passed her French GCSE privately and then she did French A level" (I146, FG1, F, Nottingham); "They learn it at school and everything, they do well but I couldn't say they are bilingual" (I214, FG4, F, Bristol).

The most challenging period tended to be adolescence where children sometimes even rejected the language of their parents and considered their identity as English, and therefore their first language as English as well (Lee et al., 2015: 512), as is the case for I161's children who, as mentioned earlier do not like to "be different", and "feel very English, with a French mom and a French passport". I214's children also said they "felt more English than French" because they are not fluent in French. A study about children of migrants in Sweden showed that teenagers tended to want to assimilate and "become Swedish" (Johansson & Olofsson, 2011: 196) partly in order not be "feel excluded" (2011: 198). Studies have indeed shown that peer interactions are increasingly important during adolescence and social belonging and "the benefit of social belonging and the distress of social exclusion is believed to be particularly high in this period" (Raufelder et al., 2021: 2213). Consequently, it seems to explain why some teenagers in this study do not want to be perceived as different because of their native language.

Nevertheless, while many children of migrants show disinterest in their parents' language during adolescence, studies have shown that they often regret it later and decide to learn, or re-learn, the language once adults to reconnect with their roots, and even often attempt to transmit their native language to their own children (Gutirrez, 2008: 228). It was the case in this research, as parents whose children were now adults reported that they usually spoke in French with them: "I always spoke in French to my son when he was little, and he always replied in English. Then, I started to speak more in English with him. But now, I'm speaking in French again with him (he is 21 years old) and now he replies in French" (Q251).

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[26] Holiday workbooks, in France many parents buy these exercise books during the summer holidays so that their children can keep studying during their 2-month summer break. Here, the participant therefore refers to workbooks to study French during the holiday.

These first three sections demonstrated that it is important for French parents that their children can speak English, but also the native languages of their parents. Therefore, most of them intended to give their children a bilingual education, and while it is a complicated journey, most of these children once adults were able to speak French. The final section will discuss whether Brexit seemed to have an impact on the way participants talked to their children.

4.4.4 Transmitting French in the Brexit era
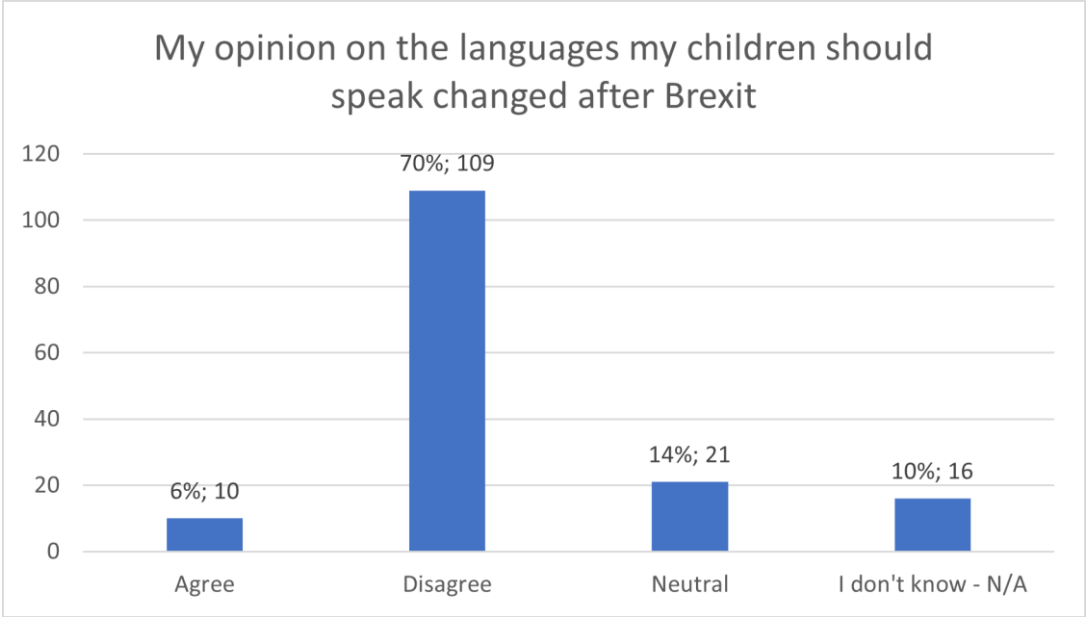
Figure 22: Question 26.3-My opinion on the languages my children should speak changed after Brexit

Figure 22 shows that overall participants declared that Brexit did not impact the way they spoke in French to their children, as only 6% of the participants agreed with the statement "My opinion on which language my children should speak in priority changed after Brexit". Half of these participants mentioned that they were planning to leave the UK because of Brexit. Consequently, it became particularly important for those who plan to return to France that their children can speak French. For instance, Q121 is planning to return to France after over 20 years in the UK as she feels uncomfortable since Brexit. She says that her main issue is the fact that her children are still in school and that since Brexit she "regrets" that they do not speak French well.

In Brahic (2020), some French mothers in Manchester reported that Brexit impacted their practice of bilingual parenting, especially after the weeks following the vote (see 6.2) as some of them for instance avoided speaking in French in public places, or others stopped interacting with English mothers and decided to only use French (2020: 13). In my research, only a few participants reported having consciously changed the way they spoke with their children in public. Q453 for instance, despite replying that Brexit did not affect her thoughts on the languages her children should speak said: "It's

hard that I had to advise my children to speak in English in public places sometimes so that they would not be recognised as foreigners... Sad!!!" (Q453, London).

Consequently, although some participants reported having changed the way they talked to their children after 2016, for the majority, Brexit did not have any impact and they still consider that bilingualism was what was best for their children. Moreover, as will be developed in Chapter 6, most French people in this study thought they were not victims of hate crimes and had an overall positive experience in the country both before and after the EU referendum. Therefore, it can also explain why most of them do not feel the need to modify the way they speak to their children as they do not feel threatened when speaking in their native language.

4.5 Chapter conclusion

This chapter addressed the following research questions:

RQ1 a) How do French migrants use the French language in different contexts in England?

b) What are their attitudes towards it and the way they speak it, how do they perceive their translanguaging and accent, and what is their experience of accent bias before and after the EU referendum?

RQ2 a) How important is it for French migrants to transmit the French language to their children?

b) Did Brexit seem to have an impact on their views about this matter, did it reinforce or weaken their wish to transmit their language?

It showed that French people tend to "have a good balance" between French and English both in personal and professional contexts. One participant out of five also regularly speaks another language, such as Spanish, German or Arabic, either because they had family or friends speaking these languages, or because they used them for their job. This chapter revealed that French people had overall many opportunities to speak French in England and were often looking for ways to maintain their language, such as talking to other francophones, joining various French associations, or watching French TV shows for instance. A large number of them had a job that requires them to speak French often, but many also claimed they usually preferred using English at work, both to include all their colleagues and because it was easier than translating work jargon into French.

This chapter also demonstrated that French migrants' attitudes towards the French accent in English were similar are those of French people living in France. Participants were often embarrassed by their accent as they associated a "native-like" accent with a "good English" and therefore most of them were trying to "hide" their French accent in English. On the contrary, as proved by previous studies, British attitudes towards the French accent and language were described by participants as overall

positive. Nevertheless, some of them mentioned sometimes not feeling included or not being taken seriously because of their accent, and a few noticed a change in these attitudes after the EU referendum, which led them to feel more self-conscious of their accent.

This chapter also indicated the French migrants in England were concerned about losing their language as they thought they used many anglicisms and often forgot words in French. Most of them declared still having various opportunities to speak French in England or started seeking opportunities to speak it when realising they were "losing their language". It also showed that while translanguaging was a way for them to express their new transnational identity, it often created a separation between them and their loved ones in France.

Finally, this chapter revealed that it was crucial for most French parents in this study to transmit their language to their children, as they thought it would give them opportunities in the future, but also to transmit their culture and connect with their family in France. It indicated that most of them considered that Brexit did not have an impact on their strategies and attitudes towards bilingual education. The majority considered that it was still, if not even more than ever, especially for those planning to leave the UK, a good opportunity for their children to know French.

Consequently, this chapter demonstrated that French people in England had opportunities to use their native language and were working on maintaining it, by building French networks for instance. Interestingly the expression "good balance" that was used by several participants in this chapter was also mentioned by one of the participants in Huc-Hepher (2021b) who claims: "I don't feel torn between the two countries, I have integrated both now, I've found a good balance" (2021c: 230). The next chapter will analyse whether participants only think that they have "a good balance" between the languages they use, or if they also think it applies to their identity as French nationals in the UK. It will focus on notions of identity and community in the UK, by analysing how important the French language is in the definition of their identity and will discuss how French people create these "French networks" and whether it is relevant to talk about a "French community" in England.

Chapter 5: Language, identity and integration

5.1 Introduction

In Chapter 4, I introduced the results of this research about the languages spoken by French migrants in England, and how speaking English affected the way they used and perceived the French language. In this chapter, I will discuss how French migrants perceive their language in relation to their identity, and how living in England affects this identity. While this chapter mainly takes into consideration the impact of living in an anglophone country, in Chapter 6 I will discuss Brexit and its potential impact on the language and identity of French people, as well as how they are represented in England.

Identity has been studied extensively in various fields including sociology, anthropology and sociolinguistics, an in-depth discussion of literature about identity is provided in 2.3. Huc-Hepher (2021b: 6) who studied the French population in London argues that:

> "[T]he migrants are in a perpetual state of ambivalence or paradox, simultaneously rejecting France/French 'mentalities', yet reasserting their Frenchness through their homemaking practices. They consciously embrace local habits and identify with individuated selfhoods, yet form a sense of community through their shared 'originary' habits, or coincidental 'common-unity' of practices. Their integration into/of the local culture is therefore only ever partial, with the habitus of origin, as Bourdieu states, proving resistant to complete transformation" (Huc-Hepher, 2021b: 6).

Therefore, in this chapter, I intend to contribute to the literature about French migrants' identity in England, and especially outside of London where they may be more isolated and have less access to the French culture and community. This chapter will analyse how French migrants perceive their language in relation to their identity and culture, their belonging, or non-belonging, to communities of migrants, and how their identity interferes with their "integration" into the local culture. It will answer this thesis' third research question:

3) a) What role does the French language play in the expression of their identity?

b) Did Brexit impact how French migrants express their identity?

The first section of this chapter will focus on the aspects of identity in relation to language and culture. I will argue that the participants often claimed that their language was important to them primarily because of the culture it carries. Then, section 5.3 will describe how they feel about integrating in England and connecting with the French community living there, and I will question the presence of a French community outside of London. Finally, section 5.4 will show that Brexit had an impact on how most participants perceived their national identity, and how it affected their decision to apply or not

for British citizenship. It will also discuss the notions of national identity and integration by arguing that our identity is defined by and in relation to others rather than ourselves.

5.2 French language, culture and identity

5.2.1 Adapting to work culture and pragmatics

Chapter 4 showed that French migrants in England usually had opportunities to speak French both in their personal and professional lives. It revealed that it was important for them to continue using the French language as it was not only a way to communicate with their families and friends in France but was also a part of their identity they did not want to lose. It was explained in 4.2 that many of the participants in this research chose professions related to the French language. For instance, 11 participants out of the 32 interviewed were language teachers, which indicated that French migrants perceived their language as a useful skill for them to use professionally. For these participants, speaking French is therefore not only a part of their identity but has also become a necessity, as explained by I316, a woman aged 18-25 who started to teach French in Reading after working for a year as a French language assistant: "As a French Foreign Language teacher, speaking French is our identity in a way, and our job […] it is because I speak French that I'm staying here, because I couldn't teach it in France the way I'm doing it here" (I316, FG8). The French language is therefore what made some of them settle in England, and what allows them to remain there. These participants explained that consequently, it would be impossible for them to abandon the French language as it is at the core of their presence in England. If for any reason they were no longer able to speak French, they would probably choose to leave the country, as will be developed in 5.4.3 where I will discuss French migrants' decision to remain or leave the UK after Brexit.

Although some participants such as Q52 (woman, 36-55, Information/Communication) mainly see French as "a beneficial skill professionally", others such as I493, a 36-55 year-old man who works for a French company in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, explained that they did not only choose professions for which speaking French was a requirement because it was convenient, but also because they genuinely enjoyed having this opportunity to speak French at work: "Yeah, personally I'm super attached to the French language and I'm really very happy to be able to speak French at work, I had missed it because I haven't always worked on French markets" (I493, FG10). As mentioned in 4.2, this highlights a will to work in areas where their linguistics skills are required rather than a need. I showed in 3.2.3 that 90% of the participants held a university degree and about the same percentage could speak English at a proficient level. Consequently, their proficiency in English, as well as their education, would probably allow them to work in fields where only English is required.

Participants also often mentioned that languages and cultures were linked. Therefore, when they speak or write in English, they must adapt to another mentality, which often feels unnatural to them.

Some of them explained that it was especially true in the context of work. I160 (F, 26-35, Logistics) and I47 (F, 26-35, Education) in FG6 both noted differences in the way people expressed themselves and their relation to politeness according to their native language. I160, a woman in her late twenties/ early thirties based in London noticed some differences between the words used in French and English:

> "At work, when I write emails in English, I know I'm not a native speaker and I know that my turn of phrase would be different in French […] So yes, in a way, the language itself makes me French and it means a lot to me […] Our sentences are really long for example, and even in English, well, with a friend we were talking about that, she's English, […] in French, I think when we speak we're very attached to the meaning of the words whereas English speakers are attached to the context, so I had quite a lot of trouble when I arrived here, they would say a word and I would take it for what it means, well, I don't know… I could take it the wrong way, but in the context, it actually didn't really mean much. So yes, I think that my language is part of my identity." (I160, FG6).

I47 agreed with I160 and added:

> "When someone says to me '*Oh it's amazing it's great it's wonderful*'[27], we might not use the same vocabulary in the same context in French. I remember I was interviewed for a job in an Australian family, back then when I was a nanny, and when I left, they just said to me '*Oh you're amazing you're great blah blah blah*' and then they didn't hire me. I thought it's strange they had told me I was exceptional etc. So, depending on the same context we wouldn't use the same vocabulary at all, it's quite true. For example, in the context of work, when I started, to write emails I had to ask my French colleague, who has been there for a very long time, to help me, because the way we write our emails [in French], they may think that we are a bit rude, that we are not polite enough, and they are so polite in their emails, they really have to say '*best regards, I hope this finds you well*', or something like that." (I47, FG6)

Several studies analysed politeness in emails sent by L2 learners (Chen, 2006; Economidou-Kogetsidis, 2011; Pan, 2012) and showed that although the participants may have high proficiency in the L2, sometimes their lack of pragmatic awareness competence resulted in misinterpretation and pragmatic failure (Economidou-Kogetsidis, 2016). For instance, Economidou-Kogetsidis (2016: 15) analysed emails sent in English by Cypriot students (non-native English speakers) to their lecturers, who were native English speakers. The same emails were described as "polite" by Cypriot students as they were using formulaic utterances such as "please" or "thank you", but as impolite by native speakers because

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[27] In English in the text.

of the use of direct "please + imperative" forms (2016: 15). On the other hand, while native speakers found acceptable for a lecturer to be addressed by their first name, non-native speakers in this study viewed it as pragmatic failure (2016: 13). As a result, not only the messages conveyed in these emails, but also the senders were evaluated negatively by the lecturers, who found them as lacking in social intelligence (2016:15).

Thomas (1983:99) distinguishes two different types of pragmatic failure. The first one, pragmalinguistic failure, is the result of differences in the linguistic encoding of pragmatic force. Thomas also uses the example of direct imperatives forms that are more polite in Russian than in English. While in Russian "Please tell me" is considered polite, in English it would be preferable to use a formulation such as "could you please tell me", as the former could sound discourteous (1983: 102). The second type, sociopragmatic failure, can happen when speakers of different cultures communicate while having different perceptions of what constitutes appropriate linguistic behaviour (1983: 99). Thomas gives the example of being told that a village is "just over the hill" although it is ten miles distant can be easily understood as not being literal by one person but perceived as deceitful or insincere by someone having different pragmatic principles (1983: 107).

The situations described by I47 and I160 are examples of both pragmalinguistic and sociopragmatic failure. Although they respectively have a C1 and C2 (proficient) level in English, they must decode and adapt to English politeness standards, which often differ from what they are used to in French. Therefore, as explained in Economidou-Kogetsidis (2016:15) what may seem polite in one language may be perceived as impolite in another. For instance, according to these participants, it would not always be necessary to sign off emails with formulations such as "Kind regards" in French, while it is in English, and if they did not do so they could seem impolite although it was not their intention. When I47 assumed she would be hired based on the compliments she received from the interviewers, it shows that although she knew the meaning of the words, she did not understand the pragmatic implication that the interviewers were only demonstrating politeness rather than giving her a positive response regarding the job. For a French speaker, it could be interpreted as insincerity.

5.2.2 Language, culture, and personality

Participants mentioned that these types of miscommunications and misunderstandings did not only occur at work but also in their personal lives. After moving to England, they realised how important the French language was in the construction and expression of their identity, and that cultures and languages had an impact on people's mindsets. Hofstede et al. (2010) defined three concepts that will be necessary for this section: human nature, culture, and personality. There are presented in Figure 23.
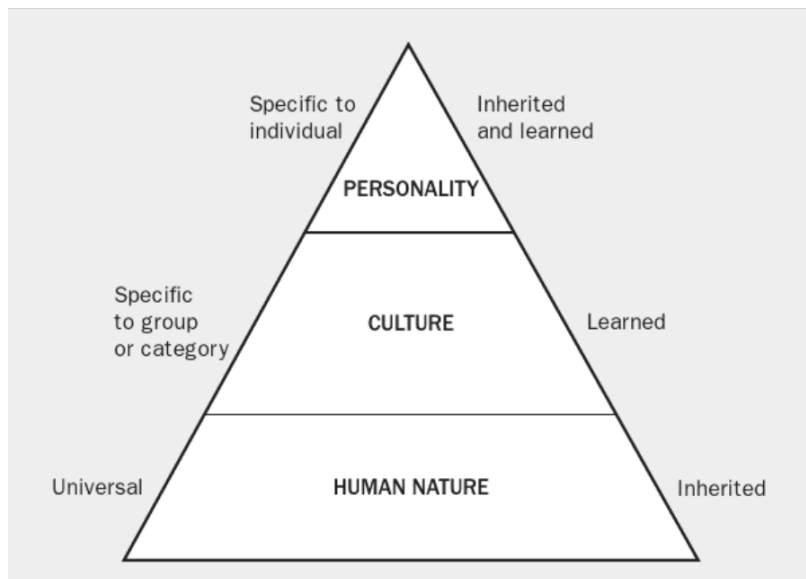
Figure 23: Three Levels of Uniqueness in Mental Programming (Hofstede et al., 2010: 6)

Figure 23 from Hofstede et al. (2010: 6) shows the three levels of uniqueness in what they refer to as "mental programming", which is a collection of patterns of feeling, thinking, and acting influenced by the environment an individual grew up in (Hofstede et al., 2010: 5). The first level, human nature, is what is common to all human beings such as the ability to feel different emotions, to observe their environment, or the need to associate and talk with others. The second level is culture, which is shared by a group of people living in the same environment. Culture refers both to the "refinement of the mind" (which results in education, arts, but also ways of thinking) and to ordinary behaviours like greetings, eating and accepted social behaviours. Hofstede et al. define it as "the unwritten rules of the social game". Finally, personality is a series of traits that are unique to the individual. The personality of people is both influenced by their culture and their personal experiences (2010: 6-7), which is what this section will discuss.

In their research about bilingualism and mentality, Oxford et al. (2015: 101) argue that not only a culture but also a language "is a mentality", meaning that culture and language influence the way people think, speak and behave in society. The word "*mentalité*"[28] was uttered by eight of my participants as well during the focus groups and in the questionnaires, either to refer to a "Brexit mentality" that I will discuss in Chapter 6 or to distinguish what they described as "French and English mentality/mindsets". I25 (FG7) and I228 (FG9) for instance both said they enjoyed living in England as they "liked the English mindset", Q52 (F, 36-55, London) even claimed she could not go back to France as "the French mentality had become absolutely unbearable" for her. Others such as Q208 (F, 26-35, Lytham St Annes) or Q207 (F, 26-35, Hinckley) on the contrary identified the "English mentality" as a

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[28] Mentality, mindset.

reason for them to leave the UK in the near future. I160, a woman aged 26-35 who studied languages and is "attached to words and their meaning" explained she realised that speaking French impacted not only the way she forms sentences but also the way she thinks: "It's true I have the impression that yes [the French language] identifies me in the sense that we build sentences really differently, so sometimes I think it's really another mentality, it's really another way of thinking" (I160, FG6). Joseph (2004:34) argues that the first known theory of language, nationality and identity can be found in Epicurus' (341-270BC) *Letter to Herodotus,* in which he claims that members of different nationalities "differ in their feelings and even sensory perception of the world around them and that these feelings and impression are produced in their particular languages". According to Joseph, it would explain why language boundaries seem to coincide with boundaries between people and that language is not an "accidental part of who we are" (2004: 43).

These differences in "mentalities", and therefore on how the language is used, once again can lead to miscommunications between French and English speakers, and sometimes even to difficulties to bond with each other. In FG3 for instance, the participants thought that English people tended to be very polite and welcoming when talking to them, but they found it difficult to form deep relationships with them: "I have developed slightly more personal relationships with some of my colleagues but even here, it's still very politically correct because there's this side of them… they don't open up" (I509, FG3, F, London). The participants in this group gave the example of how common according to them it was to say "let's keep in touch" in England when someone leaves a job, without meaning it: "There are English people I've worked with, I've spent a lot of time with them, but […] there's one thing that shocked me at the beginning, one thing that I took a bit to heart, when there's an English person who, when you leave a job says 'we'll keep in touch', but in fact, it's just hot air, it's only to be polite" (I508, FG3, M, Colchester). They explained that usually, a French person would probably not say "*gardons le contact*"[29] in this situation if they did not genuinely wish to see the person again, whereas in English it should often only be understood as a polite farewell. A study about Portuguese migrants in the UK showed that they also found it easier to socialise with other Portuguese or Southern Europeans outside of work as they often considered British people as "polite but not genuine". They gave the example of people asking "How are you" without expecting an answer to illustrate this claim (Farcas & Gonçalves, 2017: 1043). Another French woman residing in London in Reed-Danahay (2020: 24) described English people as "superficially friendly" but not "interested in getting to know people from outside their own social circle". These examples demonstrate again that words in one language or another may not be

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[29] let's keep in touch.

pragmatically interpreted the same way, and that different cultures and "mentalities" may result in difficulties for some French people to interact and form deep relationships with English citizens.

Therefore, some participants realised that living in England and speaking English daily made them aware of their French identity, and how important the French language was to express it. I228, a woman aged 26-35 who moved to England in 2018 explained:

> "I realise that the person I am deeply is French. I speak English fluently, I don't have an accent, I've never had any criticism about my English, but clearly, I'm not the same person when I speak English and when I speak French. I consider myself less funny; even if my vocabulary is correct in English, it's not as advanced as in French, so obviously, as soon as I want to make a sentence or an argument, it's going to be much more simplistic than if I'd made it in French. So, I think that the person I really am is French and it is necessarily linked to my French language, since it's the language in which I express myself the best and in which I can really show my personality, my culture and everything. And even if I manage to express myself in English, it's not the same thing, it's not the same person and it's not 100% me, I think" (I228, FG9).

It is evident here that the issue is not related to language proficiency, as this participant stated having a C2 (proficient) level in English, and never had any problem making herself understood in this language. She explains however that English is not, and will never be her native language, and there may be some nuances that she is not able to recreate in English. Consequently, she thinks that the English language will never reflect her personality as effectively as her mother tongue.

Furthermore, this feeling of "not being herself in English" could reflect a phenomenon called "feeling of self-change in bilingual speakers", which has been observed by psychologists and linguists over the last 60 years (Ervin-Tripp, 1964; Koven, 2007; Lasan, & Rehner, 2018; Luna & Peracchio, 2008; Mijatović, & Tytus, 2019). These studies have demonstrated that bilingual people often "felt like a different person" in each language, or "having two identities" (Koven, 2007:4; Luna et al., 2008: 279; Mijatović, & Tytus, 2019: 224). Koven (2007) for instance analysed from three perspectives the feeling of self-change in women who were bilingual in French and Portuguese. The first perspective was the speakers', who reported their sense of self in each language, then a discourse analyst's perspective which analysed how the participants presented themselves in the same story in the two languages, and finally from a listener's perspective which allowed to see how the participants were perceived by others in both languages. The results showed that not only the participants themselves thought they had different personalities in Portuguese and French, but the listeners also sometimes felt like they were listening to two different people (Koven, 2007: 5-8). Two participants in my research, I228 and I310 claimed to be "funnier in French", Koven's research also revealed that her participants were

sometimes perceived by the listeners as funnier in French than in Portuguese (Koven, 2007: 8). The concept of language and humour will be developed in 5.2.3, which will show that other factors, such as culture, should also be taken into consideration.

I228 also explained that she had never considered the French language, or even culture, as an important part of her identity before leaving France, but that it became important after moving to the UK: "I never considered myself as a patriotic Frenchwoman who wanted to spend her whole life in France like 'France my nation, my homeland' not at all, I was even very happy to leave France. I didn't find myself in a lot of things and it's actually since I moved to England that I've realised how French I am" (I228, FG9). Another woman in her twenties, I336, who teaches French in Oxford also explained that she only started to think about her French identity after moving to England: "Before I left [France] I didn't really define myself as French and all that, but I started to feel much more French when I arrived here, as if moving here had brought out certain things, 'oh yeah actually it's very much in line with what we call the French identity'" (I336, FG8). I336 later during the interview also explained that she noticed she even started to emphasize her French identity after moving to England:

> "Somehow, we realised [with my French friends in the UK] that sometimes we were becoming French caricatures, we use expressions that we would never use in France, that are you know, stupid and a bit tacky, like '*à la revoyure*'[30] or things like that. I don't know what it is, but we realised that yes indeed we were becoming caricatures of...I think we miss [the French culture] a bit in a certain way." (I336, FG8)

Joseph (2004) argues that "nationality is not necessarily the identity people will be most willing to die for. Regional and local identities matter, as do social class identities, racial, religious and sectarian identities. Even linguistic identity can be an end in itself, though it tends to get transmuted into quasi racial terms" (2004: 117). These quotes by I228 and I336 show that when they lived in France, their French identity indeed did not seem to be the one they considered to be the most important, or that they identified with the most. However, after moving to a place where they were different because of their French identity, they started to identify with it more. A study comparing the expression of identity of Glaswegians living in Glasgow and England found similar results. While the first group of Glaswegians distinguished themselves from "the other" being other Scots, for those in England, "the other" was the English (Braber 2009: 320), which confirms that regional and local identities within a country are probably more important than national identities, but that it changes when people leave their country. Like the participants in my research, Scottish participants living in England not only felt proud to be

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[30] Outdated colloquial phrase meaning "see you later" (literally: "until the re-seeing").

Scottish but also "more Scottish" than when they lived in Glasgow, and some of them started to be involved in cultural and political Scottish associations when in England for instance (2009: 317).

Most participants interviewed identify with the culture more than the language itself, the language being only one aspect of the French culture amongst many others, the French gastronomy for instance being cited by several participants as something they identified with and were particularly proud of:

> "I think that the language is just one of the elements [of the French culture], but for example everything related to food and so on, I identify a lot with that too, so I would say that it's not necessarily just the fact of speaking French, it's a part of the whole." (I375, F, 26-35, Cambridge FG6)

> "Even back then[31], I was always 'the French girl', I didn't hide it, even without speaking French, I always talked about the French culture 'We do it like that, yes I drink hot chocolate in a bowl'… Apparently, they learned that at school and when they saw me do it, I saw all my flatmates silently approaching me like 'Oh so it's true!' [laughs]. I've never minded being the ambassador of the French culture, I think it's great, so even if we don't always speak French out of politeness or something, it's true, I think we're very attached to being French and we're proud to be French." (I25, 26-35, London FG7).

Huc-Hepher (2021a: 63), whose participants also associated their language with French cuisine, explains that it points to "the organic physicality of language as an embodied articulation of Frenchness and its essential place in everyday life". Gabaccia (2000) argues that "food and language are the cultural traits humans learn first, and the ones that they change with the greatest reluctance. Humans cannot easily lose their accents when they learn new languages after the age of about twelve; similarly, the food they ate as children forever defines familiarity and comfort" (Gabaccia, 2000: 6) and that "when we want to celebrate, or elevate, our own group, we usually praise its superior cuisine. And when we want to demean one another, often we turn to eating habits; in the United States we have labelled Germans as 'Krauts', Italians as 'spaghetti-benders" and Frenchmen as 'frogs'" (Gabaccia, 2000: 6). Rabikowska (2010) who worked on the ritualisation of food, home and national identity among Polish migrants in London also claims that "food consumption and the ways of its preparation manifest the relationship with home and nation" (Rabikowska, 2010: 378). It is therefore not surprising that French people in England identify the French food culture as important for them and their French identity. Furthermore, French cuisine is often perceived as prestigious worldwide, the fact that it has been recognised as an intangible UNESCO cultural heritage as well as the large number of French

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[31] The participant is referring to when she moved to the UK and did not necessarily want to meet other French people there as she wanted to be immersed in the English culture and language.

borrowed words in English (Chirol, 1973; Schultz, 2016) are conclusive examples of its international renown. Consequently, this prestigious reputation would also explain the participants' pride in French cuisine when living abroad.

5.2.3 "So who's up to talking about *Koh Lanta*[32]?": French pop culture and language

Not only food but other aspects of French culture were mentioned by participants as important for the preservation of their language and identity. Reading, listening to music, watching TV or connecting with other francophones are different ways for French people in England to maintain both their language and culture (see 4.4.4). Although culture was cited more often than language as an important part of their identity, participants always admitted that one does not go without the other and losing their language would not only mean not being able to communicate in French but also losing a part of their culture and therefore identity. Participants reported trying to reconnect to the French culture after moving to England, by practising activities in French, even though they did not necessarily do it when living in France. For some of them, such as I376 (F, 36/55, Liverpool, 2005) and I253 (F, 26/35, Bristol, 2014) it is by translating and reading in French, or listening to French music:

> "Since I started literary translation, on the contrary, I'm interested, I'm re-interested in the French language, especially since before I wanted, like everyone else, to stay away from the French, to read in English… Then I went the other way around to make up for the lack of French I had accumulated over the years by not practising, by always using the same vocabulary with certain people, there are words that we don't use anymore, so I'm re-learning a bit and I can't see myself not speaking French anymore." (I376, FG7)

> "Something I've noticed when I moved here is that I've started to listen to a lot more French music than I used to, um, whereas before I used to listen to all the English stuff, but now I feel the need to listen to things in French, um, to read, I always read books in French as well… I don't necessarily want to read in English because I read enough at work daily." (I253, FG5)

I161 mentioned watching the news in French as well as *Koh Lanta*, a popular French TV reality show:

> "The French culture has become more important than the language and that's why I watch *Koh Lanta*, every Friday night I go and watch my TV and my French news. It's true that it's important to practise the language because if you don't practise it you forget it, but then it's also the culture [...] that's why I have French TV which was very useful when the children were small now that they are teenagers they don't care much but it's true that I

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[32] French popular TV reality game show in which contestants survive on a desert island for a month. In 2022, 3 to 4 million people watched it every week (Mercereau, 2022).

need to reconnect, well not regularly but it's good to be able to speak French. And that's why I was very happy that you contacted me! […] It's good to feel a bit at home because my partner is English and I speak English all day and I have very few opportunities to speak French." (I161, FG2).

When typing the name of the TV show on the search bar of the Facebook group for French people in London "*Le Cercle des Français de Londres*"[33], numerous posts can be found, with fifty to up to hundreds of comments. The most asked question related to *Koh Lanta* on this group is "How to watch it in the UK?", some people also often ask if others would like to comment on the latest episodes as they do not have acquaintances to discuss them with in the UK, as shown in Figure 24. As explained by I161, watching this kind of programme, and talking about it is also a way for French migrants to maintain their language and remain connected to French pop culture.

Figure 24: "So who's up to talking about Koh Lanta?" on Le Cercle des Français de Londres (Facebook)

In 5.2.2 two participants mentioned humour and "being funnier in French". I310 (F, 18-25, London) talked about how French was important for her especially for humour as well: "There are puns in French or little references to films or whatever that I can't translate into English because they just won't understand, so that's why I'm quite attached to it, too, like, I'm happy when I can talk to my friends about jokes between us." (I310, FG10). This quote shows that the language itself, as well as their personalities in different languages (Koven, 2010: 8), are not the only explanations for this feeling of being funnier in French. The other reason mentioned by I310 here is culture and more specifically French pop culture. References to French films for instance that most people know about in France

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[33] https://www.facebook.com/groups/27399871026

would usually not be understood in the UK, and therefore there are some jokes that the participants are not able to make with their acquaintances in England as they would not work without some knowledge of the French culture. Translating cultural references has been identified in translation studies as one of the most difficult types of translations and were described by researchers in the field as "cultural bumps", "translation crisis points" or even as "untranslatable" (Alfaify & Ramos Pinto, 2021: 1). Therefore, it explains why participants usually choose to only share jokes relying on cultural references with other francophones. Other participants mentioned pop culture as a way to connect with people, or on a contrary not being able to when this pop culture is not shared, which could lead to a feeling of being isolated from a group. I336, an 18-25 woman based in Oxford explained:

> "It's mainly at the beginning that people don't have the same references as me, we feel a bit isolated, but I've noticed that it's easier to get closer to people when you speak the same language as there's no kind of standard language façade, it's easier to express your personality through a language you master." (I336, FG8).

This notion of "references" was mentioned by several other participants, who explained that their knowledge of British culture usually started when they moved to Britain, and therefore could not always relate to people around them since they did not grow up in the same country. For instance, I161, a woman aged 36-55 who moved to the UK in 1994, explains:

> "My British culture starts in 1994, so everything since 1994, I know the comedies, I love their sense of humour but yeah, the 80s and early 90s, I'm like a child and when we have meetings at work and we share anecdotes 'your first concert' [laughs], I'll tell them about French singers, and they'll talk to me about a singer from Sheffield… We didn't know these bands in France, so I really have a before and after 1994 and even for my French culture because my French culture goes up to 94 and after that… it's more complicated!" (I161, FG2)

Like I263 in 4.3.1 who explained feeling "like a teenager" because her French did not evolve after she moved to England, I161 here expresses feeling "like a child". Therefore, despite their physical mobility, these migrants are experiencing a sense of immobility in terms of their linguistic and cultural identities, as they feel like they are not evolving. This sense of temporal stasis can be related to Khosravi's (2017) work on Iranian youth, which discusses the themes of waiting and liminality.

Khosravi (2017) suggests that young Iranians experience a sense of disconnectedness and detachment from their homeland that affects their sense of belonging and identity (2017: 220), as well as a transitional phase between two social positions or stages of life (2017: 81). Similarly, migration has disrupted my participants' sense of identity and social position, placing them in a liminal state of in-

betweenness where they can feel stuck or unable to progress. These concepts can also be understood in terms of cultural dislocation, where individuals may struggle to adapt to new cultural norms and practices. Additionally, the emphasis on time and efficiency in modern societies can contribute to feelings of inadequacy or failure when people are unable to adapt quickly or feel like they are not progressing.

Furthermore, belonging is a complex process that is determined by a combination of how individuals define themselves and how others define them (Ralph & Staeheli, 2011: 523). This process of categorisation based on similarities and differences can be experienced by anyone, but it is particularly evident for migrants who must negotiate their sense of belonging in multiple homes (2011: 524). As illustrated by the quotes from I161 and I263, migrants may not feel like they fully belong in their host country and sometimes even in their home country.

In terms of belonging, Iannone et al. (2018) studied the negative consequences of what they call "being out of the loop on pop culture" (2018: 113). They found out that when individuals experienced a disconnection from popular culture, the consequences were feeling out of the loop, lower need satisfaction (for the four fundamental needs of belonging, self-esteem, meaningful existence, and control), and more negative mood. They showed that participants also tried to look up references they did not understand, in order to "get back in the loop" as it could make them feel isolated from the group, and even from society. Finally, they concluded that the effects of being out of the loop on pop culture could be worse for the participants' mental health than being out of the loop on other information (2018: 126).

Therefore, it explains the popularity of publications on social media such as the one illustrated in Figure 24, French migrants use TV shows such as *Koh Lanta* to maintain their language and culture, but they could also be a way to compensate for this feeling of being out of the loop by keeping up with French pop culture. Consequently, it would explain why they look for other French migrants when they feel a need to talk about their own culture, in their language. The next section of this chapter will therefore discuss the idea of a French community in England, or maybe more specifically in London, as well as French migrants' strategies to assimilate or not in England.

5.3 Transnationality and community

5.3.1 Transnationality
This section will discuss the notions of integration and community and observe the potential impact they have on how French migrants use their native language in England. There has been extensive research about migrants' "integration" or "assimilation", but also how they could maintain their language and culture (see 2.3.5). Many researchers worked on migrants' strategies to maintain their

home country's language and culture while living in a new country, and how host countries could accommodate cultural diversity (Moutselos, 2020). The notion of transnationalism is probably the most relevant for this chapter as it joins the concepts of integration and maintenance of cultural identity. Transnationalism is "the tendency among immigrants to maintain ties with their country of origin while also integrating into the destination country" (Bartram, et al., 2014: 140–144). Therefore, migrants form a new identity based on the cultures of their new country and country of origin. Thanks to technology and less expensive travel costs, it is easier nowadays for migrants to maintain ties with their country of origin than it used to be (Amit & Bar-Lev, 2016: 110; Huc-Hepher, 2021b: 234).

Migrants can maintain their cultural identity through cultural diasporas or communities, which allow them to continue practising their language and culture, but also to have a network to help them settle in the host country. Recently, the development of social media has helped the building of these communities, allowing migrants to obtain information about the host country even before leaving their home country (Al-Rawi, 2019: 559; Canhilal, et al., 2020:7). More information about transnationalism and migrant communities can be found in 2.3.4.

This section will discuss how transnationality is expressed by my participants and whether it is relevant to talk about a French community in England. Section 5.2.2 showed that French migrants tried to (re)connect with their culture, especially after spending a few years in the UK, by "exaggerating their French traits", using French idioms, and maintaining contact with their family and friends in France, whether by phone or by going back to France for the holidays. Sections 4.3 and 5.2, also demonstrated that French migrants have opportunities, and even seem to be seeking opportunities, to use their native language while being in England. They tend to use the French language between themselves, sometimes even when non-francophones are around, which was considered "rude" by some participants:

> "Sometimes I'm ashamed because I have French friends who go out with me and other people who speak another language, and immediately there's a tendency to speak French just between themselves, so I say 'Guys, you're going to have to speak English', so it's true that it's important that as soon as a French person recognises another, they speak in French." (I310, F, 18/25, London FG10)

> "Just a quick comment on other nationalities, it's true that I work with Germans, for example, they tend to speak English more easily when there are other people around, whereas between French people we tend to speak French quite easily" (I493, M, 36/55, Newcastle Upon Tyne FG10).

The fact that French migrants seem to find it difficult to speak in English with other francophones seems to indicate that their language is important in the expression of their identity and how they connect with other French people. It also shows that not all nationalities seem to have the same relationship with their language and community. Germans as well as migrants from other Northern European countries for instance were mentioned by participants who claimed that they did not use their native language when they were together as much as French migrants. Proficiency in English surely also plays an important role in the fact that migrants from certain countries will have fewer difficulties communicating in English, even with their own people. Indeed, the nationalities mentioned by the participants have a higher proficiency than France or Spain which was also cited by some participants as migrants who use their native language often between them. According to the 2021 EF English proficiency report, countries such as Germany, Finland or Sweden are ranked as "very high proficiency in English" countries, whereas France and Spain are only in the "high" to "moderate" proficiency categories (EF, 2021: 6).

Nevertheless, most participants interviewed mentioned that their objective when moving to the UK was to be immersed in the English language and therefore tried to avoid spending time with other francophones at first. However, these participants admitted eventually starting to make French friends, although it was not their intention when they move to England. In the third focus group, the three participants were friends who met in London and explained that they were not necessarily looking for a French community. One of them I509, a woman aged 36-55 who moved to London in 2011, even wanted to avoid French people:

> "I didn't want to see French people because I had a very bad experience in Australia where I was right away with French people who plunged me into the French community and that went very badly, well I had a very bad experience. Therefore, when I arrived in England, I didn't want to meet French people, and so when I started to sing in a choir and the choirmaster told me 'Hey, there's a French guy there', who was I508, that's how we met, I was like 'mmh meh…'. I wasn't looking for the French community at all. At all." (I509, FG3)

In FG7, the participants also agreed that they initially did not intend to meet other French people: "When I moved here in 1995, I decided not to speak French at all, I wanted to improve my English, so I didn't speak French at all until 2005." (I189, M, 36/55, Birmingham, FG7); "At the very beginning when I was at university there were very few French people around, and just like the others, I didn't want to, I avoided the French, I lived in a house with only English flatmates and all that." (I25, F, 26/35, London, FG7). I25 then explained that she eventually became closer to French people with time:

"I speak very, very frequently in French because even though I've been living here for 12 years, all the people I'm closest to have ended up being French, even though I have quite a few English friends, but now I see, for example, with the current situation[34] where we're not allowed to see people, I have a group of three French friends that I meet up with from time to time to play board games, another friend who has just moved very close to me who is also French and I think I didn't realise that this was happening but I speak very often with French people so we speak French a lot."(I25, FG7)

I100, another woman from this group who has also been living in London for over 10 years had a similar experience:

"I did more or less the same thing when I moved here, I completely refused to mix with the French because I told myself that if I had to come back [to France] I'd be bilingual, and I didn't go to another country to stay with my community, well the community, and to speak only French. I knew some French people who were already in London and that's precisely what I didn't want to do, and because they didn't speak [English], they really lived like French people, but in London, well, […] moreover near South Kensington etc, that's not my cup of tea at all! I am not in the finance sector to be really clear!" (I100, F, 36/55, FG7)

In this quote, I100 also explains that she cannot relate to the social class often associated with the French community in areas such as South Kensington. She distances herself from the French community first by correcting herself and changing "my" to "the" community, and then by drawing the line between her and the stereotypical "South Ken elite" mirroring findings in Huc-Hepher and Drake (2013: 425) in which participants associated the London French community with the "others".

Therefore, it seems like most French people do not move to England in order to find a French community, and did not try to connect with other francophones when they moved in. Most of them started to connect with other French people after months or years spent in the country, and it often happened without them looking for a community. Similarly, French citizens in London in Huc-Hepher and Drake (2013: 403) tended to avoid the "French community" in order to be "immersed" in the English language and "integrated", but also to avoid the "unfruitful and unnecessary" anti-British discourse and frustration that often happens when French people meet. Nevertheless, these participants also ended up forming deep relationships with other French people and even though they were not deliberately looking for them, they had networks of French or non-British migrants (2013: 404).

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[34] 2020 Covid-19 lockdown in place in the UK and France.

5.3.2 A French community… In London?

Some participants on the contrary mentioned that they thought French people tended to remain exclusively between them and did not always try to integrate into the British culture: "Even though I have a French accent [in English], I still make an effort to speak as much in English as possible with the people around me, whereas some French people isolate themselves among themselves, and […] if they exclude themselves, they will inevitably be criticised more" (I464, F, 26/35, Newcastle upon Tyne, 2018 FG2). As seen in the previous sections, the participants may not have been looking for other francophones at first, but almost all of them mentioned having met French friends in the UK and feeling close to them, and hearing French people speaking in French together more than some other nationalities. I464 in the quote above, therefore, explains that according to her they excluded themselves, which did not seem to always be perceived positively by people around them, probably implying British people.

Several other participants in both the focus groups and questionnaires thought that when living in a country, people should integrate into the culture, which according to them, French people often do not do. I508, a man aged 36-55 who lived in London from 2006 before moving to near Colchester said:

> "As far as identity is concerned, I've always thought that when in Rome you do as the Romans do. We're in England, […] we have very good sides in France but also very bad sides […] but for me, there is an obligation to adapt to the culture of the country. If we are in France we don't want to see an Englishman coming and opening a pub and being super English and living like he is in England, and I don't think that the English want a Frenchman to come in and say, well, I'm going to open a bar and it's going to be all French and it's going to be all that and I refuse to open up and adapt to the culture. I was brought up in a family, my grandmother was Spanish, and she gave us this little bit of Spanish culture in the family, so I've always been […] open to different cultures and no, I would say that there is no loss of identity." (I508, FG3)

I157 (M, 36/55, London, 2006) agreed with the other participants from his group that although he is "proud to be French" it is important for him to respect the country he lives in by not imposing his French identity on others, for instance by using English rather than French when possible:

> "I'm completely in line with I508 and I509, in the sense that we decided to leave France, I'm very proud to be French, even though my grandfather was German, my grandfather was Italian, and my two grandmothers were French, so it's a mix, and it's true that I was always brought up to respect the place I live in. So, it's the respect of when I'm in England I try to speak as little French as possible, when I'm in the streets, even in London, I don't really feel comfortable, I feel a little bit like 'Well, you're in London, you have to speak

English'. But if I'm with friends who speak exclusively French, it's not a problem." (I157, FG3).

In FG3, the participants then talked about expatriates they met in London and how they understood the words "expatriate" and "immigrant" (see 1.3). These participants' definition of an expatriate is someone who was "sent abroad by their company in their home country and doesn't really have a choice" (I508, FG3). According to them, these people in London have a "different mentality" (I157, I508, I509). I157 gave the example of "the expats from the Société Générale" and said that "when you see them, you walk past them and hear them speak only French, they're among French people... it's really a different mentality". I508, who currently works with Japanese expatriates in London explained that for them it is only a "mission", and as they are not in the country for a long period of time, they do not feel the need or desire to integrate to the country:

"They think 'I'm here for one year, three years, five years maybe, but at the end of the day I'll go back to where I come from. [...] I'm Japanese, with my Japanese family, I work in a Japanese company and after a while, I go back to Japan, so why would I identify as anything else, or learn a new language or a new culture or something like that.' Whereas someone who is really an immigrant, when you look at the post-war generation in France the immigrants were people who came from Italy, Spain, Portugal or wherever to rebuild France in the post-war period. So, for me [...] an immigrant would be a person who comes by choice because in the country where they are, they don't necessarily have the future they would like, whereas expatriates have a choice, or not necessarily in the sense that the company sends them or not, but they'd always think 'I'll come back to my country'." (I508, FG3)

I157 and I509 agreed with I508:

"We use [the term expatriate] a lot in the professional world, let's say a 6-month mission in Russia and so for 6 months in Russia, we're not going to identify as Russians by saying I'm only going to speak Russian. Whereas it is different when we decide ourselves to move to another country because we really want to. We're not just going through it, but on the contrary to throw ourselves into it and think 'this is great, we're discovering a lot of things', it's exciting rather than telling ourselves 'I'm here because I have to.'" (I157, FG3)

"I came here of my own free will and there may be expatriates who are sent by French companies, perhaps they have a different approach, I don't know, that's what I'm wondering. Actually, that's what intrigued me in your study is that I had never asked myself the question of whether the French language or the French identity could be

impacted by Brexit. I was curious because it never crossed my mind and I wonder if there isn't this distinction between people who don't come themselves and those who are sent, and they make the choice to [come to the UK]." (I509, FG3)

In their study about Portuguese migrant workers in the UK, Farcas & Gonçalves (2017) make a similar distinction between Self-Initiated Expatriates (SIE), Assigned Expatriates (AE), and Immigrant Workers (IW). SIE and AE are "noncitizens of the host country and engage in regulatory cross-border compliance for purposes of residency and employment". An Assigned Expatriate is sent and fully supported by their company to complete a time-based task in a foreign subsidiary of the business, whereas a Self-Initiated Expatriates similarly temporarily moves abroad to work, but without being supported by a business in their home country. The difference between these first two categories and Immigrant Workers is that the latter intend to settle in the host country permanently (Farcas & Gonçalves, 2017: 1030). Expatriates in their research tended to have higher education degrees than IW and had moved to the UK to have an "international experience" and "improve their English-speaking skills", whereas immigrants had moved in hope of better work conditions and a better future (2017: 1041). Farcas & Gonçalves' research therefore also showed that these different types of migrants had different expectations moving to the UK, and different ways to integrate. Their study however on the contrary showed that Immigrant Workers were usually the ones relying on a community when moving to the UK, as Assigned Expatriates already received help from their company to settle in the country and did not have to look for work since it was their job that sent them in the host country. Although Self-Initiated Expatriates are expected to find their adaption to a country easier, in this study they were the ones reporting that they found interactions with the locals complicated (2017: 1046).

Finally, I157 mentioned the Facebook group "*Le Cercle des Français de Londres*", a group for Francophones in London that will be presented in 5.3.3, as a representation of how French people in the capital did not try to integrate and were always seeking the company of other French migrants:

"There are a lot of people who are on the *Cercle des Françai*s on Facebook at some point just let it go and try to be much more integrated into the country rather than always looking for other French people! Now it's true that in England we have a big community which means that very often on the South Ken[sington] side we hear a lot of French spoken." (I157, FG3)

Nevertheless, we can observe that apart from I464 who works in a French company in Newcastle-Upon-Tyne, the participants who mentioned a French community or even just hearing people speaking French around them all the time were almost all based in London. South Kensington was mentioned by several participants who live in London. As the Consulate, *Institut Français* and *Lycée Français* Charles de Gaulle, the largest French school in the UK welcoming 3,450 students, are based in South

Kensington (Lycée Français Charles de Gaulle, 2022), it is often referred to by bloggers and magazines as "unofficial French quarter" (Wellington, 2019). There are also many French restaurants, cafés and bakeries in this borough, and therefore many French expatriates choose to settle in South Kensington. As seen in 4.5, most French schools in the UK are based in London as well (Institut Français Royaume-Uni, 2022, Parapluie FLAM, 2022). According to the French government's data, 63% of French expatriates live in London (France Diplomatie, 2021), which represents between 163,000 and 300,000 people and makes London "France's sixth biggest city" (Stephenson, 2014).

Participants living outside of London often knew other French people but did not seem to consider that there was a "French community" in their city. I161 (FG2) for instance who lives in Loughborough has some French friends but does not have as many opportunities to talk with French speakers as other participants from London. Therefore, she tends to even want to talk to strangers when she hears them speaking her language:

> "It's funny because every time my children always say 'ohlala mom as soon as she goes to the supermarket and hears French, she's like 'oh do you want to be my friend?' so the children find it very funny. It's true that I have a few French or Francophones in my network of friends […] I feel the need to reconnect, well not all the time, but it feels good to be able to speak French, that's why I was happy when you contacted me!" (I161, FG2)

I146, who has been living in Nottingham for 50 years mentioned that it is easier to meet other French people now than when she moved here because of social media. Nevertheless, she also said that while she knows that there are French migrants in Nottingham but does not really know them. Therefore, it might be relevant to talk about a physical French community in London, at least in the sense that there are French associations and institutions, but not in other cities in England. The closest aspect to a community seems to be the Internet community, and most specifically the Facebook groups on which French people in different cities exchange information and sometimes organise offline meetings.

5.3.3 The online French community

As explained in 5.3.2, many Facebook groups were created by and for francophones in different British cities to meet and share information about their life in the UK, as indicated in the following descriptions of some of these groups: "Meeting and exchange circle for French/French speakers in Nottingham, UK" (*Les Français à Nottingham*, Facebook, 638 members[35]); "Meetings, tips, events, parties... Share them!"(*French people in Birmingham*, Facebook, 3,500 members); "A support group for French students who are exploring the UK. Feel free to share your experiences and ask questions." (*Etudiants Français au Royaume-Uni*, Facebook, 2,000 members); "Welcome to all French & Francophile members!

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[35] Number of members in December 2021.

This group aims to bring together French people in Bristol and Francophiles in order to create real solidarity within the community. We help you, please consider helping in return." (*Le Forum des Français A Bristol*, Facebook, 2,600 members).

The largest group is *Le Cercle des Français de Londres* mentioned previously, which currently has 77,600 members (December 2021). This group gathers francophones who live, have lived or are planning to live in or simply visit London. Its description reads:

> "A gathering of French people ready to help each other to succeed in their lives, their stays in London...Interested? Are concerned: all those who have had an experience in this city or will get to join us in this great city! Spread the word by inviting your friends to the group! Once we are all together, a project will take shape to make life easier for all French / Londoners.[36]" (*Le Cercle des Français de Londres*, Facebook, 77,600 members)

Over 100 replies for this research were collected via a publication on this Facebook group, most of the participants who responded via this publication lived in or around London, but some of them did not. It shows that many members of this group live outside of London but joined *Le Cercle des Français de Londres* as it is the most active one, and therefore their questions on this group will usually receive more replies than on the others. In these groups, people usually ask various questions about how to travel between France and the UK, how to find accommodation, a professional, French food, or how to watch French TV for instance, as mentioned in 5.2.3. They also regularly ask if other members of the group would like to meet for drinks or food. Al-Rawi (2019) who worked on Facebook groups created by and for Arab migrants in Canada argues that Facebook "provides the technological means as well as the ease to form this online community" (2019: 567) and that Arab migrants in Canada used this social media to connect and exchange information with other migrants in Canada. Facebook groups in this study were also used by people who were planning to move to Canada and wanted information from migrants who were already there, such as advice on how to get a visa (2019: 568). Facebook groups for ethnic communities in different countries and cities are more and more popular and used by migrants to communicate with other people from their home country who are living or planning to move to the host country. A literature review of studies about online migrant communities can be found in 2.3.4.

The fact that my research received over 500 responses mainly by sharing it on these groups could also demonstrate a form of solidarity between French migrants on social media. Participants were willing to help research about French migrants, and to meet others via the focus groups as mentioned by I161:

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[36] All the Facebook groups descriptions mentioned in this section are originally in French and were translated for this research.

"It's true that I have a few French or Francophones in my network of friends […] I feel the need to reconnect, well not all the time, but it feels good to be able to speak French, that's why I was happy when you contacted me!" (I161, FG2).

However, as mentioned in 5.3.2, participants who do not live in London mentioned that despite the number of members in these groups, they did not always see a real French community in their city, I214 (F, 36/55, Bristol 2000) for instance said "There's a huge French community in Bristol, it's mostly on social media", I146 (F, 55/76, Nottingham, 1970 FG1) also mentioned the Facebook group for French people in Nottingham "there are groups on Facebook, French people in Nottingham etc, there are a lot of French people in Nottingham but I don't know where they are!". It seems that contrary to some other diasporas where migrants meet both online and offline and help and support each other, preserving their culture together (Que & Correa, 2018: 1) and even attempt to "recreate home" in the host country (Gao & al. 2021: 1), there is no "French community" in this sense, especially outside of London. Participants in London all said that they could see and interact with other francophones daily, which was not always the case for participants outside of the capital, especially those in smaller cities.

This section has shown that some migrants used social media to connect and create cultural communities in their new countries. These communities are useful for migrants to help each other find places to rent or simply serve as moral support for each other by re-creating a network they lost when leaving their countries.

5.3.4 Can we talk about a French community in England?

The previous sections revealed that the participants tended to have negative representations of the French community in the UK, and often more specifically in London. It was described as French people "living like French people but in London" (I100) "always staying together" (I157) and "speaking in French amongst themselves" (I410), not trying to "integrate" (I157) and therefore "excluding themselves" (I464) from British society. Participants mentioned the "expats" in London, who were sent by their companies for a short mission to the British capital and usually did not seem to make efforts to meet people outside of the community as they knew they would not stay in the country. They discussed the difference between this type of migrant, and themselves who moved here because they "really wanted to" (I157, FG3). Some of them also could not relate to the social class usually associated with South Kensington and did not feel they belonged to it or wish to, as seen in 5.3.1.

Therefore, as showed in 5.3.1, most participants claimed they consciously avoided the French community (or other French migrants in general) when they moved to the UK as they did not come to another country to stay with French people, as also found in other studies such as Ryan & Mulholland (2014: 159) or Huc-Hepher and Drake (2013: 402). Several, like I508 in 5.3.2, thought that apart from the perceived "nonsense" of moving to a country to stay in their community, "in Rome, you do as the

Romans do", and have a "duty" to integrate as a form of respect for the country that hosts you. I508 then argues that French people also dislike English people who settle in France and live there like they would in England. It was also mentioned by Italian migrants in London in Pepe (2020: 129) who believed that Italians should "respect the host country's behaviour rules" as "a failure to comply with these norms shows disrespect". As a result, they tend to distance themselves from those who they perceive as "not integrating", perpetuating the notion of the "good migrant" who actively strives to assimilate into their new culture, versus the "bad" migrant who isolates themselves within their own community, speaks only their native language, and refuses to integrate into the host country's cultural norms (see 6.4). It is also interesting to note that the French words "communauté" and "communautarisme" are not exact equivalents for "community" and "communitarianism" as in the French context, they are often wrongly associated and used in a pejorative way, denoting this idea of people who "refuse to integrate" into the country (see 5.4.2), most of the time to refer to religious (and more specifically Muslim) communities (Mostfa, 2017: 18). Therefore, it could also be an explanation for some participants' negative perceptions and reject of the French community.

Nevertheless, would it be correct to assert that there is no "French community" in England? In the context of London, although most participants refused to be associated with it, there are many examples of a "traditional" community, not only in South Kensington but also in other areas of the capital such as Clapham or East London (Huc-Hepher and Drake, 2013: 422). Institutions such as l'*Institut Français*, the French Chamber of Commerce or French schools including the *Lycée Charles de Gaulle*, but also French restaurants, cafés, and bakeries (Huc-Hepher, 2021b: 25) are frequented by many French people in the capital, who often develop social networks in these places (Mulholland & Ryan, 2014: 159).

Furthermore, although participants even outside of London mentioned avoiding the French community at first, most of them recognised that they ended up forming friendships with other French people. Other studies such as Mulholland and Ryan (2014: 150) found that often the frustration of being unable to develop relationships with English people led migrants to start frequenting mainly other migrants, often from their home country. Participants in my research mentioned the difficulties they had to form friendships with British people because of their cultural differences. Another explanation given in Mulholland and Ryan (2014: 150) is that English people are "reluctant to invest in friendships with migrants because of their apparent transience", which would explain why the "expats" particularly tend to remain amongst themselves, as they know that they are only staying in the country for a short amount of time, and British people around them know it as well. Therefore, as found in Huc-Hepher and Drake (2013: 404), despite their initial efforts to meet British people, my participants' networks were mainly made of French and non-British migrants. Although participants do not think

they belong to the French community, like those in Pepe (2020) they "substitute the national community with a narrow group of intimate friends that replaces the whole community and provides a feeling of belonging" (2020: 131). Another aspect of a French community mentioned in 4.4, is that parents, often mothers, develop French networks after the birth of their children to create a francophone environment meant to help them "become bilingual" (Brahic, 2020: 2176). Furthermore, most of the participants were recruited through social media, including Facebook groups created by and for French people in England, as seen in 5.3.3, which shows their involvement in an online community.

Finally, while it may be inexact to talk about "physical" communities outside of London, I found what Huc-Hepher (2021b) refers to as a "common-unity of practices". As in Pepe (2020: 120), participants for instance often referred to their "French food habits", as shown with the example of drinking hot chocolate from a bowl mentioned by I25 or I390 saying that British people called him "odd" because of his breakfast was different from theirs and claiming "I wasn't going to eat oats, no!". Therefore, as illustrated by the quote from Huc-Hepher (2021b) at the beginning of this chapter, while my participants distanced themselves from the French community, they tended to "reassert their Frenchness through their homemaking practices" and still developed "a sense of community through their shared 'originary' practices" (2021b: 7).

In conclusion, most of the participants recognised the existence of a French community, especially in London, but rejected the idea of "living like French people in France but in England", like participants in Pepe (2020) they "refuse the traditional mechanisms of grouping and the implications that this membership could have" (2020: 69). Nevertheless, it would be incorrect to conclude that there is no French community at all, even outside of the capital, as this section showed that several forms of communities did exist.

The first sections of this chapter replied to the first part of the research question "What role does the French language play in the expression of their identity?". It revealed that although the participants did not always identify their native language as what defines them, they still considered it as important as it carries their culture. It also showed that most French people started to define themselves as French only after leaving France, and that while they did not seek a French community, it was often easier for them to connect with other francophones. The last section of this chapter will answer the second part of the research question which is "Did Brexit impact how French migrants perceive their national identity?".

5.4 Brexit, EU, and national identity

5.4.1 Applying for a British Passport

Another important aspect of identity to analyse in this chapter is the impact of Brexit on French migrants' national identity and feeling of belonging. This section will show that Brexit was often perceived as a painful event which revived a French and/or European identity for some participants. It also made most of the participants consider either applying for British citizenship or leaving the UK. As argued by Mulholland and Ryan (2023: 614) French migrants had nuanced and complex reactions to Brexit. While for some it triggered dis-embedding and sometimes re-embedding in France, it confronted others with "the need for a conscious process of deliberate political re-embedding" in the UK (2023: 615). Embedding (see 2.4.1), coined by Ryan and Mulholland (2014), is a conceptual tool to understand migrants' "dynamic, complex, multidimensional and spatially differentiated processes of attachments" (Ryan 2018: 235). While this concept was originally used to help explain how changes on the individual level could impact migration plans, Brexit created an opportunity to observe how an unsettling event on the socio-political level like this one could affect migrants' feelings of belonging and their migration strategies (2023: 615).

A settlement status scheme allowing EU residents who settled before January 2021 to remain in the UK was put in place on August 28th, 2018. From the beginning of the scheme until June 30th, 2021, 5 504 200 EU citizens, including over 200,000 French migrants, applied for it (Home Office, 2021).
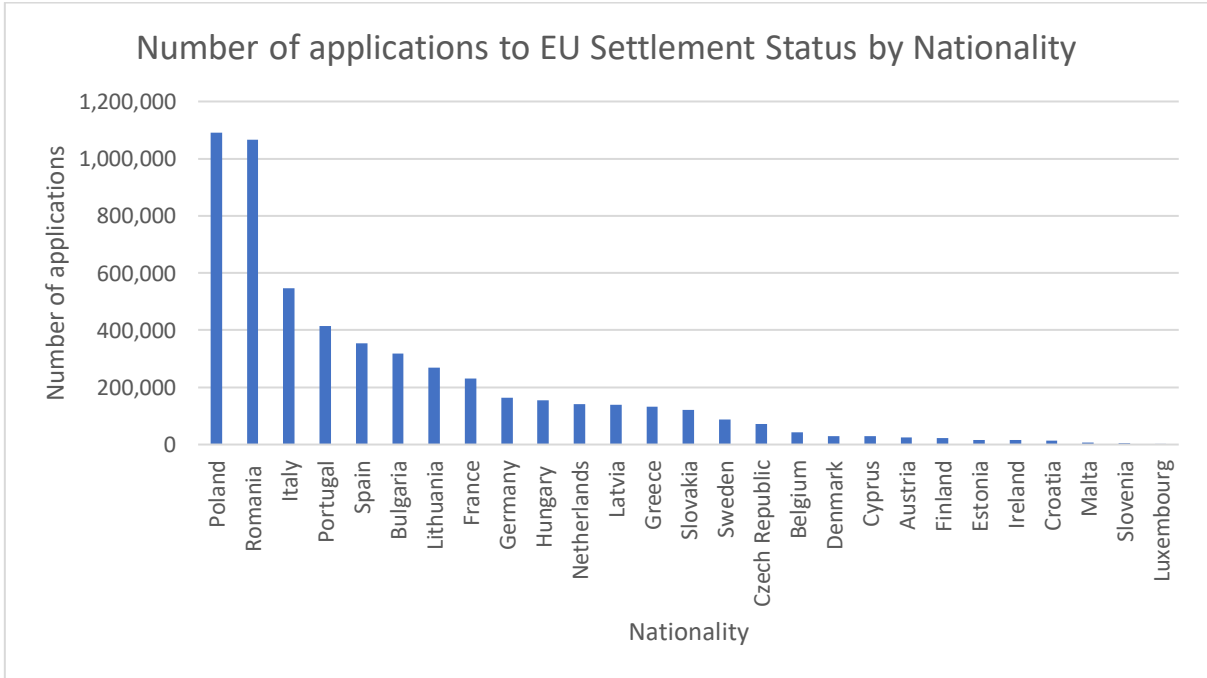
Figure 25: Number of applications to EU Settlement status by nationality (Home Office, 2021)

Figure 25 shows the number of applications to the EU settlement scheme by nationality reported by the Home Office in 2021. In 2019, over a year after its launch, less than half of the French people living

in the UK had applied for it (Home Office, 2019). Mulholland and Ryan (2023) explain that French respondents in their study delayed their application and that in 2018, most of them had not applied for permanent residency or settled status. The main reason mentioned was the uncertainty of the immediate future, French people preferred waiting to see how much would be required for them to stay in the UK (2023: 609).

In May 2016, the Centre for Population Change published a briefing about EU migrants' strategies regarding leaving or staying in the UK in the years following Brexit. Their key findings were that the majority were planning to stay in the UK and 65% were considering applying for citizenship or permanent residency. They also noted different attitudes between different nationalities, migrants from countries that recently joined the EU were most likely to apply for British citizenship than others (Moreh et al., 2016:1). Another brief published the same year also predicted that Brexit would push some EU migrants to apply for citizenship, although they never considered this option before (Falkingham, 2016: 1; Recchi, 2015: 7; Reed-Danahay, 2020: 20).

Zontini and Genova (2022:651) argue that there is a "hierarchy of privilege" and explain that Europeans from "old EU countries" tended to react with anger and resentment to Brexit, as they perceived this sudden loss of rights they had enjoyed for years as unjust. On the contrary, as they experienced labour restrictions up until 2014, migrants from "new EU countries", such as Bulgarians in Zontini and Genova (2022), were less likely to take these privileges for granted and tended to feel "gratitude and desire for inclusion" (2022: 651). Godin & Sigona (2022: 1146) also argue that some new EU migrants' traumatic memories of hostile policies prior to EU mobility rights led them to acquire British citizenship, to prevent these painful experiences from happening again. The government's data indeed shows that Romanians and Polish were amongst the top EU nationalities that applied for the EU settlement scheme from its launch in 2018 (Home Office, 2021) and were granted citizenship in 2022 (Home Office, 2023).

Godin and Sigona (2022) discuss how EU migrants' home countries but also their race impacted their decision to apply for British citizenship. Participants who already experienced racism and anti-immigration hostility before Brexit, such as Eastern and Central Europeans, but also Black people would be more likely to consider naturalisation as a way to ensure they would be treated equally (Godin and Sigona, 2022: 1136). This is illustrated by mixed-race couples in Godin and Sigona (2022: 1136) and Zambelli (2020: 11). In both studies, white EU nationals failed to understand their partners' anxiety and haste to obtain British citizenship, as they tended to be confident in the validity of their residence title (Zambelli, 2020: 10). Zambelli (2020) explains that this "serene confidence […] betrays [their] white habitus to the privileges tethered to [their] national and European citizenship-privileges materialized in their spatial mobility aspect" (2020:10) whereas their Black partners' lack of trust in

these documents was "a symptom of the racialized affective economy of (un)belonging revealed by Brexit and the Windrush scandal" (2020: 11).

Corroborating some of these findings, in my research, only five of the 33 participants interviewed in 2020 declared having applied, or being in the process of applying, for British citizenship. All of them explained that they only did it because of Brexit. They often used verbs indicating it was something they felt forced to do rather than a real choice, such as "with Brexit, *I had to* apply for a British passport"[37] (I161, FG2). None of them had considered applying for British citizenship before Brexit happened. Europeans who have a settlement status can spend up to five consecutive years outside of the UK but will lose their status if they spend more than five years abroad (gov.uk, 2021b). Therefore, like some of the participants in Godin and Sigona (2021: 1144), several in my study explained that it was because they were considering leaving the UK that they applied for citizenship, so that they would be able to come back if they did so: "And with Brexit, I applied for British citizenship and obtained it, I originally did not want to leave but not I'm no longer sure." (I100, F, 36/55, London, 2011, FG7); "I'm starting to wonder, I'm also in the process of applying for nationality, because if I go away for a few years, let's say to another country, Germany, or whatever, I know I can come back, I have a status that can't be taken away from me because it's true that I love this country very much, and I may come back afterwards."(I25, F, 26/35, London, 2008, FG7). Like I25, several participants mentioned that although they did not "feel British" (I161, F, 36/55, Loughborough, 1994, FG2) they loved the UK and the British culture and would probably want to come back if they left. All the participants made explicit that their application was not related to their identity but was about ensuring that they would be able to remain in the UK and have the same rights as other British citizens:

> "With Brexit, I had to apply for a British passport because it was the easiest solution, even if it was very expensive and very complicated, that I had to appeal even though I had been living in England for 20 years, the process took 18 months, £2,500… I'll skip the details but I don't really feel British, but I appreciate the British culture" (I161, FG2)
>
> "We decided a few weeks ago to apply for British nationality […] because we have the indefinite right to remain and so if we ever had to go back to France, we'd lose the possibility of returning to the UK. Our 10-year-old kid might be happy to come and study at Cambridge or Oxford, and above all, it might allow us to vote [...] So I've already started, well, applying was painful deeply, really, and besides, a lot of people in my family told me 'What are you doing?! Are you insane??'" (I390, M, 56/75, Cambridge, 2012 FG2)

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[37] "*avec le Brexit j'ai dû demander le passeport britannique*".

These two quotes also highlight the painful process of applying for British citizenship. On one side, the long and onerous process of the application is perceived as a burden, also described by participants in Mulholland and Ryan as "fraught with failure and upset" (2023: 609). It can also be linked to the narratives of deservingness that "often construct EU citizens as 'good citizens', who contribute to British society in Godin & Sigona (2022: 1147). Besides, I161 explaining that she had to appeal "even though she had been living in England for 20 years" shows a feeling of resentment and unfairness mirroring participants' experiences of acquiring British citizenship in Mulholland and Ryan (2023), society as hard-working taxpayers" (Godin & Sigona, 2022: 1146). Earlier in this interview, I161 does also mention being a "high taxpayer" who "probably contributed more to the country" than a Brexit supporter who confronted her in the marketplace, implying that she "deserves" to be here (see 6.4).

These quotes show that beyond the financial aspect of the application, it also entails emotional distress for the applicants. The exact words in French used by I390 were "*ça m'a fait mal aux tripes, vraiment*" literally "it hurt my guts, really". The gut is the symbol of intuition, but also of a deep upsetting feeling, it displays the participant's visceral (term also used by I146 in 5.4.2) sensation, almost physically painful, when applying for citizenship as if it had resulted in illness, indicating that this decision was unnatural. Zontini and Genova (2022) whose study aims at "understanding Brexit and integration through emotions" grouped migrants' reactions into three categories: betrayal, ambivalence, and indifference (2022: 645). They argue that "those who expressed ambivalence were trying hard to embed themselves, despite the emotional costs this entailed" (2022: 650).

Furthermore, I390's decision to apply for British citizenship was met with incomprehension from his own family, adding to the painful experience of applying for a passport seen as unwanted but necessary. Several studies showed the tensions Brexit created within families, not only when realising some members had voted for Brexit, but also within families who had different opinions on acquiring British citizenship, as in Zambelli (2020), mentioned at the beginning of this section.

To resume on the perceived loss of rights and new necessity of obtaining a British passport, like participants in Godin and Sigona's (2022), I472 talks about applying to be "protected":

> "I'm in the process of obtaining English nationality, more from a legal point of view, I'd say, precisely with the idea of having children and buying a house. I think I wasn't considering it before Brexit, but now that Brexit is done I told myself that I'd prefer to have British nationality, to have this protection, not at all in the sense of losing French culture because we're still French anyway and it won't change anything, yeah we'll always be French but it's more in the sense that since I intend to stay I'd still prefer to have English nationality, as well as French." (I472, FG6, F, 26/35, South Shields, 2013).

Godin & Sigona (2022) argue that "naturalization is, for many EU citizens in the UK, a response to a perceived loss (defensive narratives) and threat (protective narratives)" and that their family was often the main motivation for it (2022: 1150). Like those in Godin and Sigona (2022) or Reed-Danahay (2020: 20), participants in my research who applied for a British passport tended to be married to British citizens, have children and/or have lived in the UK for a long time, in order to keep the family together and ensuring everyone has the same rights and opportunities (Godin & Sigona, 2022: 1143) while retaining freedom of movement (2022: 1150). As explained above by I390, one of the reasons he and his family applied for citizenship was to ensure his son would not miss opportunities in the future because he does not hold a British passport, such as returning to the UK to "study in Cambridge or Oxford". As shown in Godin & Sigona, although EU migrants often expressed negative feelings towards their naturalisation, this additional passport is often seen by parents as a necessary sacrifice for their children's future and rights (Godin & Sigona, 2021: 1142).

5.4.2 Dual nationality

It is interesting to note at the end of the previous section that I472 specified "as well as French", as other participants also mentioned that they could consider applying for a British passport only because they can keep their French one and therefore have dual nationality:

> "I totally agree with I472 about nationality, the first thing I did was to check if we can have dual nationality, and we can. I'll never give up my French [citizenship] if I had to choose between French and another, I'd never do it, but as I know we can have both I wouldn't mind at all. But yes, with the pandemic and maybe Brexit but mostly the pandemic, I realised I was French, and I'll never be English. Maybe I used to think 'I've been living here for so long, that's it, I'm a little bit English', but in the end, I'll always be French." (I160, F, 26/35, London, 2014, FG6).

Other participants also mentioned that they felt "deeply French", especially since Brexit, and associated their passport with their identity and therefore did not wish to apply for British citizenship. Some of them such as I160 or I375 were not completely rejecting the idea:

> "My husband and I have been here for ten years, we both work here, so, for now, we have no intention of leaving, but it's true that people ask this question a lot, I have a friend who is Bulgarian but who has applied for British nationality, well I don't see myself taking that step yet because I associate my passport with my culture and my identity, but it's not definite at the moment [...] (I375, F, 26/35, Cambridge, 2003, FG6).

Others, such as I47, were more radical and claimed they would never be British:

> "I associate my passport with my culture, my language, and my identity, so I'll never ask for British nationality simply because I'll never feel English. I'm proud to be French, I'm French and so even if one day I marry an Englishman and have English children, I won't ask for nationality because I don't feel English." (I47, F, 26/35, Birmingham, 2012, FG6)

The fact that they associate their passport with their culture explains why participants in Godin & Sigona (2022) thought that applying for a British passport was a "betrayal towards their national and European identities" (2022: 1142). Q350 also mentioned being "proud to be French" and explained that it is the betrayal she felt when Brexit happened that reinforced this feeling and made her want to show that she exists as a French person in the UK (Q350, F, 36-55, Liverpool, 2003). Several participants also mentioned feeling they belonged to "something bigger" and felt European for instance:

> "It's almost as if I'm not a bit more attached to my French passport, whereas before I didn't ask myself the question, it was the, one of the great benefits of Europe is that we feel European, we feel French, but we also feel that we belong to something bigger." (I375, FG6, F, 26/35, Cambridge, 2003)

> "I don't know if I'll stay in the UK all my life it's not part of my plan anyway, but it has nothing to do with the fact that I don't feel French anymore because of the British context and Brexit. Anyway, the term identity is extremely complex to define I don't feel only French I'm, well, I'm European culturally speaking but politically I feel more French than British or European but that's another thing" (I122, FG8, M, 26/35, London, 2017).

Reed-Danahay (2020) also found that French migrants in the UK also showed that a stronger European identity was brought by Brexit:

> "French identity is strong but a consciousness of European identity and affiliation became increasingly present and viewed positively in the wake of the Brexit vote (even when the EU itself may be the subject of criticisms). The French have benefited for almost thirty years from the free movement of EU citizens within the EU that was established with the Maastricht Treaty." (Reed-Danahay 2020: 26)

It was not only the case for French migrants, as Brändle et al. (2018) also show that people who voted to remain in the EU also started to identify more as European after the Brexit vote and that "the number of people identifying as both British and European has also increased since the referendum, reaching 48% in 2017 – the highest level since 1992" (2018: 811). They also found that the percentage of UK-born protesters who had dual citizenship was much higher than in the population in Britain as a whole, which shows that UK-born citizens with dual nationality were motivated to protest (2018: 826) and therefore probably tended to identify as Europeans even more than other citizens. Some

participants in my research were bi-national and/or had bi-national children and explained that defining their national identity was not always easy. I214 for instance compared her own experience of growing up in different cultures with her children's:

> "[My children] asked us several times, telling us 'we are more English than French' because they're not fluent in French, but I tell them that it's two different nationalities, a mix of both […] but they never had identity issues […] they know I'm originally from Algeria, my parents are Algerians, they're Muslims, they understand that their dad is from the North of England […] they never had an identity crisis like I did when I was younger when I didn't know if I was French […] It was a problem because at home I was told I was Algerian, and at school, I was told 'no you're born in France, you're French'[…] it was difficult for me, really, but not for them." (I214, FG4)

I214's testimony highlights the difference between her European children's identity and her own "identity crisis" as a child of Algerian migrants in France. Maamri (2009) describes the "paralysis" and "deep wound" that "the colonial heritage has left on Algeria" (2009: 88). As for over a hundred years, Algerians were forced to identify with the "French Other" and to reject their own culture and language, it resulted in a feeling of split identity, of a "doubling, dissembling image of being in at least two places at once" (Bhabha, 2004: 64), leaving them "struggling for a sense of themselves, a positive self-identity" (Maamri, 2009: 81).

Nelson (2022) shows that Algerians who migrated to France post-1962 and their descendants are still navigating these complex and conflicting identities that "took shape through the colonial encounter" (Nelson, 2022: 142). Her work revealed that while most of her participants tended to treat "Frenchness as the opposite of Algerianness", many incorporated "French identity into their own identities" and that the question of identity in the case of Algerians in France was not binary, such as being French or Algerian but "a matter of degree, content, and situation rather than a static or zero-sum state of being" (2021: 193). Nelson (2021) also found that second-generation Algerians, such as I214, were also more likely than their parents to explore different identities and embrace some aspects of their French identity while relying on their family to find their Algerian identity (2021: 193-4).

Moreover, I214's experience of bi-nationality may be different from her children's due to the perpetuating symbolic violence against people of Algerian origin in France, repeatedly blamed for being "foreigners" who refuse to "integrate" into French society (Nelson, 2021: 148), reiterating the "colonial legacy of racism and stereotypes" (Poinsot, 2012: 2). As well as negative media representations and frequent discriminations Algerians face in France, Tchumkan (2015: 1) argues that successive French governments have drawn a line between "us" and "them", those who are worthy to

access "Frenchness" and those who are not (see 6.4 for further discussion of "un/deserving" migrants). Therefore, I214's children probably did not go through the same "identity crisis" as she did because their experience of growing up with dual nationality as Europeans in Europe was different.

Several Franco-British participants, who often also lived in other European countries (I146, FG1; I263, FG2), defined their identity as "European" and declared being particularly affected by the outcome of the EU referendum. For some of them, their French and European identity became even stronger after Brexit. It is for instance the case for I146's daughter, who was born and raised in England and decided to apply for a French passport after the vote:

> "My daughter […] studied French and Spanish at university, spent some time in Peru, she really is European and international. [Brexit] really affected her, and as until now she didn't have a French passport, it was the first thing she did, she went to the Consulate to collect her French ID, to claim her right to be European, and French, and British. For her it's visceral to be French, even though she never spent time in France, apart from holidays, she didn't go for a year abroad in France because she went to Spain instead, so it's something she doesn't want to lose […] it's a part of her." (I146, FG1)

Some participants also mentioned that if they had to apply for another nationality than French, it would not be for British:

> "As for Brexit, the passport and all of that, I can apply for the British passport since I've been here for over five years um… but I'm not interested I'll keep the French passport. I know I can have both but yeah no, I might have an attachment to France and if I ever try to do papers for another country it would be for India as I was born in India I have more of an attachment to that country but the British passport, no and if there's a problem and we have to leave [the UK] yeah I'll go to France." (I493, FG10, M, 36/55, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 2013)

The five participants who applied or are considering applying for British citizenship were already in the UK before the EU referendum. Nevertheless, many participants who have been living in the UK for a long time, such as I146 who moved to the UK in 1970 and acknowledged speaking English more often than French, said they still did not feel British and therefore would not apply for British citizenship:

> "Yes, I think [language] is an identity in the sense that it's something you never forget. Even if you don't speak French there's still an interest in knowing what's going on elsewhere, when I'm in France I read in English as well but um, so it's something that's part of me, I do not express it but yes, it's part of me. With Brexit it's out of the question that I apply for British nationality, I've got my settled status, but I see my identity as being

French rather than British. European maybe. I feel good here in my daily life but I don't feel part of the British system I'm still not British, at all" (I146, FG1, F, 56-75, Nottingham, 1970).

In conclusion, while it is possible to have both nationalities (French and British), most participants still did not choose to apply for a British passport. Many participants in this research, whether because they grew up in multicultural families or because of their experience of living outside of France felt not only French but also European and perceived Brexit as treason (Zontini & Genova, 2022: 645) which reinforced their French/European identity.

5.4.3 Should I stay or should I go? Migration strategies post EU referendum

Many participants also mentioned disliking the "uncertainty" and the perceived regression Brexit brought, as explained for instance by I500:

"When I moved here in 1986, we were not really well integrated and I vividly remember that we had to go through customs to bring my stuff back from Paris and so on, and I see this coming back and I don't feel nostalgic, I'm horrified. I think we're taking a huge step backwards where we used to have, well, it was so difficult back then to send money, to make phone calls, things like that, and now I don't even know how it's going to work out after Brexit, after 31 December, and if we're not going to go back to all of that" (I500, FG4).

Consequently, some participants are planning to leave the UK. Four out of five participants in this study plan to remain in the UK in the future, but among them, 6% specified that they were unsure or only planned to stay for a couple of years. Half of the participants who are planning to leave the UK in the near future said it was because or partly because of Brexit, whether because they no longer felt welcome, or because it had other impacts on their life, such as their company leaving the UK because of Brexit. Several of them such as Q103 (F, 26-35, London, Computing, 2013) or Q297 (F, 26-35, Hove, Education, 2015) also mentioned that Brexit was not the main reason for leaving the UK, but that it confirmed their decision (Q479, F, 26-35, Leicester, Education, 2013; Q195, F, 26-35, Birmingham, Sales/Business/Marketing, 2015) and/or "accelerated" the process (Q358, F, 26-35, Liverpool, Sales/Business/Marketing, 2014). Q159's (M, 26-35, Nottingham, Computing, 2017) departure for instance is due to "a conjecture of events including Brexit, Boris Johnson, the management of the Covid-19 crisis".

As mentioned in this chapter, French migrants tend to be privileged and live comfortably and therefore most of them would be able to leave the country if they no longer felt welcome, or even simply if they were not satisfied with the political situation. Godin and Sigona (2022: 1149) found that the "wait and see" approach was often adopted by more privileged migrants. A French woman in their study for instance explained that she considered herself a "global citizen with no border", and although she

"could not imagine being deported", if it was the case, she "would not want to live in a country like this anyway" (2022: 1149). Similarly in my research, when asked if they would change their language habits, and for instance no longer use their native language if they felt threatened, almost all the participants replied that they would not stay in a "country that does not want them". I25, for instance, who has been living for over 12 years in the UK, explained that she "loves the British mentality […] and London". Nevertheless, she is still unsure whether she wants to settle here permanently and said she could leave if her quality of life was impacted by Brexit. She did not have any issues after Brexit and never felt discriminated against, and explained that she would not stay if it was the case, as she would find opportunities elsewhere:

> "I would not even consider no longer speaking French, I think we would resist […] it's denying who you are, it means hiding, not speaking the language, being scared, it means we are in a hostile environment, to me hiding your language is something you do when you are somewhere where it is a necessity, but for us, we can leave, we can go to many other countries because we have a French passport, if you have a job that we can find elsewhere, in that case I would not stay in a hostile environment, I'm not interested in that, I'd rather go somewhere I'd be accepted." (I25, FG7)

It is what I0 for instance did, she felt "oppressed and stuck" from the moment the referendum started to be mentioned and therefore left the UK a month after the outcome of the vote. Q42 (F, 36-55, London, Education, 2000) and Q376 (F, 36-55, Liverpool, Education, 2005) also want to leave as they "no longer feel at home", and Q226 (M, 26-35, Bristol, Computing, 2019) who "feels European" does not feel comfortable England and therefore does not think he will stay here for "the rest of his life". Q208 (F, 26-35, Lytham St Annes, Energies/environment, 2018), Q214 (F, 36-55, Bristol, Health, 2000), Q170 (F, 26-35, Birmingham, Hotels & Restaurants/tourism, 2014) and Q267 (F, 26-35, Hinckley, Industries, 2012) talked about a "change in British people's mentality" and "attitudes" that strengthened their decision to leave. For Q178 (M, 26-35, Birmingham, Industries, 2016) it is because of "the unfavourable economic climate" and "the attitude of some English people making us feel as inferior as European citizens".

Therefore, although these are striking examples of dis-embedding from the UK for participants who felt a sense of loss of belonging after Brexit, as seen in the conclusion of Mulholland and Ryan (2023: 614), Brexit did not only "trigger widespread dis-embedding" but "more nuanced and differentiated responses". While it did trigger "dis-embedding and conscious re-embedding in France or elsewhere" (2023: 615) for those who are considering leaving the UK, for those who applied for citizenship, although it also led to "deliberate political re-embedding through efforts to secure their status and rights to live and work in the UK" (2023: 615). As also found in Mulholland & Ryan (2023) almost all of

my participants "lost some level of 'will to embed'" as "even those for whom citizenship constituted a means to re-embed, the context of their future embedding will necessarily be built on new reflexivities, and will never again have quite the same tacit foundations" (2023: 610). In conclusion, these findings suggest that Brexit had a complex impact on participants' sense of belonging and re-embedding, with some experiencing dis-embedding, while others attempted to re-embed in different ways.

5.4.4 "It's quite strange to think that it's always the other who defines you in the end"

A final interesting aspect in terms of national identity mentioned by two participants is that they felt their identity was always defined by how others perceived them rather than themselves. I201, an 18/25 woman who has lived in different countries before starting a PhD in Manchester in 2018 explained:

> "I haven't lived in France for more than four months in a row since 2015, so it's been five years and so almost all my life has been in English […] I've lived in Sweden, I've lived in Kosovo, I've lived here, I've moved around a lot, and therefore my French identity was given to me by others rather than by myself. It's something you have to say, otherwise, people can't place you and it's the others who tell you that 'ah you're French, so you have to be like this or like that' and it's true that for some things it made me realise that I'm French." (I201, FG9).

To this, I307 (M, 26/35, St Leonards on Sea) replied:

> "It's quite strange to think that it's always the other who defines you in the end, it's never yourself. I have the impression that I've always been told 'ah but you're French !' and I've never identified myself as French in my life, in fact when I meet people I don't think of saying 'yeah I'm French' and so on […] I don't feel French or English or anything, I just think I'm myself […] There are people who have lived for x years in France who will never define themselves as French even though they have a French ID and so on and people who have lived in England for x years who have the passport and so on but who will never identify [as English] so I think that identity is moving it's not fixed so I don't think I'm French, I don't think I'm English or I don't think I'm anything in fact."(I307, FG9).

As seen in 4.5.3, some bi-national participants also mentioned always being perceived as "French in England" and "English in France" (I263), which sometimes resulted in a sort of frustration:

> "[My children] have always felt bi-national. Speaking both languages and being exposed to both cultures from an early age, they know they are British and French. That said, they have often expressed frustration with the perception of the rest of the world: they are always 'the little French' in the UK, and 'the little English' in France! Few people know how

much this annoys them. In conclusion, there is a difference between what they know, and the image they are sent and […] it is sometimes a source of frustration. With age, this is something that they manage better and better. They understand that the way others look at them is not what defines them." (I0)

Sociologists and philosophers have argued that one's identity is indeed defined in relation to the other. Sartre's double negation "I am not the Other and the Other is not me" (Sartre, 1966: 313) shows that we define ourselves in relation to what we are not; Goffman argued that when individuals meet others, they acquire information about them that will help them know what the situation is and what is expected from them, and therefore act accordingly. He, therefore, explains that we "perform" in the presence of others (Goffman, 1959: 13). While in France, participants did not identify as French as most people around them were also French, as explained in 5.2.2, they may have identified to a regional identity more for instance. Once abroad, it is their French nationality and language that make them unique. As explained by I201 and I307, it is often the other who will point out what makes your singularity in a certain environment, your language or accent for instance.

Huc-Hepher (2021b) who analysed French migrants' language practices through Bourdieu's concepts found results similar to those presented in this chapter and showed that the French language is essential to understanding French migrants' identity in relation to the notion of habitus (see 5.1.1) and carries "complex symbolic meanings" (2021b: 6). Participants in that study also mentioned that they often heard stereotypes about the French and phrases such as "You're French so…" as also mentioned by I201, and while some of them found them painful, others also admitted "playing around these stereotypes" (2021b: 7). How French people are represented in England will be developed in 6.2, however, this confirms that the way French migrants are perceived, and the stereotypes associated with the French language and culture has an impact on French people's expression of their identity.

5.5 Chapter conclusion

This chapter addressed the following research questions:

3) a) What role does the French language play in the expression of French migrants' identity?

b) Did Brexit impact how they express their identity?

It showed that although the French language was not always mentioned immediately by the participants as a part of their identity, they often explained that it is linked to their culture and therefore it would be inconceivable for most of them not to use it. This chapter revealed that French migrants were overall "proud to be French", although they did not consider themselves nationalistic before leaving their home country. In terms of community, most participants believe that there is no real French community in England in the sense of a physical and active community of solidarity outside

of London, and those in the capital usually claimed they avoided the London French community. I found that, as argued in Huc-Hepher and Drake (2013: 425), even in London, the French community does not "perceive itself as a single, bonded entity" and that French migrants in the capital are "a group of diverse individuals keen to assert their individuality, but equally keen for it to go unnoticed in the urban mass that is London's population". The same conclusions as Cacciatorea & Pepe (2019) who work on Italian migrants in London can be drawn, it may be inaccurate to talk about a community because of "the lack of networks, links and structures for the new migrants to rely upon" (2019: 513) especially outside of London. Nevertheless, although French migrants in my study either did not think there was a French community in the UK or that they belonged to it, they used social media to help each other, talk about French culture and sometimes organise in-person gatherings, and usually found it easier to connect with other French people in the country.

Section 5.4 showed that Brexit had an impact on passport applications and strengthened a French and/or European identity for most participants, making them realise that even if they had been living in the UK for a long time and/or chose to take the British nationality, they would probably never identify as British. Brexit revived a French and/or European identity for many participants who only started to think about their national identity after the EU referendum (see 6.2). Most participants in this research chose not to apply for British citizenship as long as they can stay in the UK under the settlement scheme. Those who applied mentioned doing it for administrative purposes only, not because they "felt British", and would not have given up their French passport as they associate it with their French identity. Some participants mentioned that Brexit made them feel "more French" and/or "more European" than before, as some of them felt "betrayed" by it. It was particularly common among participants who were bi-national and those who were already living in the country before 2016. Finally, this chapter revealed that the feeling of uncertainty brought on by Brexit created forms of dis-embedding for an important part of the French population and that many were considering leaving the country in the near future.

Chapters 4 and 5 described and discussed how French migrants in England used their language and perceived their French identity, giving us enough background to analyse in more depth in Chapter 6 how Brexit impacted different aspects of French and other European migrants' languages and identities.

Chapter 6: Brexit, xenophobia and linguistic discrimination

6.1 Introduction

Chapter 5 explained how French migrants perceived their language in relation to their identity, how it was often defined by others and the impact of Brexit on national identity expression. This chapter will focus on how Brexit affected language attitudes and linguistics discrimination in England between the EU referendum in 2016 and the UK withdrawal from the EU in 2020. It will present the different experiences and feelings of participants during this period and answer the following research questions:

4   a) Does Brexit seem to have an impact on the way they perceive and use the French language?

b) Do French migrants in England feel discriminated against or threatened because of their native language?

c) To what extent do factors such as age, gender, or the number of Leave votes in their area have an impact on French migrants' language attitudes?

Several studies focus on EU migrants' experiences of discrimination in the UK before the EU referendum and some are currently being published about their experiences after 2016 (see 2.4.2 for the literature review about the impact of Brexit on migrants in the UK). Benedi Lahuerta & Iusmen (2021) worked on EU nationals' vulnerability in the context of Brexit, and differentiate three types of vulnerability: institutional discrimination, negative media coverage and political discourse, and discrimination and hate incidents (2021: 287-288). However, only a few studies (Brahic & Lallement, 2018; Huc-Hepher, 2021b, Reed-Danahay 2020a) described the experiences of French migrants in the UK, most studies published before and after the EU referendum focused on Eastern Europeans (Duru, et al, 2016; Johansson, 2016; McGhee, 2017; Ryan, 2017; Rzepnikowska, 2019; Veličković, 2020). This thesis, and particularly this chapter, intends to show how different migrants in England perceived the impact of Brexit on British attitudes towards them and how they reacted to it.

The data analysed in this chapter will be compared to the experiences lived by other European nationals in the UK, whose testimonies were gathered in a book published in 2018 titled *In Limbo*. The *In Limbo Project* started as a Facebook group called "*In Limbo- our Brexit testimonies*" created by two European women residing in the UK: Elena Remigi, an Italian interpreter and translator, and Véronique Martin, a French author. The objective of this project was to give a voice to EU citizens in the UK after the EU referendum, by allowing them to share in a safe environment their experiences and stories about how Brexit affected their lives. Over 1000 members joined the group in less than a month, and the testimonies collected between March and April 2017 were gathered in a book (InLimbo.com, 2020). I will show in this chapter that my participants reported similar experiences to those described by other Europeans in *In Limbo*.

The first section of this chapter will focus on the weeks surrounding the results of the UK EU membership referendum which took place on June 23rd, 2016. It will show that even though most participants claimed they did not experience any discrimination towards them, they perceived the Eurosceptic climate surrounding the vote as stressful. Section 6.3 will describe the different discriminations, aggressions, and microaggressions/Subtle Acts of Exclusion (SAE) experienced by some of the participants both before and after 2016. I will argue that participants tend to dismiss these forms of symbolic violence by either denying their discriminatory aspects or wondering if they are becoming "paranoid" because of Brexit. Then, section 6.4 will examine what participants described as "latent xenophobia" in the UK that was exacerbated by Brexit and compare the experience of French migrants with those of other European migrants in the country and show how distinctions between migrants perceived as "desirable" and "undesirable" are often made. Section 6.5 will analyse different factors that could have an impact on participants' experience in England. Finally, in section 6.6, I will argue that despite denying at first occurrences of microaggressions and their impact on their language habits, some participants admitted being "more careful" when speaking French in public places since 2016.

6.2 "I felt like a foreigner": the weeks following the EU referendum

6.2.1 "I don't think it has any impact on us": Positive post-Brexit experiences

This section will focus on participants' experiences and feelings during the weeks following the EU referendum in June 2016. Analysing how people felt then and now, four years later, is important to evaluate potential changes in their language habits and attitudes and whether they would be temporary or lasting.
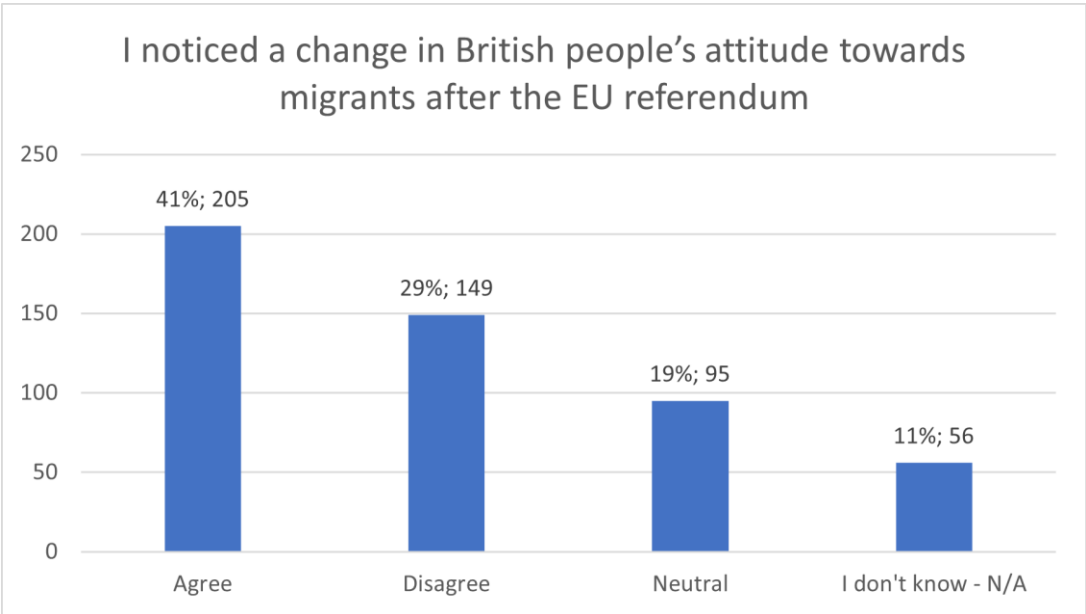
Figure 26: Question 18.1-Have you noticed a change in British attitudes towards migrants since the EU referendum?

Figure 26 shows that almost half of the participants (41%) agree with the statement "I noticed a change in British attitudes towards migrants since the EU referendum", 29% disagree and 30% are neutral or do not know. The qualitative data gives us more information about these numbers. Many participants in this study thought that Brexit did not have an impact on their life in England, at least as far as language attitudes and discrimination were concerned. Participants stated "not really feeling discriminated in any way" (Q496, F, 18-25, Southampton, Industries, 2019), being "well-integrated and accepted" and not having "any problem here" (Q499, 36-55, Portsmouth, Business/Marketing, 2020) or sometimes even feeling valued for their culture: "I obtained a job in which I feel valued for having a different culture" (Q357, F, 26-35, Liverpool, Business/Marketing, 2018); "My observation about English people is that they are a tolerant and kind people, interested in […] and respecting other cultures" (Q277, F, 26-35, Leicester, Hotels & Restaurants/ Tourism, 1997). A number of them did not feel a change in British people's attitudes towards French people (Q319, F, 26-35, Maidstone, Education, 2015) and never felt like "being a foreigner was an issue" (Q518, F, 36-55, Bristol, Social services, 2020).

According to some participants, immigration was not the main reason for people to vote for Brexit, which will be discussed in 6.4.1 and 6.5.3: "Pro-Brexit people are not necessarily against expatriates, it's rarely the case. Most of the time it is about regaining a stronger national identity, or for economic reasons, but the UK has always been a welcoming and multicultural country, I don't think it has any impact on us." (Q364, M, 36-55, Cambridge, Hotels & Restaurants/Tourism, 2019); "If you think that Brexit will affect the quality of life of a French person in England, you are misjudging the situation" (Q400, M, 36-55, Preston, Business/Marketing, 2018).

Most of the participants interviewed said they received support and kind words from British people around them after the results of the EU referendum, as seen in 6.2. Often, British people felt embarrassed when mentioning Brexit to them and apologised for the outcome of the vote: "The Brexit vote was hard for everybody [...] I saw colleagues cry that I had never seen cry before, and even apologise about Brexit" (I253, FG5); "I felt that my friends and colleagues were embarrassed by the results of the vote. They even told me 'at least you'll be able to remain in the EU with your passport'" (Q263). Q263 then developed in her focus group:

> "On the morning of the results of the Brexit vote, well I was pregnant, but I cried! I was heartbroken, and I thought 'Oh no, people are going to look at me differently now'. So I felt something and I was a bit scared and anxious about going to work […] thinking that people were going to tell me 'take your passport and leave now'. But actually, the opposite happened, I know we tend to surround ourselves with people who have the

same values but […] it was really positive […] like I had an advantage now because I had an EU passport and they did not, they were in the other side 'what can we do to obtain a French passport because we don't want to stay here'." (I263, FG2)

Some of the participants' partners were British and considered leaving their country after the vote: "My partner is English […] and like me, he felt a change in British people's attitudes towards foreigners since Brexit and no longer really wishes to be associated with them. He will probably leave the UK with me." (Q139); "My husband was really affected and wanted to leave his country" (Q404).

Other participants reported that numerous conversations about Brexit and immigration happened after the vote: "I did not notice a direct change, let's say that the day or weeks that followed [the vote] there were obviously a certain number of discussions, comments and things like that" (I472, FG6). Some participants, such as I0 who left the UK a few months after the EU referendum, also explained that all these conversations about Brexit and immigration, even well-intentioned ones, could be sometimes problematic for her:

> "I felt oppressed and trapped like never before, even before the vote (as soon as Cameron talked about this referendum, it started to be a problem for me…. it only got worse once the date of the vote was decided, and then with every debate, every pro-Brexit ad etc.). It's not so much a language problem as a political/media problem. But every conversation about the issue pushed me further out of the UK. Even when I was faced with pro-Remain friends, some of their rhetoric was problematic for me. The worst were well-intentioned people who completely failed to understand my concerns, but how could they? For them, the question was 'but you've been here so many years, surely you can become a British citizen?'. But I had no desire to become British. On the contrary! I refused to pay for the right to continue doing what I had been doing so well for so long. And I considered that I was making enough of a good and strong contribution to my local community (French or not, since I was teaching in a comprehensive school…)" (I0, F, Plymouth)

Therefore, as it will be shown in 6.2.2, even well-intentioned conversations, because of their nature and recurrence, created a stressful climate according to several participants. The next section will indeed show that for most participants, the weeks following the EU referendum were uncomfortable and created a climate of tension and anxiety.

6.2.2 "Something broke": post-EU referendum disappointment

As 6.2.1 started to show, even participants who said they did not perceive negative attitudes towards them mentioned feeling uncomfortable after Brexit. Most participants who were in the UK when the EU referendum happened described a perceptible climate of tension. Many recall the weeks before

and after the EU referendum as being stressful. Different negative emotions were mentioned by participants to describe how they felt on the morning of the EU referendum results: "stupefaction and shock" (I390, FG2), "sadness" (FG3) "uncertainty" (FG5), "stress" (Q251, I264); "shocked" (Q226). Three participants (Q410, I157, I214) used the phrase "très/vraiment déçu(e)" (very/really disappointed)[38]:

> "I'm disappointed because I have people around me, neighbours, who voted for Brexit and so on, but also people I know who voted [Leave] and I'm really disappointed to hear Boris Johnson say that they're going to get out without a deal, it's... Well, it's not what it was before." (I214, FG4, F, Bristol, 2000)

> "I was really disappointed because there was so much rivalry between France and England with all the wars and so on, but there was always this hope on my side, I don't know why, that France and England in difficult times would both be united to try to help each other rather than divide. And I really had this impression that there was a division being created." (I157, FG3, M, London, 2006)

In these examples, the participants' disappointment seems to partly come from a feeling that they belonged to the country as they all belonged to the EU, to "something bigger" as described by some participants and that, therefore, the UK leaving the EU almost felt like a "betrayal" (Q350). As seen in 5.4.2, several participants during the focus groups mentioned "feeling European" (I263, FG2; I141, FG2; I128, FG8; I375, FG6), I375 for instance talks about this feeling of "belonging to something bigger" (see 5.4):

> "I didn't have a bad experience after the announcement and the vote, but yeah, I did have the feeling that there was really something that changed. Before, I had never thought about being French in England because I had already been there for a long time, and I felt well-integrated." (I375, FG6, F, Cambridge, 2003)

I375 was not the only participant who mentioned that she felt "integrated" and therefore never really thought about being French until the EU referendum. I161 for instance also mentioned that she has been living in the UK for over 20 years and that before Brexit she was "so integrated that [she] had forgotten that [she] was French" (I161, FG2, F, Loughborough, 1994). The results of the EU referendum made some French migrants feel as if they did not belong, as explained by Q178 who thinks that some English people sometimes made European citizens in the UK feel "inferior", a feeling that most of them

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[38] « Très déçue par ce vote » (Q410) ; « J'étais vraiment déçu » (I159) ; « Je suis déçue, je suis vraiment déçue » (I214).

never had before 2016. Several participants also expressed that after the EU referendum they felt "unwanted", "not accepted", "not welcome" or "like a foreigner"[39], making some of them question their future in the UK, as seen in 5.4:

> "In the beginning, just after the Brexit vote, I felt unwanted and anxious about not being able to stay in England. I've been living here for 30 years. (Q251)

> "Brexit made me question my future in the UK as I did not feel wanted here" (Q313)

> "When Brexit was announced I was very sad because I thought it was too bad […] for a moment I did not feel accepted we feel a bit rejected yeah. But it doesn't last, we realise that nothing changes, but that's the feeling I had at the time 'oh okay we're not really welcome here in the end'." (I509, FG3)

> "I remember my feeling the day after the Brexit vote, I felt like a foreigner really, I had never felt this way before so it was a strange feeling." (I160, FG6)

Some participants mentioned that this climate of tension following the EU referendum did not last, Q283 stated that "The attitude of some English people may have been aggressive during the Brexit debates but not at all anymore" (Q283). Similarly, I0 said "Just after Brexit, there were many occurrences of more or less violently expressed racism (mainly verbal attacks). Fortunately, it calmed down a bit after a few weeks - according to my acquaintances who stayed in Plymouth, anyway. I left a month after the Brexit." (I0). Nevertheless, some participants thought that the outcome of the EU referendum was "demoralising"[40] (Q350), "broke something" (Q226) and that they no longer "feel comfortable" (Q212) since. Q410, a woman aged 56-75 working in education/research in London explains why she was disappointed by the vote and how it changed her experience in the UK: "I was well welcomed in 1973, a European in Europe, but after June 2016, it's not the same thing anymore, or the same feeling of '*wellbeing*'[41]. A page was turned, the end of a great chapter?" (Q410).

In Limbo shows that all the emotions described by participants in my study were shared by other European migrants living in the UK (see 6.1). EU migrants in *In Limbo* also expressed that they felt "scared" (2018: 29) and "anxious" (2018: 24), "no longer welcome" (2018: 24) and "stabbed in the back" (2018: 28). Similarly, to participants in my research, a French participant in *In Limbo* says he feels "betrayed […] disappointed, hurt, angry, sad" (2018: 31). Binational (EU/UK) participants in this book and my research (see 5.4.2) tended to also describe themselves as Europeans, and no longer felt at

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[39] « pas voulu », « pas accepté », « pas tellement les bienvenus » (I509, FG3) « comme une étrangère »(FG6)
[40] « un coup sur le moral »(Q350)
[41] In English in the text.

home in the UK (2018: 34-35). These results were also found in other studies about French migrants in Manchester and London who also referred to Brexit as, a "shock" (Brahic & Lallement, 2018: 14; Reed-Danahay, 2020: 23) a "grieving process" and "disappointment" (Brahic & Lallement 2018: 14-15) and that, like I509, they felt "rejected" (Brahic, 2020: 2180). Brändle et al. (2018) also talk about a feeling of grief described by people in the UK who voted to remain in the EU. In their article about the injustice felt by protesters in an anti-Brexit march in 2017, they showed that protesters, who were in majority British citizens felt that their misrecognition of their European identities were misrecognised and "often described the feeling as akin to bereavement" (2018: 825). The feeling of grief was therefore reported not only by European migrants in the UK, but also by British citizens. It shows that both Remain voters and European migrants felt that a part of their identity, their European identity, was taken away from them and that they had to suffer the consequences of this vote. It is, however, especially the case of EU citizens living in the UK who were not able to take part in the vote although it directly concerned them, as argued by Ranta & Nacheva (2018: 2208).

This section focused on how French migrants felt during the weeks following the EU referendum in June 2016. It showed that disappointment was a feeling shared by many French and EU migrants in both this study and in *In Limbo*. Some participants thought that the tension created by the outcome of the vote vanished a few weeks or months later, while others still felt this way four years later. It demonstrated that even for those who did not feel a change of attitude towards them, Brexit was perceived as deeply painful for many of them, making them feel betrayed and unwanted in a country they considered their home. While this section was only dedicated to migrants' reactions to the EU referendum results, 6.3 will focus on specific prejudice, discrimination, aggressions and subtle acts of exclusion (SAE) targeting French migrants both before and after 2016, and how they reacted to them.

6.3 Aggressions and SAE before and after 2016

6.3.1 Before 2016

This section will present experiences lived by participants before and after the EU referendum to understand how it may affect the way they use the French language in England after Brexit.

In a paper aiming to put post-Brexit anti-EU hostility into perspective, Huc-Hepher (2019:15) argues that microaggressions towards the French predated the EU referendum. She discusses humour targeting a collective national identity and raises the question of whether in the case of English jokes about the French (and vice versa), they are only the results of the "long-standing affective Franco-English relations", and would demonstrate a form of mutual respect, or if they could be a more harmful representation of resentment between the two countries, or both (2019: 17).

Interestingly, a few of my participants mentioned these notions of humour and Franco-English relations and explained they did not perceive them as harmful when they experienced them. Like the French participants in Brahic (2020) who referred to jokes about some markers of their identity such as their accent as "friendly banter" and a "means of connecting to others" (2020: 2178), Q493 thinks that "being French is generally well perceived by English people" and that it usually "leads to jokes about shared history rather than discrimination". I163, who is Franco-British also talks about "the usual jokes" on "both sides", mirroring some of the participants' thinking in Huc-Hepher (2019: 26):

> "I was always teased, you know, all the usual anecdotes or jokes about the French, but it's the same in France, I was teased about the British side, so I had both sides, so it never really affected me, so I didn't really have any unpleasant remarks, and then the same with I161, in terms of what you were saying, ah, but there's a great love story between the two countries, so I didn't have any problems." (I163, FG2)

Nevertheless, Huc-Hepher (2019: 17) uses symbolic violence as a conceptual framework to demonstrate that downplaying xenophobic attitudes or masking them as harmless humour contributes to the injury inflicted on both individuals and society as a whole. She argues that it is a subtle form of hostility hidden behind seemingly friendly behaviour and justified by claims of national fairness, and while these acts may seem "micro" or harmless, they can still be hurtful and contribute to the overall symbolic violence experienced by migrants (2019: 34). I will show throughout this chapter that participants also tended to downplay the different microaggressions but also more overt forms of xenophobia.

A few of my participants recalled xenophobic incidents that happened before 2016. I157 for instance mentioned a comment he received when speaking in French with a Belgian friend back in 2006: "We took the bus to go to the cinema and we were speaking in French and an Englishman came and told us 'Where do you live? You're in England so speak English' or something like that." (I157, FG3). I214 also remembers an altercation that affected her approximately 10 years before Brexit, as she was in a park with her dog and her two young children:

> "It happened to me once when my children were very small, and I will remember it all my life because it was quite strange. I was taking my children to a park […] it was very hot, I had tied the dog up and I had given him water etc. We were sitting with the children, they were four and six years old, and there was a group of teenagers who came and told me: 'We're going to call the RSPCA to denounce you because you're not taking very good care of your dog' and I was like: 'What? My dog is here, he's got water', and suddenly, there were many people around us, my children were here, they didn't understand… I was

asking them to stop, and one of them told me […] in English: 'Go back home, go back to your country, you don't belong here!', I was really shocked, I looked at him and I was like: 'At your age, to say something like that…'. I had tears in my eyes, I was crying because I was really shocked. And so that was before [Brexit], but it still marked me. But after that, no, no incident of this kind after […] Now sometimes it's just me, I see things that are not okay, and I have to say something!" (I214, FG4, F, 36-55, Bristol,2000)

I160 who moved to England two years before the EU referendum did not remember if the two occurrences of xenophobia towards the French she experiences happened before or after the referendum and claims she did not take them to heart. She, as well as other participants such as I472, refer to people who made xenophobic comments as "idiots", implying that to them, they were isolated cases, not necessarily that much related to the specific context of England and Brexit, and should not be given excessive attention: "I think in six years here I experienced racism against French where I was involved twice, but we were a large group of French, I can't remember if it was before or after Brexit but I think they were just idiots like you can find everywhere" (I160, FG6). Although the participants dismissed these experiences by categorising them as "anecdotal", they still remember them over 15 years later, demonstrating that the psychological impact of these incidents was probably more significant than they let appear. Indeed, Nadal (2019: 1309) showed that microaggressions could have a long-lasting impact and that those who experienced it often reported "negative outcomes such as depression, low self-esteem and trauma" (Nadal, 2019: 1309). The next section will show that more participants experienced aggression or discrimination after 2016, while still tending to minimise them.

6.3.2 After 2016

The general feedback from my participants was again that occurrences of xenophobia towards French people in England before Brexit were rare and usually did not affect them. After the EU referendum, most participants still described their experience in England as positive. Most of the incidents reported by participants were referred to as microaggressions or "unpleasant" experiences rather than aggression or discrimination. Q323 for instance explains that the adjective discriminated used in Q19.8 "Have you ever felt discriminated because of your accent/native language?" was "a bit strong to describe [her] situation". She says: "Instead I would describe it as a feeling of superiority from British people, manifested by a somewhat contemptuous/infantilising way of speaking to us as if being a foreigner made me less intelligent than them" (Q323, F, 26-35, Reading, 2015). This comment is in line with what other participants described in 4.3.3, because of their accent, some British people tended to perceive them as less intelligent, and therefore sometimes talked to them condescendingly. Although she minimises the discriminatory aspect of what she describes, the fact that British people

talk to her in a "contemptuous/infantilising" manner is an example of microaggression, that makes her feel inadequate and like she does not belong (Jana & Baran, 2020: 22). As detailed in section 4.3.3, other instances were reported where direct discrimination occurred, as illustrated by Q487 and Q334, who were subjected to unfavourable treatment by professionals due to their accents.

Studies about migrants' experiences of xenophobia in the UK (Abranches et al., 2021; Lumsden et al., 2019) showed that they were not always able to recognise discrimination and hate crime, they would describe events as "non-discriminatory" even when they would legally be considered as such (Lumsden et al., 2019: 173). In Abranches et al. (2021) for instance, participants "initially denied the existence of discrimination unless it involved physical altercations" (2021: 2891). During my research, I did observe that many participants claimed they had never faced discrimination, yet during the course of the interview, they recounted experiences that could be classified as discriminatory, as will be demonstrated in this section.

None of the participants in this research reported being physically attacked because of their language or nationality, but some of them were directly targeted by verbal attacks such as insults or phrases such as "you're in England, speak English" or "go back to your country". Six participants testified that they were told with different degrees of subtlety that they were not welcome. I310, a young language teacher based in London for instance shared that she was told that "some people would not be happy" about her being here:

> "I took a language test last year and the guy who gave us the results told me: 'Oh that's very good, well done, but I think there are people who would not be happy that you are here because you are not English […] it's not what I think but I'm just telling you'. I was like 'ah okay okay', I didn't know what to say" (I310, FG10, F, 2017)

I157, whose work involves travels to different parts of England, to large Northern cities such as Manchester or Liverpool as well as countryside areas, revealed that he was sometimes asked some "strange questions" about his residency status there:

> "I was with one of my former colleagues who was Belgian and who spoke an English that was so perfect that he sounded like he was from the North of England, but when we were talking, they [English people] were telling us 'But where are you from? You're from France, [working for] a French company […] so when are you leaving? Oh, but you live here but are you going back to your country or…?'. Well, we could feel some really…really strange questions after Brexit, we felt this change." (I157, FG3, M, 36-5, London, Business/Sales, Marketing, 2006)

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Other participants, such as Q286, I161, I500 and I100 were told in more direct ways that they "did not belong here" and even to "go back to their country" after Brexit:

"I was approached in the street after Brexit because I was speaking in French with one of my children, well my children are adults, one is 31 and the other 28 […]. And I told this person 'But I live here!', 'But no, it's not your country, your accent is awful, where do you come from?' etc." (I500, FG4, F, 56-75, Retired Education, London, 1986)

"Three times since 2016 after Brexit I was a victim of racist comments. I'm a French teacher in a secondary school in Portslade [Brighton] (where racism is an issue in some areas), and I was told 'Go back to your country/ I don't understand when you speak/ You should speak English we are in England (in a French classroom lol)/Miss, you will be deported soon after Brexit'[42]." (Q286, F, 36-55, Education, Brighton, 2008)

"I remember on the marketplace there was sometimes handing leaflets, I wasn't really focused, he puts the leaflets in my face, and it said: 'VOTE FOR BREXIT'. I look at him and laugh and I say, 'I'm not allowed to vote' because back then I didn't have the [British] passport, and he looks at me and tells me 'Well go back to your country'. I looked at him and said 'Wait, I've been a high taxpayer for over 20 years I'm sure I contributed to this country more than you did', well we're not going to debate about it, but he rubbed me the wrong way." (I161, FG2, F, 36-55, Procurement Manager, Loughborough, 1994)

I100, a journalist who moved to London in 2011 wrote in her questionnaire that she felt a difference in the way she was treated mostly at work and when doing her shopping. In her focus group, she described an altercation she had on a bus, which almost involved physical violence:

"I got hassled on public transport yeah. A guy who looked more like a Red neck than anything else, in the middle of the day, well it wasn't even evening or anything […] he put his feet right next to me on the seat next to me and I told him: 'Don't, there's my coat, my legs, just no!' and he says: 'Anyway, this is a place for English people, get out of here, you shouldn't be sitting here'. It made me so angry, moreover, I was just coming out of work, I was really not in a good mood, and I didn't let myself be pushed around, I told him 'and then what? I don't know, you stab me? You hit me? Come on, let's fight!'. He was like, really big, and nobody reacted on the bus, but I think the fact that I said that, he didn't really expect it, at one point he got up and leaned over me to threaten me, I looked at him and went 'Mmh mmh? Go on hit me!' but he actually backed off and left. It was really

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[42] Quotes in English in the text.

just intimidation and threatening. But nobody on the bus reacted, people were in their books and on their smartphones and so on, the driver just waited a lot longer for him to get off the bus, but nobody did anything. And this kind of not very pleasant stuff happened. Well, afterwards there were things that were less tense […] more like comments, I don't know. In the end, we can't really know if it's really because people are racist or xenophobic, or because they've had a bad day or if it's just in our head, but that time, it was clear."

(I100, FG7, F, 36-55, Journalist, London, 2011)

Participants also reported knowing or having heard about other French migrants with similar stories:

 "I met other French people who had similar experiences, even worse sometimes, and I think there really is a different attitude towards the French […] I talked to another couple […] at the consulate, they were telling me horrible stories […] their children who were teenagers were victims of a lot of racism even though they had always lived in England and their French accent was inexistent, but just because they had a French passport."

(I161, FG2, F, Loughborough).

I509 who describe her experience in London as very positive both before and after Brexit was surprised when she heard about young French people being attacked after Brexit in South Kensington, the "French neighbourhood" of London:

"I never had any negative comment or anything, once I read an article which said that on the bus from the French college in South Kensington, some students were attacked because they spoke in French, and I was shocked because I take this bus, I live in this area […] I had never thought something like that could be possible, but it won't stop me from speaking in French to my son outside, it's not a problem."(I509, FG3)

An interesting phenomenon which will be developed in 6.5, is that participants who have been living in the UK for a longer period seem to be more affected by changes they noticed after 2016 than those who moved more recently. Some of them mentioned never having received any comment about their language, accent, or nationality in over 20 years in the UK, whereas after Brexit they experienced discrimination and/or xenophobia several times. I161 and Q299, two women aged 36-55 based in the East Midlands since the 1990s stated that they had never felt discriminated against in over 20 years in the country and suddenly felt a change in British attitudes towards migrants after 2016: "I had never felt any discrimination before Brexit. Since Brexit, I felt more than once that now I was treated differently even though I have been living here for 22 years" (Q299, Nottingham, 1998). I161 described some of the discrimination and xenophobic incidents she experienced after June 2016:

"I had never had any problem in over 20 years in England […] and in 2018, I had six incidents in the same year, I had never had any problem, any comments before. I went to the hospital for treatments, and I was asked if I was allowed to have free NHS treatment, I had to show proof […] I was still married to a British man back then, but in over 20 years I had never been asked this question, why did things suddenly change? My mom visited me […] and needed antibiotics, the GP refused to see her, we had to go to the ER […] after four hours there we were told 'why are you here, the GP should have seen you' […]. We see the difference between people who voted for Brexit because if they did, they'll do everything they can to make your life as complicated as possible. In my street, there were builders, I just said something about the fact that they were not parked correctly, they were blocking the way and we have blind people in the area, so I asked them to park properly. Of course, I spoke in English and my accent came out 'What are you doing here! Go back to your country!'. And all these incidents, I had never experienced that in 22 years, all of this happened in 2018 […] but it was a slap in the face […]." (I161, FG2)

Discriminations from NHS workers after the EU referendum was also reported by other participants such as Q511 and Q334. Brahic (2021: 13) argued that the Leave campaign suggesting that foreigners burdened the NHS impacted some of her participants' attitudes. Some of them started to feel self-conscious speaking French to their children when going to their GP for instance and remained silent there so that other patients would not know they were foreigners.

I500 who has been living in Southampton since 1986 explained that before Brexit she had experienced some racism in schools she worked in, but that it was "always corrected by the school", and that it had never happened outside of work, she "never had any problem". However, after Brexit, she started to observe xenophobia outside of her professional environment as well, she says: "I think that yes, there was an exacerbation of this latent thing that I knew existed in my professional field but after Brexit, I encountered it outside my professional environment as well." (I500, FG4). This idea of latent xenophobia mentioned by I500 was a recurrent theme in the questionnaires and interviews. It will be discussed in the next section, which will also show how it affects some EU migrants more than others.

6.4 "Brexit is not about you!": latent xenophobia in the UK

6.4.1 Xenophobia exacerbated by Brexit

Like I500, several other participants thought that Brexit exacerbated some "latent xenophobia" (I500, FG4) already present in the UK before 2016. According to them, British people used to be more cautious when expressing their thoughts about topics such as immigration before 2016. I157 explains:

"English people have this side of them, they are very polite, very courteous, very welcoming, but when we discuss immigration etc. in greater depth, we feel that there are unsaid things, they are open […] as long as they get something out of it in terms of business, and that on the other hand, they think 'Yeah, there are far too many migrants in England'."(I157, FG3, M, London)

Participants noted that for some British citizens who voted for Brexit to reduce immigration, the outcome of the vote was seen as an opportunity to be more open about their positions. I157 then expressed that he felt a change after the vote: "After Brexit, we really felt this change, this vote made official this kind of reasoning that was a little bit 'latent' let's say. It's a bit like what we're seeing in the United States with Trump, who has extremely racist views, it validates the opinions of people who think like him" (I157, FG3). Some participants such as Q170, a woman aged 26-35 working in Birmingham said that it is "as if their mask fell", as suddenly some British people seemed to be less careful about not offending people with their views: "Since Brexit, I observe more and more casual racism, even against me, work colleagues uninhibitedly talk about their preconceived ideas, without really caring about if they could hurt or shock anybody" (Q170, F, 26-35, Hotels & Restaurants/tourism, Birmingham, 2014).

This was also reported by participants in a study about EU nationals' vulnerability in the context of Brexit. According to them, British attitudes towards migrants did not change after the EU referendum, but more people started to "openly express what they thought before" and felt "more confident in showing dissatisfaction towards immigrants" (Benedi Lahuerta & Iusmen, 2021: 293). Abranches et al. (2021) also argue that Brexit "legitimized already present (but until then partially concealed) hostility" (2021: 2886), Zampi & Awan (2019) that it "acted as a kind of 'licence' to attack innocent people on the basis of their perceived ethnicity, religion, disability or sexuality" (2019: 355), and Virdee & McGheever (2017) that after the EU referendum "racism has become normalized in both elite political discourse and practice and everyday life, dramatically diminishing the spaces for Britain's racialized minorities to breathe and live a life free from hate" (2017: 1811).

For I214, the increasing number of occurrences of uninhibited racism comes with more visible patriotic behaviours in the UK after 2016. She mentioned in the questionnaire that many British people changed post-Brexit and that she could feel "a very apparent patriotic/racism sentiment" (Q214). She then developed this idea in FG4: "Yeah, there has indeed been a silent racism for years, but after Brexit, there were so many houses which suddenly started to sport Union Jacks and flags […] it was not like this before" (I214, FG4). I157 also believes that altercations would come from people who "would not want to educate themselves, or all these people who would have this nationalistic side 'I'm English'

like a French person would say 'I'm in France, I speak French that's how it is' […] these people who, I don't want to say racists, but who have this strong nationalist pride […] this island mentality 'we're on our island, we don't care about the rest'[…] I believe that there is a very strong social aspect to it, which would lead to comments such as 'you're in England, you can't speak French'." (I157, FG3)

Zmigrod et al. (2018: 4532) argue that nationalism plays a role in citizens' voting behaviours and political engagement, which can be seen for instance with the slogan "Take Back Control" used during the Brexit campaign. Virdee & McGeever (2017: 1807) also mention this slogan as well as the message of "Island retreat" that conveyed the Leave campaign, meaning that by leaving the EU, Britain as an island would be able to keep migrants from entering the country.

As will be discussed in 6.5.3., British citizens had different motives to vote for leaving the UK; for instance, many considered that the EU failed to protect them from threats to their security or provide economic prosperity and prevented the British government from acting on these issues (Clarke et al, 2017: 69). Nevertheless, reducing immigration and nationalism were also at the core of the Brexit campaign and were the main motivations for some Leave voters (Clarke et al, 2017: 64; Goodwin & Milazzo, 2017: 452). Several studies (Clarke et al., 2017; Evans & Mellon, 2019) argue that the rise of UKIP paved the way for Brexit (Clarke et al., 2017: 111) and that the increasing pessimism about immigration from 2004 to 2015 helped UKIP gain support (2017: 124). These studies, therefore, show that there was, as felt by some of my participants, a rise in nationalistic behaviours around the Brexit vote. However, as raised by I157, even among Leave voters, not all of them had immigration and nationalism as their main reason to want to leave the EU, and comments mentioned in this section would probably mainly come from those of them who did. Section 6.5.3 will discuss the "social aspects" mentioned by I157, by looking in more detail at who voted for Brexit, and the social background people with negative attitudes towards migrants tend to come from.

6.4.2 Eastern Europeans

Despite the incidents described in the previous sections, many participants in the questionnaires and participants in almost every focus group specified that, even after Brexit, French migrants were not as targeted by discrimination and aggressions as other European migrants in the UK. For most participants, such as Q493, Brexit did not necessarily have an impact on how French migrants were perceived, according to him it is mostly about the "population from poor countries". Romanian and Polish migrants as well as Eastern Europeans in general were often cited as migrants being frequently targeted by insults or complaints. Q262 says: "I don't think French people really are victims of racism after Brexit, at least not as much as Eastern European migrants". From Q294's experience of meeting people in the UK for 13 years, "it is easier to be French than Polish for instance". I134 (FG5) and I375 (FG6) also think that the comments they may have received about their nationality, language or accent

after Brexit were overall positive, contrary to "Polish", "Romanian" or "people from Eastern Europe" around them who were more often criticised. I358 also did not notice xenophobia or change in attitudes towards French people after the vote, but "saw things, more often with other nationalities, like Eastern Europeans, maybe Indians" (Q358, FG4).

Participants also noted that people in the UK also tend to have assumptions about different nationalities, I376 for instance observed: "If I say that I'm French, automatically they ask me 'are you a teacher' but I heard Polish people say that if they said they were Polish, they were automatically asked if they were housekeepers, these types of jobs, there's a real difference in how immigrants are perceived" (I376, FG7). Benedi Lahuerta & Iusmen (2022) also found that these types of stereotypes were often associated with Eastern Europeans and were gendered. Women were for instance called 'prostitutes' or 'house cleaners' in a derogatory manner, while men were called 'terrorist', 'Nazi' or 'Polish builders' (2022: 4534).

Participants pointed out that even before Brexit, these migrants were already discriminated against. I161 explains that she was always complimented on her French accent, whereas attitudes towards the Polish accent were usually negative:

> "When I was going to the pub with my French accent […] it was always very sexy, everybody loved my French accent and I remember asking several times what the difference was, because people were very negative towards my Polish friends who had a Polish accent, and a very negative opinion on Polish immigrants in general, but I'm an immigrant just like them, so why am I treated differently? And I remember being told: 'ah yeah but French is *vavavoom* and *ohlala*, it has this chic and glamour and sexy side'. But since 2016, I am now on the Polish side, we were 'relegated with all the other foreigners' [laughs]." (I161, FG2)

This feeling of losing their privileged position as French migrants, often rather referred to as "expatriates" (see 1.3.1) is discussed in Reed-Danahay (2020) and (Brahic, 2020) who argue that before Brexit they were "neither immigrants nor migrants because they were EU citizens and therefore mobile Europeans" (Reed-Danahay, 2020: 24) but switched "from expats to migrants" after Brexit as they were faced with their migrant status for the first time (Brahic, 2020: 2182). Like I161, several participants also shared their confusion as to why Polish migrants were subjected to more hostility than they were, prompting them to seek clarification from British individuals. For I228 who works with Eastern Europeans, the issue in her company is that her Eastern European colleagues do not attempt to integrate into the British culture as much as the French for instance, and do not speak English, which creates complications:

"In my company, there is a huge community of people from Eastern Europe and I often hear criticism towards them specifically, I don't think it's their nationality that is an issue, but the fact that they don't speak English at all and I think there is this problem of integration […] criticisms are really based on the fact that they come but there's no integration to the country because they don't speak the language, which means we have to write their contracts in Russian and everything, it's very complicated." (I228, FG9, F, 26-35, Law/Economics/Gestion, Bristol, 2018)

Hopkins (2012: 135) showed that workers' low level of English often resulted in hostility from British workers, who felt excluded when migrants spoke in their native language. This explanation joins other participants' testimonies about how French people who did not try to integrate and spoke their native language in front of non-francophones tended to be perceived negatively and were often criticised as well. I122 (FG8) for instance mentioned tensions between his English and French flatmates, as the English speaker did not want French to be spoken in his presence since he could not understand the language. I464 (FG2) also reported that her friends who spoke French in front of non-native speakers tended to receive remarks from British people, whereas she did not have this issue as "despite [her] French accent" she always tried to make efforts to "speak English as much as possible". She believes that "attitudes play a huge role in this, because if they exclude themselves, of course, they will be criticised."

However, this is not the only justification participants heard about Eastern Europeans. In FG6, all the participants had heard negative comments against Polish migrants, and when I47 mentioned it to an English person, she was given a different explanation for this:

"When just after Brexit there were attacks, sometimes physical attacks, against Polish people, I was really shocked. One day I asked an Englishman: 'But why? What's the problem with Polish people?' and I was told 'That's because there are too many of them, there are one million Polish immigrants in the UK', I didn't know. That's sad, just because of that, I don't understand." (I47, FG6).

I157 also shared conversations he heard about Polish migrants at work and in pubs:

"When you talk to British people at the pub, where are you from etc and after a few pints tongues are wagging, I heard conversations where English people were hyper, hyper racist, but like openly, and with me like: 'All these Polish need to leave, there are too many of them!', so when you dig they're not as open-minded as we could think […] Romanians, Polish, Eastern European countries, to them, they 'come [to the UK] to commit crimes',

they 'speak a barbarian sounding language', they're not 'elegant or educated', that's the kind of things I heard." (I157, FG3)

Many studies about Polish migrants living in Brexit Britain were published since 2016 (Benedi Lahuerta & Iusmen, 2021; Botterill & Hancock, 2018; Jancewicz et al., 2020; Kozminska & Zhu, 2021; Martynowska et al., 2020; McGhee et al., 2017; Rzepnikowska, 2019; Rzepnikowska, 2020; Trąbka & Pustulka, 2020; White & Goodwin, 2021). In one of the first papers on this topic, Rzepnikowska (2019: 62) revealed that while they were already victims of discrimination before Brexit, the number of hate crimes towards Polish migrants rose after the referendum, and that, as mentioned by my participants in 6.4.1, xenophobia was legitimised by Brexit and media discourses. Rzepnikowska argues that despite being white, they still experienced racism and xenophobia (2019: 74) and that the "privilege of their whiteness disappears when they start speaking" (2019: 70). More information regarding studies about how Brexit affected Eastern Europeans in the UK can be found in 2.4.2.

Interestingly, my research was inspired by some of these early studies about violence towards Eastern Europeans. I wondered whether the consequent amount of research on Eastern Europeans indicated that they were more often victims of discrimination than other Europeans in the UK. The fact that participants were not told about these studies in the questionnaire or during the focus groups and mentioned them on their own confirms the important number of discrimination occurrences and hate crimes against Eastern Europeans, both before and after the EU referendum.

It also seems that attitudes towards migrants are related to attitudes towards their languages, as research showed that they were often the result of media representations and preconceptions about nationalities (Shah, 2019: 134). Polish migrants have been suffering from negative representations in the media even years before the EU referendum, which started to claim in 2004 that they were coming to the UK to take British citizens' jobs (Rzepnikowska, 2019: 66; Spigelman, 2013:111) or "exploit the welfare state" (Schweyher et al., 2019: 102). These discourses were intensified by pro-Leave media around the Brexit vote, praising ideologies of deportability (Radziwinowiczówna & Galasińska, 2021: 76). These media established a hierarchy within EU citizenship and argued that there were "good" and "bad" EU migrants (2021: 77). The "good" ones are those seen as "contributing to the fiscal and social system", and the "bad" ones usually those from new European countries, such as Eastern Europeans (2021: 78), often depicted in these media as "jobless, rough sleepers, 'welfare tourists'" or even criminals (2021: 90).

Therefore, as participants explained that French migrants were less likely to be negatively represented in the media and targeted by discrimination than other migrants, they also thought that the French language was more likely to be better perceived than other EU languages. Q30, a woman in her late

twenties/early thirties working in London thinks that there are so many francophones or people who understand French in London that it is not a "secret language", however, she "saw and heard English people complaining about people speaking in other foreign languages in the street" (Q30). Q389 also thinks that "there would be more discrimination with other languages". I189 who teaches French, Spanish and Latin in Birmingham explained that although he only rarely uses the French language in public places, he never felt that he could not speak French in England. However, he thinks that there would be more discrimination against languages other than French:

> "I might be wrong, but in this linguistic xenophobia, I don't think that the French language is at the same level as other languages [...] I think there would be a difference in what I said if I was speaking Romanian or Polish, maybe reactions would be different. There are, that's a bad expression, but 'good immigrants' and 'bad immigrants' [...]. My brother-in-law a long time ago admitted that he voted for the BNP [...] he said 'Yeah but there are too many foreigners and everything' and I said 'Well yeah, like me', 'Oh but no, you it's different, you're French'. Ah. So I think there is a sort of linguistic hierarchy, I think that some languages will be more problematic. For instance, there's a huge Chinese community in Birmingham and well yeah, it's true that sometimes there's someone at the front of the bus and someone at the back and they're talking to each other so obviously they're loud, well it's not very very polite but that's another debate, but we can feel an annoyance, more than if it was another language. But then, we hear plenty of languages, it's like in London [...] it's not necessarily the English language that we always hear. But I think that some languages are seen as more acceptable than others, I don't know, I haven't done any research about it, but I don't think French would be in the top 3 languages you shouldn't speak." (I189, FG7)

I189 was not the only participant who experienced being told "there are too many immigrants, but you, it's different". Several other participants also explained that there seemed to be a sort of hierarchy of immigrants and that people who voted for Brexit with the hope of reducing immigration did not appear to consider French as immigrants too. Participants shared stories where they were directly told that Brexit would be a solution to control immigration without seemingly realising that this sort of discourse could offend their interlocutors. When reminded that they, as French immigrants, were European immigrants too, they would often reply that it was "not the same" or "not about them". When I500, who lives in what she refers to as "a Brexit zone" (Southampton) mentioned that her neighbours said: "We voted Brexit because it has to change, of course, it's not really you, you it's different!", other participants in the focus group showed signs of agreement, indicating that they also

heard similar comments. In the questionnaire, Q334 and Q336 two women working in education/research respectively in Beckenham and Oxford also have a comparable experience:

> "What was clear in the media propaganda before Brexit, and for my racist neighbour (who told me what will follow) is that the immigrants they did not want were not the French, the Italians, or the Spanish, but black people and Eastern Europeans. My neighbour, who was telling me she was going to vote for Brexit to stop immigrants has an Italian daughter-in-law and told me: 'It's not against you or the French, but I don't want *them*'." (Q334, 36-55, Beckenham, 1997)

> "When I lived in Bath last year in the Somerset (more rural and less diverse [than Oxford]), I had conversations with people who told me honestly that they had voted for Brexit because they wanted to reduce immigration. But it seems that these people did not necessarily realise that I was in this category. I think there is less stigma around French expatriates than there may be for people from other countries and cultures." (Q336, 18-25, Oxford, 2018)

These conversations tend to make participants uncomfortable. I100 for instance, like I157, mentioned how people under the influence of alcohol tended to be more open about their thought regarding immigration and Brexit and said: "We didn't stay friends for a long time after that [...] I didn't really like this 'No but it's not against you but foreigners, out! But not you, we know you, but the others, out!'" (I100, FG7). For I500 (FG4), this kind of comment is a consequence of Brexit, as she had never heard anything similar before, and she calls these attitudes "unhealthy".

Therefore, these various examples demonstrate that not all European migrants are perceived the same way in the UK. While I showed in this section that some British citizens made a distinction between "good and valuable" migrants, usually coming from the old EU countries, versus the "undeserving" ones coming from new EU countries, the common colonial legacies of countries such as France or Spain also surely play a role in how migrants from these countries are represented in England. This distinction is explicitly expressed by Q334's neighbour who makes a clear division between "us" and "them" when she explains that the migrants she "does not want" are "not the French, the Italians, or the Spanish, but Black people and Eastern Europeans". In *Orientalism*, Said explains this notion of "us" as Europeans, Westerners against "them", the "stranger" from the Orient, the East (Said, 2014: 65), which not only creates division and hostility but also suggests that European identity and culture are superior to non-European ones (2014: 31).

Leurs & Ponzanesi (2018) and Ammaturo (2019) argue that the way Western European countries manage their borders and who deserves to belong or not in their countries is still influenced by their

colonial histories which continue to shape the ways non-Western European migrants are perceived. Several studies (Ammaturo, 2019: 551; Leurs & Ponzanesi, 2018: 8; Sušová-Salminen, 2012: 193) have shown how the representations of Eastern Europeans in Western Europe must be understood from a postcolonial perspective. Sušová-Salminen (2012) argues that the impact of colonialism is not limited to the countries that were formally colonised, as they have shaped the entire global capitalist system, including how knowledge is produced and disseminated. Therefore, even countries that are not considered former colonies of western countries, such as those in Eastern Europe, are still impacted by the legacies of colonialism. The idea of Eastern Europe is not just a geographic or cultural concept, but also an epistemological one that reflects the ways in which knowledge is constructed within the broader capitalist world system (Sušová-Salminen, 2012: 193). Krivonos (2020) adds that:

> "Europeanness must be understood as a postcolonial formation of whiteness, with internal hierarchies and symbolic geographies that distinguish between Western Europe as Europe proper, and Europe's "incomplete self", Eastern Europe". The notion of "us" Westerners versus "them" Easterners is therefore also applicable to Europe, as "'Eastern Europe' is a product of colonialist othering by Western Europe and, like the Oriental, has been constructed as a violent and primitive Other" (Krivonos, 2020: 392).

Finally, Virdee and McGeever (2017) highlighted how the Brexit campaign and colonial racism were intrinsically linked, as the Leave campaign was an example of postcolonial melancholy, a narrative created by a part of the British population that has not come to terms with the loss of Britain's global influence after the decline of its empire (2017: 1809). Leave campaigners capitalised on latent racism by appealing to those who sought to maintain Britain's "white and Christian" identity, framing cultural differences as justification for excluding migrants from the 'imagined national community' (2017: 1807). Consequently, it is unsurprising to find these arguments in the discourse of Leave voters, as my participants revealed in this section.

6.4.3 Racial discrimination in France and England

Finally, participants mentioned that other factors such as race should also be taken into consideration and explained that sometimes they were not sure if people were staring at them because of their accent or the way they looked, as explained by Q493:

> "I am afraid that my dual origins sometimes alter my answers. The discrimination I experienced is difficult to place on the spoken language, having a different skin colour from the majority, a more visible sign of a non-local origin and of another continent quite far away. Cultural differences are therefore more easily assumed about me. The cultural

differences between the inhabitants of India and England are indeed greater than between the inhabitants of France and England." (Q493)

As this research focuses on the aspect of language, I chose not to explore in detail other factors of discrimination such as race, sexuality or religion (see 3.3.1). Nevertheless, these valuable testimonies are worth being shared in this section for a better understanding of the situation:

"I think that being a queer and black person speaking a foreign language got me to be discriminated against often. But I think that if I had been a young white woman, it would have been easier […] I am discriminated against because I am non-white with an accent, not specifically because I have a French accent." (Q211)

"The attitudes towards immigrants in the UK after or even before Brexit certainly differ according to the origin of immigrants, the colour of their skin, religion and so on. Using only the criteria of the language (and especially the French language in a country where many people are Francophile) may invalidate the results." (Q427)

"As I look more Indian, I can have other remarks, but ironically, I had more comments in France where I was always made feel like I'm not French because of the colour of my skin!" (I160, FG6)

Q463 explained that growing up as an Asian girl in a small town in France, she faced a lot of racism, and because of this, she got used to not noticing it. Therefore, she thinks she would not necessarily pay attention to comments about her native language now that she lives in the UK. She says:

"It's a bit sad but in a way, I think it helps, I don't think anybody said anything like this here [in the UK] but at the same time if someone said something I don't know if I'd notice or pay attention to it […] it's either you do what I did, or you can't accept it, which is normal because you should not have to accept it, but in this case, it makes things way more complicated." (I464, FG2)

These testimonies are particularly interesting for several reasons. First, they highlight that some people experience different forms of discrimination, based on their appearance, religion or sexual orientation for instance. This phenomenon is called multiple or intersectional discrimination (Siddiqui, 2018: 363; Weichselbaumer, 2020: 603). After the EU referendum, not only white Eastern Europeans were victims of hate crimes, but people were also attacked because of their race (Burnett, 2017; Dalle Carbonare et al., 2020; Virdee & McGeever, 2017). Dalle Carbonare et al. (2020b: 187) who worked on maxillofacial trauma resulting from attacks in North London around the EU referendum revealed that about 40% of people injured belonged to ethnic minority groups and that there was an increase in assaults against

Asian and Black/African Caribbean individuals. Virdee and McGeever (2017) in their study about racism and Brexit also report several cases of hate crimes and verbal abuse towards South Asians for instance, such as a Sikh radiographer who was told by a patient: "Shouldn't you be on a plane back to Pakistan? We voted you out!" (2018: 1808). Zampi and Awan (2020: 591) also found that some non-Muslim men, often Sikhs, were sometimes mistaken for being Muslim, and experienced islamophobia. Indeed, people after Brexit were assaulted not only based on their language or race but also religion, an increase in attacks against Muslims, as well as Jewish people, was also reported after the EU referendum (Burnett, 2017:87; Abranches et al. 2021: 2887).

Therefore, some of my participants find it difficult to determine whether they perceive hostility towards them because of the language they are speaking or because of these other factors. This issue is raised in a report from the Migration Observatory:

> "Foreign-born individuals living in the UK may be discriminated against for multiple reasons, some of which might be shared with UK-born ethnic minorities (e.g. ethnicity, skin colour or religion) while others are more likely to affect the migrant population (e.g. having foreign qualifications or a foreign accent). It is difficult to disentangle the reasons for discrimination because multiple factors might be at play at the same time. For example, a Somali-born worker might be discriminated against for his/her ethnicity, race, Muslim affiliation, a foreign accent or foreign credentials." (Migration Observatory, 2020)

One of the consequences is that, as explained by I464, they do not even notice these aggressions. In a study about racism in online gaming (Ortiz, 2019), some participants echo I464's words when she says that because she experienced racism ever since she was a child, she no longer pays attention to racist comments. They explain that they got "desensitised" to racism as they "hear[d] it enough [to] get to the point of not caring" (2019: 579). Therefore, they may also be less likely to report xenophobic incidents.

The other important aspect these participants highlight is that discrimination is certainly not specific to Britain or even Brexit and should be put into perspective. In the last two quotes from I160 and I464, the two young women report that they were more often targeted by xenophobic comments in France, their home country, than in England. This was also reported by some participants in Huc-Hepher & Drake (2013: 411) who mentioned having left France because of racism there and felt that they were more often victims of discrimination in their native country than in the UK. In Godin and Sigona (2023: 138) Black French participants came to the same conclusions that France still has "a long way to go" in terms of "open-mindedness" compared to London and feel less discriminated against in the British capital where they can "be more themselves". Figure 27 below shows the Migration Observatory (2020)

analysis of the European Social Survey 2002-2018 for Great Britain. It indicates that non-EU-born people in France perceived more discrimination against them than those in Great Britain, confirming that xenophobia is indeed an issue in France as well.

	All foreign born	EU born	Non-EU born	Country born with migrant parents	Country born with country-born & migrant parents	Country born with country-born parents
Belgium	23%	11%	32%	28%	6%	
Austria	21%	8%	32%	17%	5%	
EU-14	17%	9%	20%	21%	6%	
France	18%	12%	20%	27%	7%	
Great Britain	16%	14%	17%	32%	15%	5%
Germany	13%	4%	17%	15%	5%	
Ireland	6%	7%	6%	7%	4%	
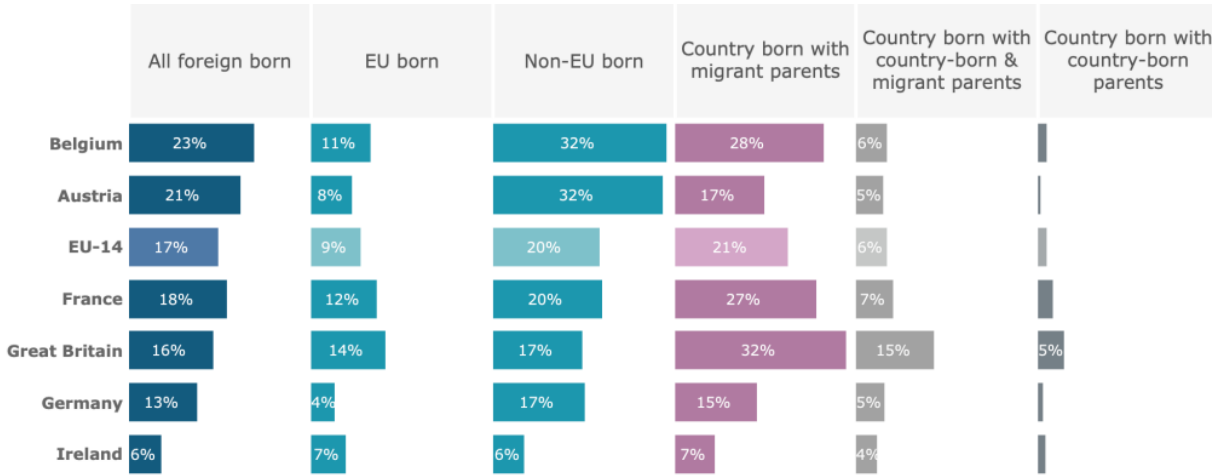
Figure 27: Migrants perceiving discrimination against their group in European countries (Migration Observatory, 2020)

The next section will analyse different factors that could influence French migrants in England, in order to understand why while most of them did not feel discriminated against because of their native language or nationality, others had a less positive experience.

6.5 Factors influencing participants' experiences

6.5.1 Different factors and hypotheses

This section will discuss different factors that could explain why some French migrants perceived a change in British attitudes towards migrants and foreign languages and/or were victims of xenophobia while others were not. The first hypothesis when starting this research was that French migrants would not be as targeted by discrimination and xenophobia as other European migrants, which was proved in 6.4. Nevertheless, it was expected that different factors could have an impact on the participants' experiences of living in England after the EU referendum. The criteria expected to have the greatest impact on how French migrants were affected by the outcome of the UK EU Referendum were their place of residence and occupation/social environment. Migrants residing in cities or working in places where most people voted Remain would potentially notice fewer changes after the EU referendum, would be less targeted by anti-European crimes and therefore would be less inclined to modify their language habits.

Other factors such as the age and gender of the participants for instance were also expected to potentially impact their language attitudes. Early research about gender and language in the 1970s showed that there were differences in the way men and women talked (Lakoff, 1975; Trudgill, 1974).

Lakoff for instance argued that women were more likely to use tag questions (1975: 48) or less likely to use swear words (1975: 45) because from their childhood they were told to be "ladies" and to "keep their place" (1975: 44). Trudgill (1974: 185) also found that women used a more standard language than men because they tried to adapt to social norms (Trudgill, 1974: 186; Coastes 2015: 61) and that women would prefer a collaborative speech style to emphasise solidarity with their co-speaker whereas a man would use a competitive style (Cheshire & Trudgill, 1998: 3).

In a more recent study about migrants' acquisition of Dutch, van der Slik et al. (2015: 15) found that "female learners, independently of their home country or native language, consistently outperformed male learners for speaking and writing proficiency". Dovchin (2019) who worked on language crossing among Mongolian migrant women in Australia found that many of them tried to "adopt 'authentic' or 'standard' Australian accent" as a passing strategy in order to avoid linguistic racism (2019: 345). Finally, Dewaele & McCloskey (2015) analysed attitudes towards foreign accents among adult multilingual language users and found that women were significantly more bothered by their own foreign accent than men (2015: 230). These three studies could indicate, as argued by Trudgill (1974) that migrant women try to use the standard language of the country they live in, to adapt to their social norms and be included.

Moreover, studies about gender and discrimination found that when asked about the discrimination they had experienced, women tended to describe more severe events than men (Schmitt & Branscombe, 2002: 169) and that discrimination had a stronger impact on women's mental health than men's (Banks et al, 2006: 558). Therefore, it was anticipated to find differences in men's and women use of the French language as seen in 4.2, but also that women would be more likely to be affected by discrimination and adapt their language habits for instance. This will be shown in 6.5.4.

It was also predicted that the age and educational background of the participants could have an impact on the frequency of discriminatory events towards them. People under 45 years old voted in overwhelmingly to remain in the EU, with 73% of the 18-25 age group who voted Remain (Finlay, 2019: 19). British citizens with no educational qualifications tended to vote Leave more than those with university degrees (Goodwin & Heath, 2016: 326), 37% of university-educated people and 60% of people with no university education voted Leave (Clarke et al., 2017: 155). Therefore, students for instance would be less likely to be targeted by xenophobia as their social circle would probably be in these age and education categories.

In this section, I will show that while some of these hypotheses were confirmed by the data collected for this research, others were not. Furthermore, other factors also emerged from this study. For instance, it showed, as seen in 6.4, that participants who moved to the UK after 2016 were less affected

than those who already lived there before the UK EU Referendum. Finally, some participants believe that their own attitudes towards Brexit may have an impact on their experience in the UK after 2016, and therefore on their language attitudes and habits.

6.5.2 Place of residence

One of the central hypotheses for this research was that the place of residence of participants would be one of the most important factors influencing their experience in post-EU referendum Britain. Migrants living in cities or towns where most people voted to leave the EU would be more likely to meet citizens who would be hostile to migrants than those in cities where people voted Remain, or in multicultural cities such as London, Birmingham, or Leicester for instance. Considering that most large cities voted to remain in the EU, a hypothesis was that migrants in smaller cities, towns, and villages where people voted to leave the EU would be more often victims of xenophobia.

Most of the participants in this research lived in England's largest cities, which usually voted to remain in the EU; 378 (74%) lived in Remain areas and 133 (26%) in Leave areas, which were usually smaller cities/towns in various parts of the country. A list of all the cities participants lived in with the percentages of people who voted Leave there can be found in Appendix 1. Over a third of the participants lived in London/Greater London, where 75% of the population voted to remain in the EU. Some participants mentioned having had bad experiences there, Q239 who lives in Bristol, for instance, notes that the only criticism she received about her nationality/language was in London. I100's negative post-Brexit experiences described in previous sections also took place in London. Nonetheless, out of the 185 participants based in London, only 5 (less than 3%) reported having been discriminated against or verbally attacked because of their native language or accent. Most of the participants residing in the capital had an overall positive experience both before and after 2016 and believe that the low percentage of Leavers in the city plays a role in it, as explained by I25 and Q418: "I never had any problem, but then I'm in London that's true that it's not really a pro-Brexit area" (I25, FG7); "Registered French in the UK usually live in London/very large cities where populations have a negative perception of Brexit" (Q418). Most of them also think that the fact that there are many francophones and other migrants in the capital also probably made their experience different from migrants living in less multicultural cities: "Living in London is maybe for me less worrying because there's a big cultural mix there. The impact of Brexit is less evident than in other cities for now in my opinion" (Q342); "I never had any problem because I'm around open-minded people in London" (Q519); "I live in London, so I don't really think my [French/European] identity is endangered, absolutely not" (I122, FG8).

Participants living in other large cities are also convinced that their environment is so multicultural that even in cities that voted Leave such as Birmingham, they did not really feel any anti-European sentiment that would have been brought by Brexit: "I lived in Birmingham, which is the 'Leave centre'

of England in a way, and even here I never had any remarks or anything […] Manchester not at all either" (Q201, FG9). Other cities such as Oxford (Q447), Leicester (I269, FG1) or Bristol (I253, FG5) were also described by participants living there as "cosmopolitan", "multicultural" or "international", and therefore there were "very few discriminations against non-native English speakers" (I253, FG5) and would "not always [be] representative of the rest of the UK" (Q447).

Some participants who lived in different cities in England compared their experiences. According to several of them, British people living in smaller towns, rural areas or less wealthy regions tended to be less favourable to immigration than people in larger cities. Q39 for instance wrote in her questionnaire: "I lived in London and Huddersfield. It's not the same mentality!!!" (Q39). Q336, a woman in her early twenties who lived in Somerset describes it as "more rural and a bit less diverse" than Oxford where she recently moved to. There, she "had conversations with people who told [her] quite honestly that they had voted for Brexit, and that they had done so to reduce immigration" whereas people she came across in Oxford are mainly "against Brexit and advocate cultural richness" (Q336). In FG3, all the participants knew each other and met in London several years ago. However, they all had slightly different experiences, as I509 lives and works in London, I157 lives near her but travels often around the UK for work, and I508 works in the capital but lives near Colchester. Their different experiences were the topic of the conversation below:

> I509: It's interesting because I had never thought about it and I realise when talking to you that I probably live in a bubble because I never heard things like that, I never received this type of comment, things about the French language so I feel like maybe not to…
>
> I508: You live in London! [laughs]
>
> I157: We live about 5min away from each other, almost in the same neighbourhood, but the only difference is that I travel more often to the countryside and all the suppliers are English […] I saw this I'd say more often in the countryside where people are closer to losing a job etc. (FG3)

Other European migrants in Godin & Sigona (2023: 138) referred to London "a bubble, a place of refuge, a place outside England" where they felt people were more "open-minded" than in other places in England or even Europe. Q334 who also lives in London thinks that "things must be different in areas with high unemployment rates" and similarly, Q224 who is based in Bath says: "We are lucky to live in an educated and wealthy region [Bath], never an English person made us feel like we don't belong here", implying that experiences of migrants living in less wealthy regions may be different. It is interesting that people living in London mention that unemployment could lead to xenophobia, as the second region with the highest unemployment rate in 2016 was London, after the Northeast (ONS,

2016). Only 11 participants (2%) lived in the Northeast region, eight were based in Newcastle-Upon-Tyne, one in South Shields, one in Gateshead and one in Durham.
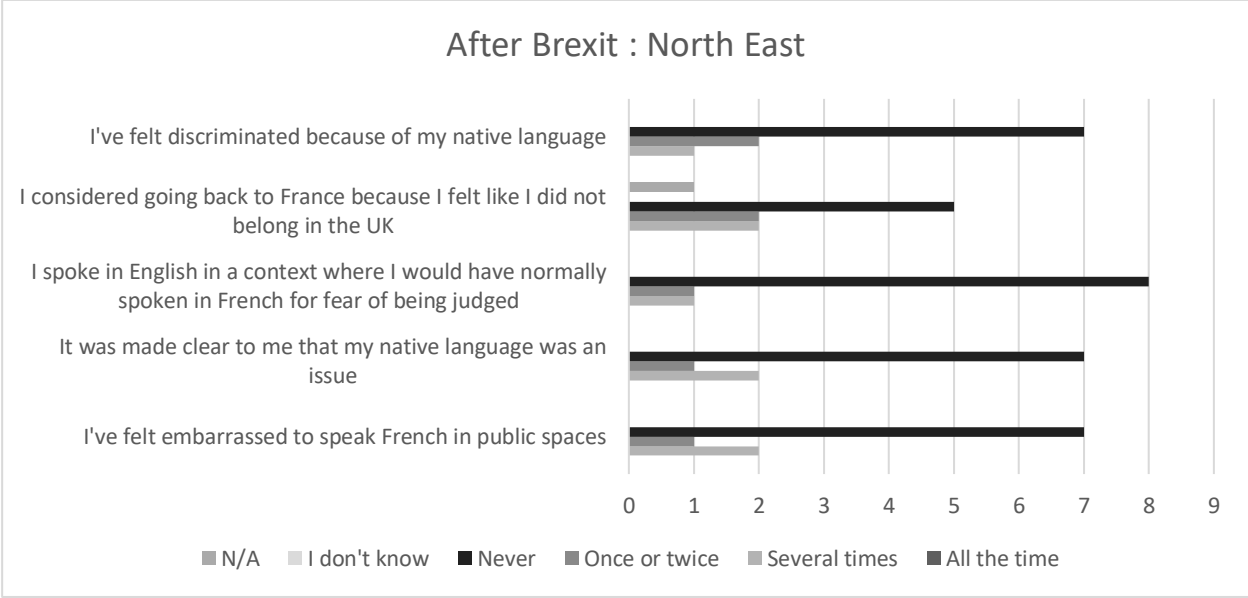
Figure 28: Attitudes after Brexit – Northeast Region

Figure 28 shows that most participants living in the Northeast region never felt discriminated against, threatened, or embarrassed by their native language after the EU referendum. For instance, 64% of them answered that they never felt discriminated against because of their language after Brexit, while only 56% of the total participants in this study responded "never" to this question. Therefore, it tends to indicate that people living in the Newcastle-Upon-Tyne area are not more likely to be discriminated against than in any other region, despite it being the region with the highest unemployment rate.

The "North" in a more general way (usually referring to the Midlands and above) was also mentioned a few times by participants living in the "South" as probably being less favourable to immigration than the South. In FG9 for instance, I307 and I228 who respectively moved to St Leonards-on-Sea and Bristol in 2019 and 2018 both never felt discrimination in their city and thought that "maybe in the North it would be different". Nevertheless, here again, other participants based in what they referred to as "the North", such as I201 who lived in Birmingham and Manchester had a positive experience there: "I only lived in the North of England so that's all I know and it's fine, but maybe it's just me!" (I201, FG9). Q472 who lived in the South before moving to South Shields in 2015 received more comments about her nationality in the South than in the North: "I think that in the North as there are fewer foreigners than in the South people are more, well there are idiots everywhere, but people are generally more open-minded" (I472, FG6).

The hypothesis that it would be more difficult to be a migrant in rural areas or small towns considering their usually higher percentage of Brexit supporters was also not confirmed. On the contrary, participants living in small towns and villages, even in Leave areas, tend to report never having experienced xenophobia, linguistic discrimination, or fear to speak French in public spaces. It is for instance the case of Q273, who lives in Market Bosworth (60.3% Leave), a small rural town in Leicestershire, Q337 based in Hayle (56.5% Leave) a small coastal town in Cornwall, or Q507 who resides in Belper (60.3% Leave), a town near Derby. A study about young Eastern Europeans' experiences of xenophobia after the EU referendum also showed that participants living in cities were more likely to report incidents than those in rural areas (Sime et al., 2022: 7).

The data about where participants who reported having felt unwanted or been victims of discrimination or xenophobia lived does not suggest that people living in Leave areas were more affected than those in Remain areas either. While some of them did live in cities where a large majority of the population voted to leave the EU such as Wakefield (66% Leave), Plymouth (60% Leave) or Hinckley (60% Leave), others had similar experiences in cities where the Leave percentage was relatively low such as Bristol (38% Leave), Brighton (31% Leave), or even London (25% Leave). Therefore, this study did not confirm the hypothesis that living in a Leave area impacted participants' experiences post-EU referendum.

Moreover, several participants mentioned being "lucky" to live in areas where they felt safe and welcome. It could be argued that it is not due to luck but to the privilege to have the choice to live in these "rich and educated" (Q224) areas, as mentioned by some participants. Indeed, the Office of National Statistics reported in 2016 that almost 80% of French nationals in the UK were employed, and among them, 65% worked in higher-level professions compared to 44% of the UK workforce (ONS, 2016). Brahic (2020) notes that these statistics suggest that most French migrants in the UK "live relatively comfortable" (2020:6). Consequently, given this privileged status, it is unlikely that they would choose to live in poor areas, especially if they felt unwelcome or unsafe, which could explain why most participants reported living in areas where they felt overall safe and welcome.

Many participants concluded that perhaps the most important element was not necessarily the city in which they lived, but the people they chose to surround themselves with. Many used the word "community"[43] and talked about people being "open-minded"[44]: "It all depends on the communities in which you live […] in your circle of friends it's normally people who are quite open-minded because they would not be friends with you otherwise" (I189, FG7, M, 36-55, Education, Birmingham, 1995);

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[43] Communauté
[44] Ouverts d'esprit

"Although I know that an anti-European sentiment grew after Brexit, the city where I live (Bristol) and the people around me here are not at all like this. It's like an anti-Brexit bubble that helps not to feel rejected or judged. On the contrary, people were really awesome and supportive of Europeans." (Q239, F, 26-35, Computing, 2009); "We are lucky, we live in a small and open-minded community, so we never suffered from direct discrimination before or after Brexit. Those who don't like it (the local vote here was representative of the national vote) never told us face to face (or don't know us)." (Q294, M, 36-55, Computing, Hereford, 2007).

Consequently, the number of Leave votes in their area of residence did not seem to be related to the number of linguistic discriminations. People in different parts of the country had similar experiences, whether they were negative or positive, and xenophobic incidents often happened in large cities such as London, even if the majority had voted against Brexit. As it will be shown in 6.5.3, it is the social environment of the participants rather than the city or region where they lived that had an impact on their experience of xenophobia.

6.5.3 Professional and social environment

The professional and social environment of participants was also expected to be a factor which could potentially impact their experience post-EU referendum. Participants working in professional sectors where most people voted to leave the EU would be more likely to be around them often and therefore potentially face negative remarks about migrants or even be discriminated against. On the contrary, people working in sectors where most people voted Remain would probably be in a more favourable environment to EU migrants and therefore would not necessarily see changes in their professional life after Brexit.

Are you in favor of leaving the European Union?

Occupation	Remain	Leave
Design	76.67%	23.33%
Consulting	74.73%	25.27%
Media	66.13%	33.87%
Education	65.52%	34.48%
Insurance	65.43%	34.57%
Public Affairs	64.7%	35.29%
Advertising	64.44%	35.56%
Politics	62.5%	37.5%
Health / Social Care	61.45%	38.55%
Accounting	58.53%	41.47%
Human Resources	51.72%	48.28%
Retail	46.91%	53.09%
Market Research	42.86%	57.14%
Hospitality	41.22%	58.78%
Manufacturing	40.08%	59.92%
Engineering	39.79%	60.21%

Percentage of respondents

● Remain ● Leave

Figure 29: "Are you in favour of leaving the EU?" by occupation industry in 2019 (Clark, 2022)

Figure 29 presents the results of a survey conducted in September 2019 in which 7,517 respondents in the UK were asked whether they were in favour of the UK leaving the EU (Clark, 2022). It shows the professions where most participants felt a change in British attitudes towards migrants after the EU referendum. It reveals that people working in engineering, manufacturing, hospitality, market research and retail were more likely to be in favour of Brexit. On the contrary, most people working in design, consulting, media, or education for instance voted Remain. The hypothesis was therefore that participants having occupations in which most people voted Leave would be more likely to be faced with xenophobia at work than those working for instance in education or in the media, where most people voted Remain.

I've felt a change in British attitudes towards migrants since June 2016	Agriculture	Retired	Computing	Education/Research
Agree	67% (n=2)	66% (n=4)	55% (n=16)	52% (n=56)
Disagree	0% (n=0)	17% (n=1)	21% (n=6)	18% (n=19)
Neutral, I don't know, N/A	33% (n=1)	17% (n=1)	24% (n=7)	30% (n=32)

Figure 30: Question 18.1-I have felt a change in British attitudes towards migrants since June 2016" by profession

Figure 30 shows the four professions in my research with the highest percentages of participants who felt a change in British attitudes towards migrants after the EU referendum. It is not surprising to find retired people in this table. As it will be developed in 6.5.4, older participants are more likely to have people of their age in their circle of acquaintances, and therefore people who voted Leave.

The fact that people working in agriculture felt a change in British attitudes towards migrants after the EU referendum also seems to validate this hypothesis, as many workers in agriculture professions voted for Brexit (May, 2022: 281). Nevertheless, it is important to remain careful when interpreting these results, as only three participants in my research work in this sector, therefore their answers may be influenced by other factors than their job. One of these participants working in agriculture, I375, was interviewed in FG6. She explained that although she did not have a negative experience herself, she felt that "something changed" after Brexit, but that negative comments she heard were usually about Eastern Europeans rather than about her or French people in general (see 6.4.2). Nevertheless, she did not specify whether she heard these comments in her professional context.

However, finding education in this table was unexpected. As seen in Figure 29, education is a sector where most people were in favour of the EU. Therefore, it was predicted that participants working in education/research would not necessarily see a change in British people's attitudes as much as in other professions as they would be in contact daily with people who voted Remain. As 107 participants in this research work in education/research and nine of them were interviewed, enough qualitative data was collected to understand this phenomenon.

Firstly, it should be noted that each professional category in my questionnaire includes different types of professions. For instance, for education/research, the participants interviewed were primary/secondary school teachers, language assistants, university lecturers or doctoral/post-doctoral students. Participants working or studying in universities, as expected, mentioned that their environment being overall favourable to immigration and being multicultural, they did not feel a negative impact of Brexit at work. Q201, I253 and Q387 mention the "multicultural" or "international"

aspect of universities, which "plays a role in the absence of discrimination" (Q387). Q473 and I201 did not see differences when they spoke in French after Brexit as university students, but I201 explains that her friends working in other sectors such as restaurants and bars in other cities were victims of xenophobic comments by customers such as "That's it, with Brexit it's over, pack your bags and go back home" (I201, FG9, F, 18-25, Doctoral student, Manchester, 2018).

I122 who teaches French in a secondary school in London explains that he never received negative comments about his native language as his work environment was favourable to foreign languages (I122, FG8, M, 25-36, London, 2017). For Q516 who works in a primary school in Warminster, the education sector has never been "openly racist", whereas when she worked as a caregiver in 1997, she was told by a colleague to "go back home". The negative comments received by participants working in education were usually not made by colleagues, but by students or parents, as reported for instance by Q286 in 6.3 who explained that students in her French classroom told her to "speak English" or to "go back to [her] country". I500 who worked in a city school in Southampton also talked about her experiences with racism at work even before 2016, but that it was always "corrected by the school", implying that racism would not come from the staff (I500, FG4).

As far as other professions were concerned, I157 mentions that he felt a change in attitudes usually linked to some jobs and social categories. He talks about "'low-class'[45] people, people who claim benefit or who are not necessarily educated and have basic jobs in manutention etc." (I157, FG3). Clarke et al. (2017: 62) also argue that "people in low-status, poorly paid jobs and those with only a few or no educational qualifications" are often competing with workers from Eastern European countries and therefore are more likely to be opposed to the EU. Goodwin & Heath (2016) and Virdee & McGheever (2017) showed that although "the left-behind thesis cannot explain the entire Brexit vote" (Goodwin & Heath, 2016:331) the working class did play a role in the outcome of the vote, as explained in the following extract:

> "The public vote for Brexit was anchored predominantly, albeit not exclusively, in areas
> of the country that are filled with pensioners, low-skilled and less well-educated blue-
> collar workers and citizens who have been pushed to the margins not only by the
> economic transformation of the country over recent decades but also by the values that
> have come to dominate a more socially liberal media and political class. In this respect,
> the vote for Brexit was delivered by the 'left behind'—social groups that are united by a
> general sense of insecurity, pessimism and marginalisation, who do not feel as though
> elites, whether in Brussels or Westminster, share their values, represent their interests

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and genuinely empathise with their intense angst about rapid social, economic and cultural change" (Goodwin & Heath, 2016: 332).

In FG2, participants also discussed the impact of working for small businesses or multinationals. I464 for instance explained that her environment in a multinational was very multicultural and that she therefore never felt discriminated against there. I390 who worked for smaller businesses in different countries explains that "SMEs are different from multinationals like [name of 1464's company], so it's not the same thing when you work in a small company where you deal with people who have not always been really far from home, it can be a bit more difficult" (I390, FG2).

Therefore, the hypothesis that the participants' profession could have an impact on their experience in England seems to be confirmed by my participants' experiences. Those who reported being particularly affected by Brexit either worked in sectors where many of their colleagues probably voted Leave or were in contact with people from different backgrounds and social classes, such as education, health and social services or customer services and sales. The negative experiences they may have had at work were not necessarily due to a change in their colleagues' attitudes (most of them reported having on the contrary received support from them after the EU referendum) but due to a change of attitudes from customers. Participants working in what they described as "international environments" such as universities or multinationals also believed that it had an impact on their positive experience after the EU referendum, as many of their colleagues were migrants as well.

6.5.4 Gender, age and time spent in the UK

This sub-section will analyse the impact of three factors on participants' experiences after the EU referendum: their gender, age, and the time they spent in the UK. In terms of gender, as explained in 6.5.1, some studies (Coastes 2015: 61; Dovchin, 2019: 345; Trudgill, 1974: 186) showed differences between how women and men speak, with women for instance trying to adapt to societal norms more than men. Brahic (2020: 2176) also found that most of the French mothers in her study had moved to the UK to follow a partner who had secured a position there and were often not in paid employment. Some of them had low proficiency in English and used French-speaking playgroups and networks to socialise. While only about 3% of my participants were not in paid employment, about 25% were mothers and could therefore have had experiences like those of the participants in Brahic (2020), who for instance reported avoiding speaking French in public places with their children to "blend in" (2020: 2180). Therefore, it was expected that women may be more likely to be more affected than men by the outcome of the EU referendum and potentially modify the way they speak.

I've felt discriminated against because of my native language	Men before 2016	Women before 2016	Men after 2016	Women after 2016
All the time	0%	0%	0%	3%
Several times	7%	11%	4%	15%
Once or twice	25%	27%	22%	21%
Never	62%	57%	67%	56%
I don't know	0%	2%	0%	2%
N/A	5%	2%	7%	3%
It was made clear to me that my native language was an issue	Men before 2016	Women before 2016	Men after 2016	Women after 2016
All the time	0%	0%	0%	0%
Several times	0%	3%	4%	9%
Once or twice	16%	16%	11%	25%
Never	82%	78%	83%	64%
I don't know	0%	2%	0%	1%
N/A	2%	1%	2%	0%

Figure 31: Questions 16.3&19.3 and Q16.8&19.8-Perceived discrimination by gender before and after Brexit

A phenomenon that seems to confirm this theory can be observed when comparing the answers of men and women who lived in the UK before 2016 to the questions about their language attitudes before and after Brexit. Figure 31 shows how men and women responded to the questions Q.16.3/19.3 "I have felt discriminated because of my native language" and Q16.8/19.8 "It was made clear to me that my native language was an issue" before and after Brexit. The answers before Brexit are similar for both genders, although a slightly higher percentage of women reported cases of perceived linguistic discrimination, with respectively 38% and 19% of women who experienced being discriminated against because of their native language and feeling that their language was an issue, for 32% and 16% of men.

However, when looking at the answers to the same questions for "after Brexit", we can see even larger gaps between men's and women's answers. After Brexit, 39% of women perceived linguistic discrimination, including 3% who feel discriminated against all the time because of their language, and it was expressed to 34% of them that their language was an issue. In comparison, only 26% and 15% of men answered positively to the same questions. It can therefore be noted that while the number of women who perceived linguistics discrimination increased after Brexit, it decreased for men. More women (57%) than men (49%) also noticed a change in British attitudes towards migrants after Brexit,

and almost all the events of discrimination in the previous sections of this chapter were reported by women.

It confirms the findings in Schmitt & Branscombe (2002: 169), that women tend to describe more severe occurrences of discrimination than men and that these events had a greater impact on their life. Migrant women may report more discrimination occurrences because they experience it more, potentially because as women and migrants they face intersectional discrimination (Campbell, 2015: 480; Lieberman et al. 2021:11). Intersectional discrimination was described in 6.4.3 by Q211, a non-binary participant who argued that they were not only discriminated because of their French accent but also because of other factors such as being queer and black. Botterill and Hancock (2018) argue that "strategies of self-securitisation are employed in anticipation of a range of everyday fears, these are gendered and related to different intersections of identity" (2018: 6). One of their participants, a Polish woman living in Scotland, explains that she started to feel self-conscious about her accent after Brexit and for instance stopped speaking in Polish in public transports with her child (2018: 5) because she felt stigmatised as a woman and as a migrant. She then acknowledges that her "perceptions are based on stereotypes, being a woman is a big factor here, it's not just migrant" (2018: 6).

A report (OECE/EU 2019) about gender differences in migrant integration showed that men's and women's perceptions of discrimination vary between countries (2018: 168). It revealed that in the UK, the levels of perceived discrimination among foreign-born men declined while it rose for women since 2002 (2018: 168). Nevertheless, this study also indicates that foreign-born men still reported more occurrences of discrimination in the UK, as well as in Europe in general, than foreign-born women (2018: 169). What these studies as well as the results found in my research indicate is that migrant women may not be more discriminated against than men but feel more vulnerable because they are not only migrants but also women.

I spoke in English in a context where I would have normally spoken in French for fear of being judged	Men before 2016	Women before 2016	Men after 2016	Women after 2016
All the time	0%	0%	0%	1%
Several times	4%	3%	2%	12%
Once or twice	13%	12%	16%	14%
Never	82%	81%	80%	71%
I don't know	0%	3%	2%	1%
N/A	1%	1%	0%	1%

I've felt embarrassed to speak French in public spaces	Men before 2016	Women before 2016	Men after 2016	Women after 2016
All the time	0%	2%	0%	4%
Several times	7%	5%	11%	15%
Once or twice	15%	15%	11%	21%
Never	76%	77%	74%	59%
I don't know	0%	0%	0%	0%
N/A	2%	1%	4%	1%

Figure 32: Questions 16.1&19.1, 16.3&19.3-Responses to discrimination by gender before and after the EU referendum

Figure 32 shows how men and women responded to potential linguistic discrimination. Here as well, while percentages are similar for both genders before Brexit, 17% of men and 15% of women spoke English rather than French for fear of being judged at least once, and 22% of both men and women felt embarrassed when speaking in French in public places at least once. Nevertheless, the gaps become larger again for the same questions after Brexit. After Brexit, the number of men who spoke English instead of French does not change, however, 27% (+12%) of women reported having done this. For the question "have you ever felt embarrassed of speaking French", the percentage of men who replied that they have remains the same as well after Brexit, whereas 40% (+18%) of women answered yes.

I considered going back to France because I felt like I did not belong in the UK	Men before 2016	Women before 2016	Men after 2016	Women after 2016
All the time	0%	0%	0%	5%
Several times	4%	8%	11%	13%
Once or twice	20%	10%	20%	24%
Never	75%	78%	67%	57%
I don't know	0%	2%	0%	1%
N/A	2%	1%	2%	0%

Figure 33: Questions 16.5&19.5-I considered going back to France because I felt like I did not belong in the UK

Finally, Figure 33 displays the results for Q.16.5 & 19.5 "Have you ever considered going back to France because you felt like you did not belong in the UK?" (before and after Brexit) for men and women. It shows that before Brexit, more men had considered leaving the UK than women (24% of men for 18% of women). After Brexit, these percentages increase for both men and women, with 31% (+7%) of men and 42% (+24%) of women who felt like they did not belong in the UK and considered leaving. These results indicate once more that women seem to be more affected by Brexit than men.

These findings suggest that women indeed try to adapt and conform to societal norms (Trudgill, 1974: 186) or as put in by Brahic (2020: 2180) "blend in". It also shows, as reported in Dovchin (2019) that for women, their native language can become "a source of shame" when it becomes a factor of discrimination rather than an asset (2019: 346).

In terms of age, it is difficult to analyse the results, as when taking into consideration only the participants who were already in the UK before 2016, a large majority belonged to the age groups 26-35 or 36-55. Indeed, 242 participants (87%) are aged between 26 and 55 years old, with only 21 (8%) in the 18-25 age group, and 13 (5%) who are over 55 years old.

I've felt a change in British attitudes towards immigrants since June 2016	18-25	26-35	36-55	56+
Agree	33%	53%	62%	75%
Neutral	14%	19%	14%	8%
Disagree	48%	27%	23%	8%
I don't know/ N/A	5%	1%	1%	8%

Figure 34: Question 18.1-I have felt a change in British attitudes towards migrants since June 2016 by age group

Figure 34 shows how the different age groups replied to the question "Have you felt a change in British attitudes towards migrants after the EU referendum". It indicates that the older the participants are, the more likely they are to have noticed a change in British attitudes towards migrants. There are two reasons to explain this tendency.

Which way did you vote in the Brexit referendum?
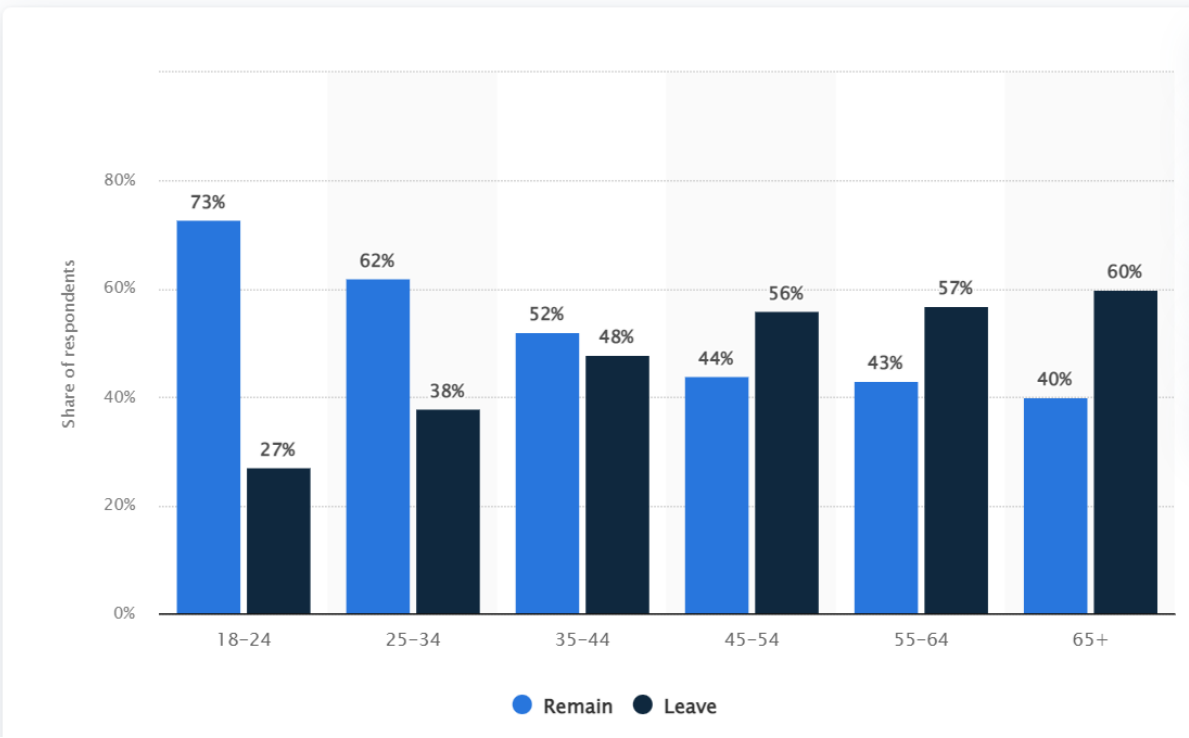
Figure 35: "Which way did you vote in the Brexit referendum" by age group (Statista Research Department, 2016b)

Figure 35 shows how the different age groups voted in June 2016 (Statista Research Department, 2016b). The older they are, the more likely British citizens are likely to have voted Leave. People aged 18 to 45 voted in the majority to remain in the EU, and only 27% of the 18-24 age group voted to leave. On the contrary, only about 40% of people above 45 years old voted to remain in the EU. Therefore, if the participants' circles of friends are in the same age groups, younger participants would be more likely to be around people who voted Remain while participants aged 45 and over would have more people who voted Leave in their circle. Consequently, the first hypothesis is that they would be more likely to hear comments about immigration that could affect their well-being and language attitudes.

Nevertheless, in other studies about EU migrants' experiences of discrimination after the EU referendum, people of all ages reported having felt a change in attitudes or been victims of xenophobia. Eastern Europeans in Lumsden et al. (2019: 173) who reported cases of verbal abuse after Brexit for instance were aged between 20 to 50 years old. In Rzepnikowska (2019) as well, most participants were in their early thirties and one of them explains that she "experienced racist harassment before

and after the Brexit vote by the local youth" (2019: 72). Although participants in these studies are Eastern Europeans, and therefore, as shown in 6.4.2, they were more often victims of hate crimes than French migrants, it proves that being a young European migrant does not necessarily mean experiencing xenophobia less often.

Therefore, the second way to explain why my older participants noticed more changes in British attitudes towards migrants and were overall more affected than my younger participants is that it is not directly related to their age, but to the time they spent in the UK. Out of the 14 participants who are over 55 years old, only one moved to the UK after the EU referendum, and 12 of them have been living here for at least ten years, including seven who moved to the UK before 2000. On the contrary, 90% of the participants under 25 years old moved to the UK after 2016, and only two participants have been living in the country for more than 10 years.

Section 6.3 showed that participants who have lived in the UK for over 10 years before the EU referendum tended to be the most disappointed by the outcome of the vote and the attitudes of some British citizens towards migrants. It is a factor influencing the experience of migrants and potentially their language attitudes and habits that emerged when analysing the results of the study and was not part of the initial hypotheses. Other studies (Brahic & Lallement, 2018; Brahic, 2020) have recently published about the experiences of French migrants in post-Brexit Britain also found that French people who were settled reacted to Brexit more intensely than those who had moved recently (Brahic & Lallement, 2018: 15). French mothers who lived in the UK before 2016 and had never experienced racism until then and felt "a strong sense of connection and belonging to the UK" felt more affected and rejected after the EU referendum than those who moved after 2016 (Brahic, 2020: 11).

On the other hand, participants who moved to the UK after 2016 knew that Brexit was going to happen, sometimes expected to meet people who would not be favourable to immigration and were usually on the contrary pleasantly surprised to feel overall welcome in the country. This was discussed for instance in FG10 where all the participants settled in England after 2016: "Brexit has no impact because we came because of Brexit, so we came with the knowledge of what was going on and we were really excited about this opportunity" (I148, FG10, F, 56-75, Nottingham, 2019).

Those who recently moved to England and were confronted with xenophobia tended to report it as "only once or twice" and, as mentioned in 6.4, considered that they were just isolated acts. For people who have lived in the country before Brexit even "once" was perceived as "one time too many", as they know this used to be different and did not happen to them before Brexit. Europeans in *In Limbo* who have lived in the UK for a long period also seem to be the most affected by Brexit. Several of them talk about Brexit as a "betrayal" (Remigi, 2018: 187), as like my participants also mentioned in 6.2.2,

they felt integrated after spending so many years in the UK, "paying their taxes" (2018: 176) and were now faced with their migrant status for the first time (Brahic, 2020: 2182).

This section showed that although it was expected that where participants lived would have an impact on their experience, it was mainly their social environment, such as their workplace that did. It also revealed that women and migrants who were already in the UK before 2016 were more likely to report discrimination and feel affected by it. In the final section, I will show that while most of my participants described their experience in England as positive and did not think they were targeted by xenophobic attacks, several of them mentioned "feeling paranoid" and blaming themselves for negative experiences they had. Similarly, I will argue that while they tended to perceive no change in the way they speak, a few participants realised they were being "more careful" when speaking in French in public places after 2016.

6.6 Impact of Brexit on French migrants' language habits and well-being
6.6.1 "Brexit paranoia" or symbolic violence?

In this final section, I will provide an answer for the main question of this research: did Brexit impact French migrants' language habits? I have shown throughout this thesis that although French migrants often claimed not feeling discriminated, or at least "not as much as other migrants", and that therefore Brexit did not have any impact on them, they also tended to downplay their experiences of xenophobia. Several participants argued that their experience in England could be the result of their own attitudes rather than British people's attitudes. As seen in 6.2, the outcome of the 2016 UK EU Referendum brought a climate of tension, and even participants who felt supported by people around them often felt anxious or even scared. Consequently, some participants believe that some of the altercations that they or people they know had after the EU referendum may have been the result of their own fear of being unwanted. I509 for instance thinks that she never had any problem because she "tries to integrate" and has a "positive mindset", whereas some of her family members who visited her in the UK with preconceived ideas about what British people may think about them had confrontations with them:

> "When I read your questionnaire, I thought about something. I know that if you are already conditioned to think that because you are French maybe others won't accept you as you are, sometimes things happen. I saw this in my family, for instance, my father when he visits us, several times he had altercations with English people because, in his mind, he thinks that because he is French, English people have a problem with him. So, I believe that if you think like that, you're already taking the wrong direction. You notice things that are not, it's a sort of paranoia, nothing is going on, but we create these tensions that would not be there otherwise. I know it's not at all how I see things, I'm in England, I want

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to integrate, but if I want to speak my language, I don't think English people will hate me for it. So I think that when you're like 'I'm different in this country, maybe it's not going to be well perceived' maybe that's when tensions happen because you created them yourselves." (I509, FG3)

Similarly, I269 who has been living in Leicester for 20 years never had any negative experience when speaking French in England, whereas her family also found themselves confronted with xenophobia when visiting her:

"My brother and my father came here during the rugby world cup two or three years ago, I don't remember if it was before [Brexit] or not, they were all speaking in French and there were rugby fans who said racist stuff, whereas it had never happened to me even though I live here." (I269, FG1)

In this second example, the context of the World Cup as well as the alcohol involved may also have triggered this altercation. Other participants mentioned that incidents like this often happened in places where alcohol was involved, I100, for instance, explained that her (ex)-friends made xenophobic comments at the pub as "when it's almost closing time, people become loose-tongued" (I100, FG7). In Huc-Hepher (2019: 24), a participant also identified sports events as times when British people were particularly "against France", as even when England is not playing, they always support the opposite team. Huc-Hepher (2019) argues that this constant unified opposition feels like a personal attack and results in a sense of isolation for this participant (2019: 24). Therefore, it seems to demonstrate that these behaviours and tensions do exist, but French migrants, to protect themselves, may sometimes prefer to ignore them to avoid the stress that acknowledging these repeated microaggressions would create (Estacio & Saidy-Khan, 2014: 6).

Other participants also mentioned that since the EU referendum, because of the climate of tension brought among others by the media, they did not always know if there was a change in British attitudes towards them, or if they "perceived tensions that may not exist" because of their fear of being rejected or disliked because of their nationality. When describing how he felt after the results of the vote I390 says: "It's always difficult to know if you're just projecting, but there was a tension" (I390, FG2, M, 56-75, Business/Marketing, Cambridge, 2012). I100 also thinks that sometimes "we can't really know if it's really because people are racist or xenophobic, or because they've had a bad day, or if it's just in our head" (I100, FG7, F, 36-55, Journalist, London, 2011). I376 mentioned feeling less comfortable speaking her native language since Brexit and wonders if she is "becoming paranoid", like participants in Brahic (2020: 13): "Regarding how I feel about Brexit, I'm apprehensive about speaking in French or even just being heard speaking in English with my accent, and I can't identify whether there is a

difference in people's attitudes or if it's me who is becoming paranoid" (I376, FG7, F, 36-55, Education, Liverpool, 2005).

Nevertheless, these same participants described several cases of SAE/microaggressions and even less subtle direct discrimination. For instance, I376 gave two examples of SAE before asking if she is becoming "paranoid". In the first one, a woman had come to her in a friendly way to get to know her at the swimming pool, and after hearing her accent asked if she "was a foreigner" and immediately ended the conversation and left, which as a result may have made I376 feel unwanted and like she does not belong (Jana & Baran, 2020: 23). In another example, she explains that she was several times asked if she knows a word in English, despite speaking fluently the language. Although it may have come from a good intention of ensuring that she understood the conversation, it is also an SAE, as it is offending for this participant who is once again made feel like she does not belong and is "inadequate" (Jana & Baran, 2020: 23). Similarly, I100 and I390 wonder if sometimes "it is in their heads", despite also experiencing direct discrimination: I390 explained he lost the interest of head-hunters after they heard his accent and I100 was told to "go back to her country" and was almost involved in a physical altercation.

Their reactions are common responses to microaggressions/SAE. Participants tended to minimise their own feelings by for instance attributing it to the lack of education of the perpetrators and implying it did not affect them, despite still remembering some of these incidents several years later as seen in 6.3.1. For instance, as seen in 6.3.2, I160 claims that those who made xenophobic comments to her and her French friends were "just idiots", and I376 assume that they are "maybe a bit less educated people", minimising the impact these aggressions had on them and finding "excuses" for the initiators such as their lack of education, or even describing these behaviours as "humour" and "friendliness" as seen in 6.3.1. Similar responses to microaggressions were found in Li (2019: 566), whose participants tended to interpret the occurrences of microaggression as "ignorance" or "friendliness" from the initiator and claimed that they "did not care" and that it "did not hurt them". Torino, et al. (2018: 97) and Estacio & Saidy-Khan (2014:5) explain that microaggressions can be confusing due to their subtle and ambiguous nature, leading individuals to question whether it was actually xenophobic. Estacio & Saidy-Khan (2014) argue that they would rather "admit to being paranoid than suspect their colleagues of being racially aggressive" (2014: 5).

By doing so, they avoid confrontation and potential further aggression. Recent studies on microaggressions have shown that people who pointed out offensive behaviours were often told that it was "in their heads" and that they were "oversensitive" and "paranoid" (Johnson et al., 2021: 1026). Consequently, people who experience microaggression convince themselves that it is actually "only in

their heads" to avoid further mistreatment, despite the negative consequences on their well-being, as they may feel anger, frustration and even paranoia (Estacio & Saidy-Khan, 2014: 6; Johnson et al., 2021: 1025).

Therefore, for Huc-Hepher (2021b) who studied the microaggressions faced by French migrants in London through the lens of Bourdieu's symbolic violence (see 1.3.3) "the referendum and its aftermath are the ultimate materialisation of symbolic violence" (2021b: 245). She argues that microaggressions French migrants experienced, often disguised as "jokes", pre-dated the EU referendum (Huc-Hepher, 2019: 22), but have now been legitimised and are being perpetuated politically (Huc-Hepher, 2021b: 245). Respondents in her study displayed similar reactions as my participants, they tended to minimise or deny their experiences of xenophobic microaggressions as defence mechanisms to cope with the lack of control they have over them (2021b: 246), which can be apprehended within the framework of symbolic violence, as this subtle form of hostility is therefore inflicted to them with their complicity (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992: 167).

In conclusion, some participants believe that their experience of discrimination in England is a result of their own attitudes. They think that their fear of being unwanted may have contributed to some of the altercations they had after the referendum. Nevertheless, I showed that most of these participants after wondering whether they had imagined these tensions proceeded to describe several occurrences of microaggressions and discrimination. I demonstrated that these were typical responses to microaggressions, those who experience them tend to minimise their impact and often prefer blaming themselves rather than addressing the aggression.

Furthermore, my participants also tended to downplay their own experience of discrimination or the way they felt after the outcome of the EU referendum because they were aware of their privileged position in the UK (see 6.3). As seen in 6.3, many immediately explained after talking about their experiences of xenophobia that they were "not as discriminated against as other migrants". I160 (FG6) for instance recalls feeling "like a stranger" after the EU referendum and adds: "I feel ashamed to say that, because those who are refugees, everything they must go through in their life, leave their country […] we are lucky, we have a choice", referring to the fact that as seen in 5.4, French migrants tend to have moved because they "wanted to" and would easily be able to either return to France or moved to another country if they no longer felt comfortable in England.

6.6.2 "I'll be quieter": modifying language habits after the EU Referendum

Similarly, this thesis showed that most participants did not think that Brexit had an impact on the way they speak. Several of them, like I509, believe that if they want to speak their language in public places, they will not receive hate for it. Nevertheless, I also showed throughout this thesis that despite not

feeling threatened, several participants would not speak French around British people, "out of respect" but also so that they would not be "criticised" (see 4.2.5). Some of them, like I157 or I500 in 6.3.1 and 6.3.2, were indeed told to "speak English" and that they did not belong in England because they were speaking in French in public places. In 4.3.3, when discussing attitudes towards the French accent, several also admitted having experienced microaggressions and discrimination because of their accent, especially after 2016. Some participants, such as Q317, thought that this "climate" could make people want to "blend in", by not using their native language or trying to mask their accent.

Therefore, although often initially denying the impact of these microaggressions on their language habits, several participants later in the questionnaires or focus groups conceded being "more careful" when speaking in French in public places. Some of them, like Q453 in 4.4.4, originally replied that Brexit did not impact their language attitudes, and then explained that she told her children to speak in English in the street so that they "would not be recognised as foreigners". A few participants, such as I134, a man in his late twenties-early thirties who lives in Derby and I161, a woman aged 36/55 based in Loughborough also mentioned being more careful when speaking French in public places after Brexit, even four years after the vote:

> "I took the habit of speaking in English more now, even when we are with French people we speak in English, we try to speak more in English when there are people around us [...] sometimes when we're in the street we try to speak in English because we don't want people to look at us." (I134, FG5)

> "It's true that in the pubs I'm more careful now about what I say, I may not be as loud, I'll be quieter, maybe a bit less extravagant because I know that there are negative connotations against French people included" (I161, FG2).

As argued by Rzepnikowska (2019), white migrants are invisible until they speak, their "language make their Otherness visible and audible" (2019: 74). These quotes express these participants' desire of remaining "invisible", as clearly articulated by I134 who does not "want people to look at [him]". They also show that speaking English with francophones in public or being "quiet" is a new "habit" they consciously started after the EU referendum. It is therefore a part of their personality they decided to change, as I161 explains that when being a French speaker was perceived as "sexy", she did not mind being "extravagant", but now that she feels it has "negative connotations" she feels a need to be more discreet. Lulle et al (2017) in a study published a year after the EU referendum found that "general worries about being seen and heard speaking a foreign language on the street demonstrated the deeply felt emotional burden and negative atmosphere created by Brexit" (2017: 7).

To conclude, most of the participants did not perceive changes in the way they use the French language in England after the EU referendum. Nevertheless, this final section demonstrated that although participants usually at first declared not feeling affected by Brexit, several revealed later in the discussion having experienced microaggression and discrimination, which not only made them displace the blame and convince themselves it was probably "in their heads", but also made them feel uncomfortable speaking in French in public places.

6.7 Chapter conclusion

This final chapter focused on French migrants' experiences of xenophobia, discrimination, and perception of language attitudes after the outcome of the UK EU Referendum in June 2016. It answered the following research questions:

4 a) Does Brexit seem to have an impact on the way they perceive and use the French language?

b) Do French migrants in England feel discriminated against or threatened because of their native language?

c) To what extent do factors such as age, gender, or the number of Leave votes in their area have an impact on French migrants' language attitudes?

This chapter revealed that most French participants in this study do not believe their language habits and attitudes towards their native language were affected by the outcome of the EU referendum. Many of them did not think that Brexit affected the way they were perceived as French migrants and described the attitudes of British citizens around them as generally positive and supportive. They often mentioned that their experience as French migrants in England was not representative of EU migrants. Eastern Europeans and more specifically Polish nationals were often cited by participants as being targeted by xenophobia and hate crimes the most. As also found in other studies (Abranches et al., 2021: 2886; Benedi Lahuerta & Iusmen, 2021: 293; Virdee & McGheever, 2017: 1811; Zampi & Awan, 2019: 355), participants perceived latent xenophobia in the UK that was exacerbated by the outcome of the EU referendum. Many of them witnessed negative attitudes towards foreign languages. Several were told that the number of migrants in the country was an issue and noticed that British people usually did not include French or Western Europeans in general in it. Consequently, participants tended to think that they would be less likely to be discriminated against based on their native language or accent in English as attitudes towards their language also tend to be positive, and that speaking French was usually seen as an asset in England.

Nevertheless, most participants also felt disappointed and anxious during the weeks following the EU referendum, and some of them directly experienced linguistic discrimination or xenophobia such as verbal attacks during this period. The experiences and emotions described by the participants in my

research corroborate with those of other European migrants in the UK featured in *In Limbo,* as well as participants in similar studies published after 2016 (Brahic, 2020; Godin & Sigona, 2022; Ryan & Mulholland, 2023; Zontini & Genova, 2022). As mentioned, especially during the weeks surrounding the EU referendum, most EU migrants felt disappointed, unwelcome, and feared that their nationality would become an issue in Brexit Britain. However, most participants thought that the climate of tensions and xenophobia surrounding the 2016 vote faded after a few weeks/months, and therefore so did their anxiety and discomfort.

Nevertheless, as shown at the end of this chapter with I376 who did not know whether attitudes towards migrants changed or if she was "becoming paranoid", some participants even four years after the EU referendum still perceived hostility. Several of them who experienced microaggressions tended to misplace the blame and argue that these tensions they felt were probably just "in their heads", which is a common response to microaggression (Estacio & Saidy-Khan, 2014: 6; Johnson et al., 2021: 1025). In the final section, some participants mentioned that they started to be "more careful" and "quieter" when speaking their native language in public places after the EU referendum, revealing that Brexit, therefore, did have an impact on the language habits of some French migrants in England.

Finally, in terms of factors influencing French migrants' experiences of discrimination in England, it was demonstrated that living in an area where people voted to leave the EU did not necessarily result in participants being more often victims of xenophobia, however, their social and professional environment did. It was also shown that women and older participants tended to report more cases of discrimination and were more likely to modify their language habits after 2016, such as attempting to mask their accent or using English instead of French. I also found, like Brahic (2020), that migrants who settled in England before the EU referendum were the most affected by Brexit, and often reported that they experienced xenophobia for the first time in 2016, which made them feel disappointed and sometimes question whether they still belonged in this country.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

This thesis analysed how French migrants in England use and perceive the French language and their French identity between the UK EU membership referendum in June 2016 and January 2020 when the UK officially left the EU. The following questions were answered:

RQ1 a) How do French migrants use the French language in different contexts in England?

b) What are their attitudes towards it and the way they speak it, how do they perceive their translanguaging and accent, and what is their experience of accent bias before and after the EU referendum?

RQ2 a) How important is it for French migrants to transmit the French language to their children?

b) Did Brexit seem to have an impact on their views about this matter, did it reinforce or weaken their wish to transmit their language?

RQ3 a) What role does the French language play in the expression of French migrants' identity in England?

b) Did Brexit impact how French migrants perceive and express their French identity?

RQ4 a) Does Brexit seem to have an impact on the way they perceive and use the French language?

b) Do French migrants in England feel discriminated against or threatened because of their native language?

c) To what extent do factors such as age, gender, or the number of Leave votes in their area have an impact on French migrants' language attitudes?

This research showed in Chapter 4 that French migrants in England had and often even sought opportunities to speak French. While it is usually easier for those living in large cities, especially London, to meet other francophones to speak in French with, those who do not have access to a "French community" where they lived also mentioned making efforts to use the French language, by reading or watching TV in French for instance, or calling their families in France. This study proved that the French language was important for French migrants as it is not only a part of their identity but also a way to remain connected to French culture and their family and friends in France. Consequently, it is also necessary for them to transmit it to their children so that they can communicate with their families and understand their culture. The focus groups also showed that although the participants were worried about language attrition, they only used a small number of English lexical borrowings during the interview. Nevertheless, I argued in 4.3.1 that rather than anglicisms or even code-switching, it

would be more relevant to talk about translanguaging, which is a way for them to express their new transnational identity, connect with other French people in England while creating a distance with those who remained in France and do not always understand their new language practices (Cacciatorea & Pepe, 2019: 520; Huc-Hepher, 2021a: 77).

Section 4.3.2 and 4.3.3 revealed that attitudes towards the French language and accent were divided. While several claimed to be proud to be a French speaker and sometimes of their French accent in English, most tried to hide their accent as they associated a "native-like" accent with fluency in English. For some of them being a French speaker was an asset in a country where most citizens are monolingual and where the French language and accent usually were loved. Nevertheless, for others, it could be a disadvantage as they felt they were not always "taken seriously" because of their foreign accent, especially since Brexit. Several experienced microaggressions and discrimination because of their accent, they for instance received poor services and lack of interest from professionals and hiring managers after they heard they were not English native speakers. A few also explained that after Brexit people often enquired about their residency status after hearing their accent, which sometimes made them feel uncomfortable and want to "blend in", by trying to mask their accent.

Chapter 5 showed that although the French language was not always mentioned immediately by the participants as a part of their identity, they often clarified that it is indissociable from their culture and that it was important for them to continue using it as much as they could in England. Participants outside of London usually did not believe they had access to a "French community" to practise their language and culture with, but many of them still had francophone friends in England or used social media to help each other and sometimes meet offline. The situation was different in London, where participants acknowledged the existence of a more traditional form of "community" (French networks, schools, institutions as well as restaurants or bakeries). Nevertheless, as found in other studies such as Huc-Hepher and Drake (2013), they usually claimed to avoid this community, and they saw it as an impediment to their "integration" into the country.

Section 5.4 showed that Brexit had an impact on the perception and expression of their national identity. Many French people living in England explained that while they sometimes had never really thought about their national identity, Brexit made them feel more French and European, as also found in Reed-Danahay (2020a: 26): "In my pre-Brexit discussions with the French in London, European identity was not a particularly prominent component of their sense of belonging in comparison with French national identity".

After the EU referendum, the question of leaving or staying in the UK and applying for citizenship was on most migrants' minds. The majority of my participants refused to apply for British citizenship, as

also found in Godin and Sigona (2022) or Brahic (2020), as they associated their French passport with their identity. For those who decided to do so, it was often described as a painful process, both administratively but also psychologically, as they felt Brexit resulted in a loss of privilege for these migrants who until 2016 could move freely, and even a betrayal (Brahic, 2020; Godin & Sigona, 2022; Mulholland and Ryan, 2023).

As shown in other recent studies (Brahic, 2020: 2183, Reed-Danahay 2020a: 24), they were also often confronted with their migrant status for the first time after the EU referendum. They usually referred to themselves as "expats", "French in England" and saw themselves as European movers, the media representations and administrative aspects of Brexit made them realise they were, or had become, migrants. Participants in this research also highlighted that not all European migrants were represented and treated the same way in England and that as argued in Brahic (2020: 2183) "migrants and movers ('national x in country y' and expats) co-exist, inhabit and reproduce complex hierarchies based (primarily) on ethnicity and national identity".

Chapter 6 also highlighted these hierarchies, as almost half of the participants felt a negative change in British attitudes towards immigrants and their languages after the EU referendum, but most of them thought the xenophobic behaviours were usually not directed at French but other migrants such as Central and Eastern Europeans. As shown in other studies (Abranches et al., 2021: 2886; Benedi Lahuerta & Iusmen, 2021: 293; Virdee & McGheever, 2017: 1811; Zampi & Awan, 2019: 355), physical and verbal attacks happened around the weeks surrounding the vote, exacerbating the latent xenophobia already present in some parts of the British population.

Most participants denied the impact of Brexit on them or their language habits as they argued that the French were usually not discriminated against in England and that British attitudes towards them and their language were usually positive. Nevertheless, I showed throughout this thesis, and particularly in Chapter 6, that Brexit did have an impact at least on some of my participants. For instance, some left or are considering leaving as they no longer feel wanted in a country they used to call home, and others are taking British nationality regretfully as they fear for their rights in the UK after Brexit. Several participants, even after denying the existence of anti-French feelings in England described occurrences of microaggressions as well as direct discrimination both before and after Brexit. They also tended to downplay these incidents by either saying that it "only happened once or twice" that these people were "just idiots, like you can find anywhere", that it was worse for other migrants, or even by dismissing these occurrences by claiming that it might "just be in their head", which is a common reaction to microaggressions.

As also indicated in early studies about Brexit, the feelings of shock, deception, uncertainty, and anxiety brought by the outcome of the referendum vote tended to diminish in the weeks or months

after and so did the occurrences of anti-European hate crimes (Brahic, 2020: 2180; Brahic and Lallement, 2018: 8; Huc-Hepher, 2021b: 242; Reed-Danahay, 2020a: 23). Nevertheless, for some of them, Brexit "broke something" in their relationship with England, and a few participants recognised they started to be "quieter" and sometimes use English with other francophones in public places to "blend in". It is crucial to continue researching this topic in the years to come to observe how this situation evolves.

As the main objective of this study was to observe the language itself in a context potentially hostile to foreign languages and see for instance if French people avoided speaking French in public places, all French people (apart from I0) still lived in England when they took part in this research. The focus was not on migrants who returned to France because they felt uncomfortable or threatened as they would no longer feel discriminated against for speaking French once in France. However, not having more participants who left England after Brexit could bias some of the results as people who decided to stay were usually those who did not have negative experiences. People who could not stand the post-Brexit atmosphere probably returned to France, as I0 did. Therefore, it means that there may be a more important part of the French population in England who experienced linguistic xenophobia after the EU referendum. Consequently, more research should be done about the impact not only of Brexit but also of living in an anglophone country on French "impats".

It would also be useful to conduct more research like this one about other French speakers, as well as other EU and non-EU migrants. This would ensure that similar results can be found for different nationalities and that as was found in this research. As this research focused on linguistics discrimination, it did not take into account other discriminations such as racial discrimination. As mentioned by some participants, it was sometimes difficult for them to determine whether they were victims of hate crimes because of their language/nationality, or because of their physical appearance. Moreover, while racial discrimination is included in the 2010 Equality Act, linguistic discrimination is not, which could make it more difficult to condemn. Consequently, it would be beneficial to amend the act to include it as a protected characteristic.

To date, most research about Brexit, including mine, focused on migrants living in England, based on the hypothesis that it would be where most hate crimes and discrimination would happen. Piatkowska & Lantz (2021: 352) for instance found that hate crimes increased just after Brexit in England and Wales but not in Scotland, nevertheless, some Polish participants living in Scotland in Botterill & Hancock (2018) felt rejected after Brexit and stopped using Polish with their children in public places for instance (2018: 5). Having more research in Wales, Ireland and Scotland would help to compare the experiences of linguistic discrimination and hate crime of migrants living there.

Finally, another aspect of the impact of Brexit that will need to be observed in the years to come is its consequences on language policies and language learning in the UK. As argued in MacGiolla Chriost & Bonotti (2018: 46) Brexit is likely to have an impact on both British and EU language policies, such as strengthening "the case for the statutory recognition of English as the official language of the UK", which could have consequences on minority languages in the UK. As far as language learning is concerned, a decrease in the number of students taking a language for their GCSE and A-level exams has been observed over the last 20 years (Collen, 2020). Many British universities have also seen their number of language students decline in recent years, and several even closed their language departments (Baker, 2021). A direct consequence of Brexit mentioned by some of the participants working in education in this thesis was the difficulties to recruit language teachers (as well as nannies or au pairs) after Brexit, as many of them came from EU countries.

This thesis, therefore, fills the gap about French as a minority language spoken by migrants, as only a few studies were published about this aspect of the French language, as well as a gap about how different European migrants in England experienced and reacted to the Brexit vote of 2016. It will hopefully raise awareness, as other similar studies did, on post-Brexit hate crimes, and xenophobia against some EU migrants that were already present before 2016. It also suggested that foreign accents in the UK were sometimes discriminated against, which should make the case for foreign languages and accents to be included in the 2010 Equality Act's protected characteristics, as suggested in other recent studies about accent bias in the UK (Sharma et al, 2019: 150). The different issues mentioned in this conclusion show that research about Brexit and languages will be crucial in the years to come to ensure that migrants' rights in terms of languages are not affected whether by hate crimes and discrimination or new language policies, and also to attempt to find solutions to the decline in interest in languages in the UK.

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Appendices

Appendix 1 - Cities in which participants live with percentages of leave votes.

Leave cities	Number of participants	Percentage	Brexit vote LEAVE percentage
Birmingham	26	5,05	50,4
Nottingham	24	4,67	50,8
Southampton	8	1,56	53,8
Bournemouth	4	0,78	54,9
Northampton	3	0,58	58,4
Coventry	3	0,58	55,6
Loughborough	2	0,39	53,8
Cranfield	2	0,39	56,1
Derby	2	0,39	57,2
Redditch	2	0,39	62,3
Salford	2	0,39	56,8
Preston	2	0,39	53,3
Colchester	2	0,39	53,6
Maidstone	2	0,39	58,8
Chester	2	0,39	50,7
Feering	1	0,19	55,3
Gloucester	1	0,19	58,5
Northwood	1	0,19	56,4
Swindon	1	0,19	54,7
Ipswich	1	0,19	58,3
Bridgnorth	1	0,19	56,9
Sutton Coldfield	1	0,19	50,4
Solihull	1	0,19	56,2
Chadderton	1	0,19	60,9
Lytham st annes	1	0,19	57
Worcester	1	0,19	53,7
Taunton	1	0,19	52,9
Hinckley	1	0,19	60,3
Glenfield	1	0,19	60,7
Market Bosworth	1	0,19	60,3
Eastbourne	1	0,19	57,3
Hereford	1	0,19	59,2
Hucknall	1	0,19	69,8
St-Leonards-on-Sea	1	0,19	54,9
Wakefield	1	0,19	66,4
Belper	1	0,19	60,3
Bicester	1	0,19	50,3
Northwich	1	0,19	50,7
Egremont	1	0,19	62
Leighton Buzzard	1	0,19	56,1
Burton on trent	1	0,19	63,2
Hayle	1	0,19	56,5
Skelmersdale	1	0,19	55,3
Saffron Walden	1	0,19	50,7
Ramsey	1	0,19	54,2
Hoddesdon	1	0,19	66,3
Ellesmere	1	0,19	56,9
St Neots	1	0,19	54,2
Nantwich	1	0,19	51,2
Shipley	1	0,19	54,2
Ashford	1	0,19	59,4
Sheffield	1	0,19	51
Newton-le-Willows	1	0,19	58
Fleetwood	1	0,19	63,8
Bury	1	0,19	54,1
Bolton	1	0,19	58,3
South Shields	1	0,19	62
Gateshead	1	0,19	56,8
Swinton	1	0,19	56,8
Durham	1	0,19	57,5
Warminster	1	0,19	52,5
Portsmouth	1	0,19	58,1
TOTAL	**133**	**26**	

Remain cities	Number of participants	Percentage	Brexit vote LEAVE percentage
London/Greater London	185	35,99	24,7
Cambridge	36	7	26,2
Bristol	36	7	38,3
Manchester	30	5,84	39,6
Liverpool	17	3,31	41,8
Leicester	15	2,92	48,9
Brighton	9	1,75	31,4
Newcastle Upon Tyne	8	1,56	49,3
Leeds	6	1,17	49,7
Oxford	5	0,97	29,7
Reading	5	0,97	42
Windsor	2	0,39	46,1
Bath	2	0,39	42,1
Hove	2	0,39	31,4
Paisley	2	0,39	35,2
Redhill	1	0,19	51
Purley	1	0,19	45,7
Kippax	1	0,19	49,7
Royal Tunbridge Wells	1	0,19	45,1
Hale	1	0,19	42,3
Frome	1	0,19	48,9
Exeter	1	0,19	44,7
Peacehaven	1	0,19	47,9
Benenden	1	0,19	45,1
High Wycombe	1	0,19	48
Ascot, Berkshire	1	0,19	48,2
Birkenhead	1	0,19	48,3
Swavesey	1	0,19	39,8
Paulton	1	0,19	42,1
Strensall	1	0,19	42
Harrogate	1	0,19	49
Sale	1	0,19	42,3
Winchester	1	0,19	41,1
TOTAL	**378**	**74**	

Appendix 2 - Meta data participants interviewed

Number	FG	Gender	Age	City	In the UK since	Occupation	Children	CERF English
25	FG7	F	26/35	London	2008	Media	No	C2
47	FG6	F	26/35	Birmingham	2012	Education/recruitment consultant	No	C1
100	FG7	F	36/55	London	2011	Editor-in-chief	No	C2
122	FG8	M	26/35	London	2017	French teacher	No	C1
134	FG5	M	26/35	Derby	2014	Industries	No	C1
146	FG1	F	56/75	Nottingham	1970	Retired language teacher	Yes	C2
148	FG10	F	56/75	Nottingham	2019	Industries	No	C2
154	FG8	M	26/35	Nottingham	2020	Industries	No	B2
157	FG3	M	36/55	London	2006	Business/Sales/Marketing	Yes	C2
160	FG6	F	26/35	London	2014	Logistics	No	C2
161	FG2	F	36/55	Loughbourough	2014	Procurement manager	Yes	C2
189	FG7	M	36/55	Birmingham	1995	Language teacher	No	C2
201	FG9	F	18/25	Manchester	2018	PhD student	No	C2
214	FG4	F	36/55	Bristol	2000	Education and health	Yes	C2
228	FG9	F	26/35	Bristol	2018	Law/Economics/Gestion	No	B2
253	FG5	F	26/35	Bristol	2014	Education, post-doc	No	C2
263	FG2	F	36/55	Leicester	2000	IT/Internet	Yes	C2
269	FG1	F	36/55	Leicester	2000	French teacher	Yes	C2
307	FG9	M	26/35	St Leonards on Sea	2019	PGCE student	No	C2
310	FG10	F	18/25	London	2017	French teacher	No	C2
316	FG8	F	18/25	Reading	2018	Student	No	C2
336	FG8	F	18/25	Oxford	2018	Language teacher	No	C2
358	FG4	F	26/35	Liverpool	2014	Translator	Yes	C1
375	FG6	F	26/35	Cambridge	2003	Agriculture	No	C2
376	FG7	F	36/55	Liverpool	2005	Lecturer/translator	Yes	C2
390	FG2	M	56/75	Cambridge	2012	Business/Sales/Marketing	Yes	C2
464	FG2	F	26/35	Newcastle Upon Tyne	2018	Community manager	Yes	C2
472	FG6	F	26/35	South Shields	2013	Industries	No	C2
493	FG10	M	36/55	Newcastle Upon Tyne	2013	Business/Sales/Marketing	No	C2
500	FG4	F	56/75	Southampton	1986	Retired language teacher	Yes	C2
508	FG3	M	36/55	Feering	2006	Insurance/Bank	Yes	C2
509	FG3	F	36/55	Londres	2011	IT/Internet	Yes	C2
515	0	F	?	Plymouth (now France)	Until 2016	Language teacher	Yes	C2

Appendix 3 - Codes

Codes focus groups

Nom	Sources	References
Anglicisms	3	5
Binationality	2	4
Brexit and alcohol	2	2
Brexit and region and entourage	8	15
Brexit vote results	5	9
British culture shock	2	2
British passport	5	11
Children	6	38
Disappoitment	2	3
European identity	3	5
Expatriés	1	7
Feeling like a foreigner	3	6
French Accent	7	22
French community UK	5	11
French identity and culture	11	36
French representations	5	6
Generations	1	1
Imagined hatred	2	2
Incidents after Brexit	8	12
Incidents before Brexit	2	2
Integration	2	8
Introduction	10	14
Latent xenophobia	2	4
Leave UK	2	2
Losing French language	6	20
Nationalism UK	2	2
Other discriminations	2	5
Other Europeans or languages	9	19
Other issues related to Brexit	2	2
Other than Brexit	3	4
Perception of things languages	1	2
Positive experience post Brexit	9	19
Relations France England	2	2
Speak French or English UK	11	77
Stay UK long term	5	7
Stay UK short medium term	8	12
Teaching languages	2	3
Trump and Brexit	2	2
Uncertain future	2	3

Codes questionnaires

Nom	Sources	References
Accent	21	21
Brexit and economy jobs	1	1
Brexit not about expatriates	2	2
Brexit regions and entourage	18	18
Brexit vote results	2	2
British and languages	4	4
British nationality	8	8
British perspective	5	5
Children	2	4
Culture shock	1	1
Disappointment	3	3
Discrimination France	1	1
Discriminations post Brexit	6	6
Feeling like a foreiner	3	3
French identity	3	3
Language attitudes UK	1	1
Latent racism	2	2
Leave UK	92	97
Other discriminations	3	5
Other Europeans languages	6	6
Other than Brexit	4	4
Positive experience	6	6
Something is broken	1	1
Speaking French	35	39
Stay long term or not specified	323	323
Stay short medium term	55	55
Uncertain future	44	44

Appendix 4 – Anglicisms used during the focus groups

P FG	Gender	Age	Occupation	Moved in	City	CEFR (English)	Total number of anglicisms (Different)	Anglicisms	Type
134 FG5	M	26/ 35	Industries	2014	Derby	C1	2 (2)	Four o'clock/ Brexit time	NB
189 FG7	M	36/ 55	Education	1995	Birmingham	C2	2 (2)	GCSE level/ A level	NB
122 FG8	M	26/ 35	Education	2017	London	C1	1 (1)	A level	NB
154 FG8	M	26/ 35	Industries	2020	Nottingham	B2	0 (0)	/	
307 FG9	M	26/ 35	Education	2019	St Leonards On Sea	C2	2 (2)	PGCE/ Switcher	EB / NB
493 FG10	M	36/ 55	Business Marketing	2013	Newcastle upon Tyne	C2	4 (2)	Mix/Switcher	EB
390 FG2	M	56/ 75	Business Marketing	2012	Cambridge	C2	6 (6)	Business case/ British/ UK/ "You're so odd"/ indefinite right to remain/ witness	NB
157 FG3	M	36/ 55	Business Marketing	2006	London	C2	10 (8)	job/loose/ low class/ sous benefit/ basique/business/ countryside/ miss	EB / NB
508 FG3	M	36/ 55	Insurance Banking	2006	Feering	C2	2 (2)	Management/ business	EB

P FG	Gender	Age	Occupation	Moved in	City	CEFR (English)	Total number of anglicisms (Different)	Anglicisms	Type
269 FG1	F	36/ 55	Education	2000	Leicester	C2	5 (4)	apply/comfortable/ apologetic	NB
146 FG1	F	56/ 75	Retired Education	1970	Nottingham	C2	12 (8)	Specialist schools/ language college/ science college/ art college/A level/ local authorities	NB
464 FG2	F	26/ 35	Audio- visual	2018	Newcastle Upon Tyne	C2	5 (3)	Sonne pas très juste/ Mix / Community manager	EB / NB
161 FG2	F	36/ 55	Health	1994	Loughborough	C2	5 (5)	Procurement manager/ NHS/ GP/ higher tax payer/ A level	NB
263 FG2	F	36/ 55	Computing Internet	2000	Leicester	C2	2 (2)	"You're saved"/ reward chart	NB
509 FG3	F	36/ 55	Computing Internet	2011	London	C2	0 (0)	/	
500 FG4	F	56/75	Retired Education	1986	Southampton	C2	4 (4)	MFL department/ city schools/ head of year/ head of school	NB
310 FG10	F	18/ 25	Education	2017	London	C2	1 (1)	PGCE	NB
253 FG5	F	26/ 35	Education	2014	Bristol	C2	2 (2)	Settled status/ soft	EB / NB
47 FG6	F	26/ 35	Education	2012	Birmingham	C1	9 (5)	Jobs/ tutoring/ nannies/ interview/ "you're amazing, you're great"	EB / NB
358 FG4	F	26/ 35	Business Marketing	2014	Liverpool	C1	0 (0)	/	
214 FG4	F	36/ 55	Health	2000	Bristol	C2	4 (4)	Sans deal/jobs/ Pidgin French/ Google Translate	EB / NB
160 FG6	F	26/ 35	Administration Logistics	2014	London	C2	1 (1)	Parler "à propos de"	Calque
472 FG6	F	26/ 35	Industries	2013	South Shields	C2	0 (0)	/	
375 FG6	F	26/ 35	Agriculture	2003	Cambridge	C2	0 (0)	/	
376 FG7	F	36/ 55	Education	2005	Liverpool	C2	4 (3)	PGCE/associate lecturer/ Sixth form/ okay	EB / NB
25 FG7	F	26/ 35	Audio- visual	2008	London	C2	2 (2)	"de" Brexit/ Settled status	NB
100 FG7	F	36/ 55	Audio- visual	2011	London	C2	4 (4)	hug/smartphone boss/brand content	EB / NB
336 FG8	F	18/ 25	Education	2018	Oxford	C2	1 (1)	Pre covid	Calque
316 FG8	F	18/ 25	Student	2018	Reading	C2	0 (0)	/	
201 FG9	F	18/ 25	Student	2018	Manchester	C2	2 (2)	Provisional license/ leave	NB
228 FG9	F	26/ 35	Law Gestion Economics	2018	Bristol	B2	1 (1)	Melting pot	EB
148 FG10	F	56/ 75	Industries	2019	Nottingham	C1	3 (3)	Coworking/fun/ UK	EB

Appendix 5 - Questionnaire

NOTTINGHAM TRENT UNIVERSITY

Impact du Brexit sur la langue des Expatriés Français DRAFT

0% complet

Feuille d'information

Dans le cadre de ma thèse de doctorat, j'étudie l'impact du Brexit sur la langue parlée par les Français expatriés au Royaume-Uni. Peu de recherches ont pour l'instant été effectuées sur les potentielles conséquences de ce changement politique sur les langues régionales et minoritaires au Royaume-Uni. Or, ce climat peu favorable à l'Europe et à l'immigration de manière générale, ainsi que les potentiels changements dans les politiques linguistiques du pays pourraient avoir un effet sur les différentes langues parlées au sein de la nation. Certains immigrés pourraient par exemple renoncer à parler leur langue natale ou à l'enseigner à leurs enfants. Il est donc important de comprendre comment les populations non-anglophones vivant au Royaume-Uni réagissent face à cette nouvelle situation de manière à éventuellement mettre en place des mesures pour protéger ces langues minoritaires post-Brexit.

Cette recherche s'intéresse tout particulièrement aux expatriés Français. Pour cela, un questionnaire, des interviews individuelles ainsi que des groupes de discussion seront mis en place. Les participants pourront alors discuter de leur rapport à leur langue avant et après le vote du Brexit. Ils pourront décider de ne participer qu'au questionnaire, ou bien d'être également interviewé seul ou en groupe de discussion, selon leur préférence.

Pour participer, vous devez être de nationalité Française, avoir le français pour langue maternelle et vivre au Royaume-Uni.

En remplissant ce questionnaire, vous acceptez que vos réponses puissent être analysées dans le cadre de cette recherche et utilisées pour d'éventuelles futures publications scientifiques.

Pour toute question, n'hésitez pas à contacter le chercheur aux coordonnées suivantes :

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Informations

Sexe ✱ *Requis*

○ Homme   ○ Femme   ○ Autre

Ville de résidence au Royaume-Uni

[   ]

Activité Professionnelle ✱ *Requis*

○ Agriculture
○ Architecture / Paysage / Urbanisme
○ Arts / Arts du spectacle / Design / Culture
○ Artisanat
○ Armée / Sécurité
○ Assurances / Banques
○ Audiovisuel / Information / Communication/ Traduction
○ Construction durable
○ Droit / Economie / Gestion
○ Enseignement / Recherche
○ Energies/ Environnement
○ Gestion administrative / Transport / Logistique
○ Hôtellerie / Restauration / Tourisme
○ Industries (électronique, chimique, alimentaire, maintenance, mécanique…)
○ Informatique / Internet
○ Relation client / Commerce / Vente / Marketing
○ Santé
○ Social / Service à la personne
○ Sport
○ Etudiant
○ Sans Emploi
○ Retraité
○ Autre

Diplôme le plus élevé obtenu

○ Diplôme National du Brevet
○ Baccalauréat
○ Bac + 2 (BTS/DUT...)
○ Bac + 3 (Licence, licence pro...)
○ Bac + 5 (Master, diplôme d'ingénieur...)
○ Bac + 8 (Doctorat)
○ Autre

Âge

○ Moins de 18 ans
○ 18/25 ans
○ 26/35 ans
○ 36/55 ans
○ 56/75 ans
○ 76 ans ou plus

Depuis quelle année vivez-vous au Royaume-Uni?

[   ]

Quel niveau pensez-vous avoir en anglais? Une liste décrivant chaque niveau est disponible sous cette question afin de vous aider à vous situer. ✱ *Requis*

○ A1
○ A2
○ B1
○ B2
○ C1
○ C2
○ L'anglais est ma langue maternelle

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Cadre européen de référence pour les langues		
Niveau CECRL	Classement	Capacités
Utilisateur élémentaire (niveau introductif ou de découverte)	A1	• Comprendre et utiliser des expressions familières et quotidiennes ainsi que des énoncés très simples qui visent à satisfaire des besoins concrets • Savoir se présenter ou présenter quelqu'un • Pouvoir poser à une personne des questions la concernant et répondre au même type de questions • Communiquer de façon simple si l'interlocuteur parle lentement et distinctement et se montre coopératif
Utilisateur élémentaire (niveau intermédiaire ou usuel)	A2	• Comprendre des phrases isolées et des expressions fréquemment utilisées en relation avec des domaines de l'environnement quotidien (par exemple, informations personnelles et familiales simples, achats, travail, etc.) • Pouvoir communiquer lors de tâches simples et habituelles ne demandant qu'un échange d'informations simple et direct sur des sujets familiers et habituels • Savoir décrire avec des moyens simples sa formation, son environnement immédiat et évoquer des sujets qui correspondent à des besoins immédiats
Utilisateur indépendant (niveau seuil)	B1	• Comprendre les points essentiels d'une discussion quand un langage clair et standard est utilisé et s'il s'agit de choses familières au travail, à l'école, aux loisirs, etc. • Être autonome dans la plupart des situations rencontrées en voyage dans une région où la langue cible est parlée • Pouvoir produire un discours simple et cohérent sur des sujets familiers et dans ses domaines d'intérêt • Savoir raconter un événement, une expérience ou un rêve, décrire un espoir ou un but et exposer brièvement des raisons ou explications pour un projet ou une idée
Utilisateur indépendant (niveau avancé ou indépendant)	B2	• Comprendre le contenu essentiel de sujets concrets ou abstraits dans un texte complexe, y compris une discussion technique dans sa spécialité • Communiquer avec spontanéité et aisance avec un locuteur natif • S'exprimer de façon claire et détaillée sur une grande gamme de sujets, émettre un avis sur un sujet d'actualité et exposer les avantages et les inconvénients de différentes possibilités
Utilisateur expérimenté (niveau autonome)	C1	• Comprendre des textes longs et exigeants et saisir des significations implicites • S'exprimer spontanément et couramment sans trop devoir chercher ses mots • Utiliser la langue de façon efficace et souple dans la vie sociale, professionnelle ou académique • S'exprimer sur des sujets complexes de façon claire et bien structurée et manifester son contrôle des outils linguistiques d'organisation, d'articulation et de cohésion du discours
Utilisateur expérimenté (niveau maîtrise)	C2	• Comprendre sans effort pratiquement tout ce qui est lu ou entendu • Pouvoir restituer des faits et des arguments issus de diverses sources écrites et orales en les résumant de façon cohérente • S'exprimer spontanément, très couramment, de façon précise et rendre distinctes de fines nuances de sens en rapport avec des sujets complexes

Source: Service-Public.fr (2020) https://www.service-public.fr/particuliers/vosdroits/F34739

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Langues utilisées dans la vie quotidienne 1

Le format de cette question vous pose-t-il problème? Afficher en mode "sans-tableau"

A quelle fréquence parlez-vous français...

Ne pas sélectionner plus de 1 réponse(s) par ligne.

	Tout le temps	La plupart du temps	De temps en temps	Rarement	Jamais	Je ne sais pas	Non concerné(e)
De manière générale	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Chez vous	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Au travail / à l'école	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Sur les réseaux sociaux / sur Internet	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Avec votre entourage au Royaume-Uni	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

A quelle fréquence parlez-vous anglais?

Ne pas sélectionner plus de 1 réponse(s) par ligne.

	Tout le temps	La plupart du temps	De temps en temps	Rarement	Jamais	Je ne sais pas	Non concerné(e)
De manière générale	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Chez vous	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Au travail / à l'école	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Sur les réseaux sociaux / sur Internet	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Avec votre entourage au Royaume-Uni	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Parlez-vous d'autres langues dans votre vie quotidienne?

○ Oui	○ Non

Quelle(s) autre(s) langue(s) parlez-vous dans votre vie quotidienne, et dans quel contexte?

[   ]

A quelle fréquence parlez-vous ces autres langues ?

Ne pas sélectionner plus de 1 réponse(s) par ligne.

	Tout le temps	La plupart du temps	De temps en temps	Rarement	Jamais	Je ne sais pas	Non concerné(e)
De manière générale	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Chez vous	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Au travail / à l'école	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Sur les réseaux sociaux / sur Internet	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Avec votre entourage au Royaume-Uni	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Langues utilisées dans la vie quotidienne 2

Dans quel (s) contexte (s) parleriez-vous en anglais avec un autre francophone ? (possibilité de sélectionner plusieurs réponses)

Veuillez sélectionner de 1 à 5 réponses.

- ☐ Si un non francophone participe à la conversation
- ☐ Si un non francophone écoute la conversation
- ☐ Si un non francophone se trouve à proximité
- ☐ Je suis en Angleterre, je parle anglais
- ☐ Je ne parlerais pas anglais avec un Francophone
- ☐ Autre

Merci d'utiliser cet espace pour tout commentaire / précision que vous souhaiteriez apporter à cette partie.

Avant le Brexit

Avez-vous vécu au Royaume-Uni avant Juin 2016?

○ Oui   ○ Non

Le format de cette question vous pose-t-il problème? Afficher en mode "sans-tableau"

AVANT le vote du Brexit en juin 2016, vous est-il arrivé de:

Ne pas sélectionner plus de 1 réponse(s) par ligne.

	Tout le temps	Plusieurs fois	Une fois ou deux	Jamais	Je ne sais pas	Non concerné(e)
Je me suis senti gêné de parler français en public	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
On m'a fait comprendre que ma langue natale dérangeait	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
J'ai parlé anglais dans un contexte où j'aurais normalement parlé français par crainte d'être jugé	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
J'ai parlé français en public par provocation	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
J'ai envisagé de rentrer en France car je ne me sentais pas à ma place	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
J'ai eu honte de mon accent français lorsque je parle anglais	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
J'ai essayé de masquer cet accent	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Je me suis senti discriminé à cause de mon accent / ma langue maternelle	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Dans quelle mesure êtes-vous d'accord avec les énoncés suivants (toujours en vous replaçant avant 2016)

Ne pas sélectionner plus de 1 réponse(s) par ligne.

	Tout à fait d'accord	Plutôt d'accord	Ni d'accord, ni pas d'accord	Plutôt pas d'accord	Pas du tout d'accord	Je ne sais pas	Pas concerné(e)
Je me sentais fier(e) de parler français	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Je considérais que le fait de parler français faisait partie de mon identité	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
J'avais l'occasion d'utiliser le français au moins une fois par jour	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Merci d'utiliser cet espace pour tout commentaire / précision que vous souhaiteriez apporter à cette partie.

Après le Brexit

Le format de cette question vous pose-t-il problème? Afficher en mode "sans-tableau"

Dans quelle mesure êtes-vous d'accord avec les énoncés suivants aujourd'hui:

Ne pas sélectionner plus de 1 réponse(s) par ligne.

	Tout à fait d'accord	Plutôt d'accord	Ni d'accord, ni pas d'accord	Plutôt pas d'accord	Pas du tout d'accord	Je ne sais pas	Pas concerné(e)
J'ai ressenti un changement dans l'attitude des Britanniques envers les immigrés depuis le début du processus du Brexit	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Je me sens fier(e) de parler français	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Je considère que le fait de parler français fait partie de mon identité	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
J'ai l'occasion d'utiliser le français au moins une fois par jour	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

APRES le vote du Brexit en juin 2016, vous est-il arrivé de:

Ne pas sélectionner plus de 1 réponse(s) par ligne.

	Tout le temps	Plusieurs fois	Une fois ou deux	Jamais	Je ne sais pas	Non concerné(e)
Je me suis senti gêné de parler français en public	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
On m'a fait comprendre que ma langue natale dérangeait	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
J'ai parlé anglais dans un contexte où j'aurais normalement parlé français par crainte d'être jugé	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
J'ai parlé français en public par provocation	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
J'ai envisagé de rentrer en France car je ne me sentais pas à ma place	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
J'ai eu honte de mon accent français lorsque je parle anglais	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
J'ai essayé de masquer cet accent	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Je me suis senti discriminé à cause de mon accent / ma langue maternelle	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Envisagez-vous de rester au Royaume-Uni dans les années à venir? Si oui, le Brexit a-t-il eu une influence directe sur cette décision?

Merci d'utiliser cette section pour tout commentaire / précision que vous souhaiteriez apporter à cette partie.

Langues parlées avec vos enfants

Avez-vous des enfants que vous élevez ou avez élevés au Royaume-Uni?

○ Oui   ○ Non

Sont-ils nés au Royaume-Uni? Si non, à quel âge sont-ils arrivés?

Dans quelle langue leur parlez-vous le plus souvent? Vous répondent-ils dans cette même langue généralement?

Dans quelle langue s'expriment-ils le plus souvent de manière générale? Dans quelle langue ont-ils tendance à s'adresser à vous?

Le format de cette question vous pose-t-il problème? Afficher en mode "sans-tableau"

Dans quelle mesure êtes-vous d'accord avec les énoncés suivants:

Ne pas sélectionner plus de 1 réponse(s) par ligne.

	Tout à fait d'accord	Plutôt d'accord	Ni d'accord ni pas d'accord	Plutôt pas d'accord	Pas d'accord du tout	Je ne sais pas	Non concerné(e)
Il est plus important pour moi que mes enfants parlent français plutôt qu'anglais	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Si mes enfants ne parlaient qu'anglais ce serait un problème pour moi	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Mon opinion sur la langue que mes enfants devraient parler en priorité a changé depuis le Brexit	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Merci d'utiliser cet espace pour tout commentaire/précision que vous souhaiteriez apporter à cette partie.

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Commentaires

Merci d'utiliser cet espace pour tout commentaire / précision que vous souhaiteriez apporter à ce questionnaire.

Merci pour votre participation! Nous recherchons des expatriés Français pour participer à des interviews et focus groups qui seront organisés dans différentes villes du Royaume-Uni. Cela vous permettrait de vous exprimer plus amplement sur les thèmes abordés dans ce questionnaire avec d'autres expatriés. Si vous souhaitez être informés lorsque nous commencerons ces interviews, merci de nous laisser une adresse email ou un numéro de téléphone auquel nous pourrons vous contacter. (Ces données ne seront pas partagées, seront uniquement utilisées dans ce but et seront détruites ensuite.) Si vous souhaitez obtenir plus d'informations, vous pouvez également nous contacter directement à cette adresse : ophelie.castellani2019@my.ntu.ac.uk

Appendix 6: Transcripts Focus groups

FG 1

Date: 16 October 2020

Group: Children

Participants: 269, 146

D'abord je vais vous demander d'expliquer pour quelles raisons à la base vous êtes venue en Angleterre et si vous comptez y rester définitivement.

Alors même cursus je suis arrivée en année Erasmus à l'université de Derby en septembre 1999, et je ne suis jamais repartie donc ça fait 20 ans quoi et donc après derby on a une amie donc on est arrivées de l'université du havre on a décidé de rester on a entendu parler du PGCE donc on a décidé d'apply donc on est restées près de Derby parce qu'on avait des amis là-bas donc on a apply à Leicester et à Nottingham je crois donc on a eu, on a été prises à Leicester et l'année d'après on a fait notre PGCE à Leicester l'année après ça je suis partie vivre au Moyen orient et après je suis revenue à Leicester et voilà j'enseigne le français depuis 2003 dans les collèges lycée.

Donc c'est maintenant plutôt définitif ?

Oui j'ai rencontré mon mari plusieurs années après ça quand même en 2005 à peu près et mes enfants ont maintenant 12 et 10 ans donc oui la vie est vraiment en Angleterre bien qu'on parle souvent d'un jour revenir en France, mon mari est francophone.

Dans quel contexte vous parlez français ?

J'ai deux collègues français avec qui on parle français tous les jours au collège lycée le mercredi H qui est française aussi et je parle français à la maison avec mon mari et mes enfants.

D'accord donc vraiment vous parlez français dans toute sorte de contextes, et il n'y a pas des fois où justement même avec ces personnes vous parlez en anglais ?

Euh si si, des fois on se parle en anglais avec mes collègues parce qu'il y a des Anglais autour et nos autres collègues anglais doivent comprendre ce qui se dit dans le contexte professionnel. Avec mon mari on parle aussi en anglais, ça dépend de la situation ça dépend de l'humeur de plein de choses ; Quand on est en France on parle plus français mais à la maison on essaye de parler français quand même.

Oui parce que justement il y avait une question qui n'était pas très développée sur dans quel contexte vous parleriez en anglais avec un francophone

Y a ça, si quelqu'un est autour et ne va pas comprendre ce qu'on dit on va parler en anglais, j'essaye de réfléchir à une autre raison pour laquelle… bon si des fois si on ouais non voilà c'est ça quoi si on sait que quelqu'un veut comprendre ce qu'on dit, de quoi on parle …

Oui donc si vous êtes au supermarché et qu'il y a des gens autour vous n'allez pas forcément parler en anglais pour autant

Non pas forcément non

Quelles sortes d'expériences qu'elles soient positives ou négatives en rapport à votre langue, des commentaires que vous avez pu recevoir de la part de britanniques, on va commencer par avant le Brexit puisque vous êtes là depuis avant 2016.

Bon alors je dirais qu'en général les gens sont assez positifs quand ils entendent un accent français, donc quand les gens ne me connaissent pas et qu'ils entendent un accent ils me disent ah vous êtes française j'adore la France j'ai fait du français à l'école mais je ne sais pas très bien parler tu vois ce genre de trucs, je ne me souviens vraiment pas ou ça peut être ça a dû être très rare d'entendre un commentaire négatif au fait que je ne sois pas anglaise

Et donc après le Brexit ?

Non, je pense que plutôt le contraire souvent les gens s'excusent ou vont dire des choses comme oh enfin si il y a des gens qui font des commentaires ce sont plutôt des gens qui sont pro Europe et qui vont dire genre oh je me sens vraiment mal que l'Angleterre quitte l'Europe moi je suis j'adore les autres pays européens machin machin donc les gens qui sont pour le Brexit ne vont pas me faire ce genre de commentaires par peur de m'offusquer, vous voyez ce que je veux dire ?

Tout à fait, c'est peut-être aussi de là où on est, comme on disait Leicester est assez multiculturel comme ville

C'est vrai c'est une bonne question, vous connaissez les statiques des gens qui ont voté (par région) ça pourrait être qqch qui pourrait être utile si vous trouvez des gens qui vivent dans le sud par exemple où est ce qu'ils ont voté pour le Brexit.

J'interview des gens un peu partout en Angleterre justement pour voir s'il y a des endroits où c'est plus compliqué

Après moi je ne vis pas dans le centre-ville de Leicester mais le collège où je travaille est assez multiculturel, je n'ai pas vraiment de commentaires négatifs.

Tant mieux !

Il y a ça que je voudrais dire aussi. Mon frère qui est venu avec mon père pendant la coupe du monde de rugby il y a 2 ou 3 ans il me semble que ah je ne me souviens pas si c'était avant ou pas, bon bref eux ils étaient en train de parler tous français et y avait des fans de rugby qui ont fait des commentaires racistes alors que moi qui habite aussi ça ne m'est vraiment presque jamais arrivé.

Le contexte coupe du monde peut être aussi ?

C'était dans un pub donc il y avait peut-être aussi l'alcool !

Par rapport à vos enfants, vous disiez leur parler en français la plupart du temps que ce soit vous ou votre compagnon ?

Oui quand ma fille est née la première on a fait en sorte de l'élever en français donc c'était beaucoup plus facile forcément parce que mon mari parle français, mes amies qui ont des maris qui ne parlent pas français n'ont pas du tout eu la même expérience, et d'ailleurs H vous le dira elle son mari n'est pas français donc elle a plus de mal à ce que ses enfants parlent français, mais ma fille a parlé français avant de parler anglais je dirais.

Et pourtant elle est née ici ?

Elle est née ici mais vu qu'ici c'était 100% français, les livres la télé, les conversations elle a parlé français avant de parler anglais d'ailleurs ses grands-parents anglais les parents de mon mari étaient frustrés parce qu'elle parlait plus en français qu'en anglais. Une fois qu'elle a commencé l'école par contre on a tout de suite au bout d'un mois la langue a commencé donc elle rentrait de l'école elle nous parlait en anglais et tout et donc on a la conversation bilingue le parent qui parle en français et l'enfant qui répond en anglais. Et donc le deuxième enfant mon fils du coup a eu plus d'anglais avec sa sœur qu'elle n'avait que du français donc on voit enfin on ne voit pas mais de mon expérience mon fils a tout de suite parlé plus les deux langues. Entre eux ils communiquent en anglais sauf quand on parle en France et qu'on parle qu'en français et qu'il y a d'autres enfants dans le groupe les cousins, ils arrêtent l'anglais et ils se parlent tout de suite en français.

Est-ce que le Brexit vous a fait changer d'avis ?

Non pas du tout. Je pense que c'est plutôt leur âge donc en grandissant maintenant on a plus souvent des conversations en anglais qu'en français parce que leur langue première enfin la langue dans laquelle ils sont plus confortables c'est l'anglais donc il nous arrive d'avoir des conversations en anglais.

Autre chose à ajouter ? Votre école française que vous avez montée ?
Bah en fait en ayant des enfants bilingues y a des moments où il nous manque des ressources françaises souvent j'achetais les livres quand ils étaient petits quand j'étais en France j'allais à Auchan j'achetais des livres des dvd mais en grandissant on a moins besoin maintenant si on veut regarder la télé en français c'est facile, sur Netflix on peut mettre en français ils lisent plus vraiment en français alors que quand ils étaient petits ils lisaient un peu j'ai appris à mes enfants à lire en français mais forcement ils préfèrent lire en anglais et donc l'école française de Leicester c'est un projet et si j'avais eu le temps de le faire quand ils étaient petits ça aurait bien de le faire et que l'école grandisse avec mes enfants mais du coup je vais le faire avec les enfants des autres.
Dans vos questions il y avait qqch si on voulait repartir en France, donc oui à l'annonce ça fait je ne

sais plus maintenant 2 ou 3 ans, je sais qu'il y a eu beaucoup de réactions et il y a des gens qui sont repartis tout de suite la réaction initiale a été allez on s'en va parce que trop dégoutés mais la vie fait que c'est pas aussi simple que ça et professionnellement ce serait difficile pour mon mari et moi de recommencer une vie en France c'est pas si simple que ça. Après pour l'instant ça n'a pas vraiment changé grand-chose à la vie de tous les jours et si un jour ça devenait vraiment invivable mais on espère que non. Je sais qu'il va falloir un passeport, le vin c'est un gros problème s'il faut payer cher le vin et qu'on ne peut plus en ramener !

Quitter le RU plutôt que d'abandonner votre langue, identité ?

Non moi je pense que pour l'instant ça n'a pas eu d'impact sur, comme je vous ai dit au contraire les gens sont plutôt apologetic comme on dit en…. Voilà.

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Si vous voulez bien me dire depuis quand vous êtes ici, ce que vous y faites, si vous comptez rester…

Je pense que par rapport aux autres l'expérience que je viens d'entendre la mienne est tout à fait différente puisque je suis dans un age groupe différent, moi je suis arrivée définitivement en janvier 1971 donc j'avais fait une licence d'anglais à Lyon et suite à mon année d'assistanat en angleterre je me suis mariée avec un anglais et donc nous nous sommes installés à nottingham en janvier 71 et donc je suis là depuis ce moment là, j'ai eu une fille en 1974 mon mari et moi avons divorcés mais je suis quand même restée à nottingham, pour moi c'est une expérience différente parce que quand je suis arrivée il y avait très peu de français pas beaucoup de français donc au niveau de la langue c'était disons que d'abord à la maison on parlait anglais ma fille a appris le français au fur et à mesure des vacances avec ses cousins en France mais elle n'a jamais eu de leçons euh fin elle a fait du français à l'école parce qu'elle était obligée mais quand elle a pu abandonner donc au niveau de gcse elle a fait de l'allemand elle a quand même passé son gcse de français en privé et après elle a fait a level français au college. Donc pour nous le français en fait c'est périphérique quand on est en Angleterre, ça nous sert bien sûr quand on est en France mais en Angleterre je parle rarement en français maintenant, avant j'enseignais le français donc j'ai enseigné le français jusqu'en 2007 donc je parlais français à l'école enfin le français qu'on parle à l' école mais pour moi ça n'a jamais été vraiment la chose primordiale ici parce que ça n'était pas ça ne faisait pas partie de on ne retrouvait pas de français parce qu'il y en avait moins c'était pas du tout la même chose que maintenant. Et même j'ai une amie française maintenant mais on parle en anglais quand on est avec les autres dont on parle pas français forcement quand on se voit.

C'est effectivement une expérience différente, les questions vont peut-être différentes pour vous. Le français déjà avant le Brexit presque jamais, et là récemment est ce que vous parlez peut-être plus français au contraire ?

En fait je fais des… j'ai des… deux je ne les appelle pas vraiment des classes des groupes de conversations françaises avec l'université du 3ème âge vous connaissez ? U3A en anglais, en fait en Angleterre est organisée différemment dans le sens que c'est tous des volontaires ou des bénévoles, je crois qu'ne France c'est vaguement basé à l'université tandis qu'en Angleterre c'est vraiment un réseau social qui est animé par des gens qui ont un intérêt dans un certain truc. Donc moi je fais une classe de conversation française mais il faut déjà avoir un niveau assez élevé pour avoir une conversation et j'ai un autre groupe de français qui est pareil on fait de la conversation, une fois tous les 15 jours avec un et une fois tous les 15 jours avec l'autre. Donc à part ça j'ai pas d'occasion de parler français du tout parce que j'ai pas d'enfant fin plus d''enfant ici et même avec ma fille on

parlait pas français systématiquement à la maison puisque mon conjoint n'était pas français et ne parlait pas très bien français donc la solution de facilité a été de parler en anglais tout le temps.

Est-ce que vous diriez que c'est qqch qui vous manque de parler français ?

Non pas vraiment parce qu'on vit dans des circonstances différentes donc quand je suis en France je parle français avec ma famille mais ça fait partie de ma vie ma vie est compartimentée en divisée en périodes en France périodes cii et donc ici j'essaye de je vais au cinéma quand il y a des films français je vais voir ça je m'intéresse un peu à la culture ce qui se passe en France mais disons que c'est pas ma vie est ici depuis le temps que je suis ici c'est pas tout à fait la même chose que les plus jeunes qui ont peut-être plus de y a des groupes Facebook Français à Nottingham etc y a beaucoup de français à Nottingham mais je ne sais pas où ils sont !

Je m'intéresse à l'identité française, les Français ont tendance à vraiment considérer le français comme une vraie part de leur identité, dans votre cas c'est intéressant est ce que c'est qqch que vous ressentez aussi ?

 Oui je pense que c'est une identité en ce sens que c'est qqch qu'on oublie jamais même si on parle pas français y a quand même un intérêt à savoir ce qui se passe ailleurs quand je suis en France je lis en anglais aussi mais euh donc c'est qqch qui fait partie de moi mais qui n'est pas forcément exprimé par oui ça fait partie de moi avec le Brexit il n'est pas question que je prenne la nationalité britannique j'ai mon statut de settle status mais je vois mon identité comme étant française plutôt que britannique, européenne peut être. Je me sens pas, je me sens bien ici dans ma vie quotidienne mais je ne me sens pas dans le système britannique pas du tout toujours pas

Vous n'envisagez pas de rentrer ici

Non ma fille est ici et mes liens avec la famille sont j'avais deux frères et une sœur il ne me reste plus qu'une sœur, j'ai une maison avec mes neveux mais c'est pas la vie quotidienne ici ça fait partie des amis, d'autant plus à mon âge repartir dans un pays étranger enfin un pays étranger enfin même un pays qui n'est pas un pays où on a vécu est difficile de toute façon.

Vu que vous êtes ici depuis longtemps vous avez vu des changements dans l'attitude des Britanniques par rapport aux langues étrangères, aux immigrés ?

Aux langues étrangères oui, beaucoup parce que j'ai fait toute ma carrière en enseignant le français donc j'ai vu un intérêt à un certain moment au moment où le gouvernement a instauré les specialist schools, y a eu un moment où les école d'état pouvaient demander un statut spécial selon certaines disciplines, language college, science college, art college donc à l'époque beaucoup d'écoles sont parties sur maths et sciences etc mais y a quand même des écoles qui ont décidé de devenir language schools. Et donc j'ai travaillé à une époque à lincoln dans un language college donc c'était très intéressant parce qu'à l'époque les langues étrangères étaient obligatoires pour tout le monde jusq'à gcse on avait plus d'argent pour faire des projets dans la communauté etc on avait retrouvé nos assistantes plus ou moins et on avait plus de liens avec l'Europe nous a Lincoln on avait un projet avec une école en Espagne une école en Allemagne une école en France dans la république tchèque etc donc y avait un pas vraiment un engouement mais un dynamisme disons dans l'enseignement des langues mais malheureusement petit à petit tout à changer du tout au tout les langues ne sont plus obligatoires du tout à partir jusqu'à GCSE les statuts des languages colleges ont changé depuis qu'il y a une semi privatisation de l'enseignement puisque les écoles maintenant sont regroupées en académies etc on a essayé de les soustraire à l'influence des local authorities donc d'un point de langues ça a été un désastre complet parce qu'il y a de moins en moins d'étudiants qui étudient à

GCSE et donc de moins en moins qui étudient A level et je pense qu'à l'université c'est pareil il y a de moins en moins d'étudiants qui font des langues étrangères et c'est dommage parce qu'à une époque on avait l'impression que c'était plus développé mais on est reparti en arrière carrément et je pense qu'avec Brexit ça va être pire. Je pense qu'il y a aussi un énorme problème social au niveau des langues donc on ne va pas faire trop de politiques mais entre les riches et les pauvres, toutes les écoles privées donc toutes les écoles comme Nottingham high school ils ont un programme de langues qui est bien plus développé et donc c'est encore eux qui vont avoir les postes où on a besoin d'une langue ou les étrangers qui vont venir avec un langue spécifique à offrir donc c'est vraiment dommage que les jeunes dans les écoles normales entre guillemets n'aient plus la possibilité d'apprendre les langues parce que les langues étrangères ont toujours été peintes comme difficiles dans les écoles c'était toujours une matière difficile par rapport à d'autres matières et donc c'est pour ça que les enfants ne choisissaient pas systématiquement de faire des langues, au début c'était réservé aux plus doués etc et puis petit à petit non et maintenant c'est reparti dans l'autre sens c'est malheureux.

Par rapport aux questions sur les discriminations par rapport à votre langue vu que vous parlez en fait toujours en anglais j'imagine que vous ne vous êtes donc pas sentie concernée ?

Non je pense que la seule chose où on peut être discriminé c'est que j'ai toujours un accent les gens savent que je ne suis pas britannique que l'anglais n'est pas ma langue maternelle et puis en plus je circule dans un cercle je ne suis plus au travail donc mon cercle d'amis est relativement sympathique à la cause européenne aussi.

Oui donc même par rapport à votre accent, vous n'avez jamais été discriminée ?

Non en fait je ne sais pas pourquoi mais les gens arrivent difficilement à me placer pas forcément français pas britannique mais pas forcément français par contre quand j'étais prof j'avais souvent des commentaires des enfants mais ça ça fait partie d'être prof c'était pas forcement une classe par rapport à moi mais par rapport aux étrangers.

Ma fille sa perception comme elle a fait du française et de l'espagnol à l'université elle a passé du temps au Pérou elle est vraiment européenne et internationale disons elle ça l'a beaucoup touchée et comme jusqu'à maintenant elle n'avait pas de passeport français ça a été la première chose qu'elle a fait elle a été cherché sa carte d'identité au consulat pour revendiquer son droit ç être européenne et française et britannique disons pour elle c'est plus qqch de viscéral disons d'être française même si elle n'a jamais vraiment passé vraiment de temps a part les vacances en France elle n'a pas fait d'année en France parce qu'elle a fait son année en Espagne plutôt qu'en France etc donc pour elle c'est qqch d'acquise qu'elle ne veut pas perdre elle n'a pas du tout d'identité française en ce sens qu'elle n'est pas intéressée par la politique mais ça fait partie d'elle.

Autre chose à ajouter ?

Mon expérience est différente de plus jeunes disons parce que je n'ai pas d'enfants à l'école en général les enfants bilingues parlent français et anglais très bien s'ils ont été élevés ici donc je ne pense pas que ça puisse poser de problème pour eux aussi en fait. Je pense que les gens qui sont installés ici en général ma génération c'est souvent des femmes qui ont fait une licence d'anglais en France et qui se sont mariées en Angleterre, à l'époque c'était très rare de trouver des gens qui étaient simplement venus chercher du travail. Notre génération est différente des générations d'après.

FG 2

Date : 16 october 2020

Group : children

Participants : 390, 464, 263, 161

Pourquoi êtes-vous arrivé au Royaume-Uni, pour quelles raisons ?

161: je suis arrivée en Angleterre en 1994 i y a 26 ans avec une personne qui allait devenir mon mari qui est le père de mes enfants ça fait donc assez longtemps que je suis là, donc maintenant je suis séparée avec 2 enfants de 19 et 16 ans et eux se sentent très anglais avec une maman française et un passeport français mais eux se sentent anglais ils parlent anglais entre eux je leur parle en français ils répondent en anglais on a la télé française mais bon personne la regarde je suis la seule à regarder koh lanta le vendredi soir, donc voilà on est une famille internationale mais bon c'est anglais avec un maman française c'est tout.

263 : je vais juste préciser qu'en fait je suis bilingue parce que ma mère est britannique donc j'ai grandi en France donc j'avais un père française et une mère Ecossaise donc j'ai grandi avec les 2 langues, donc je suis allée un lycée international et après je suis allée en Angleterre en l'an 2000 donc il y a 20 ans pour étudier à l'université, ça fait 20 ans que je suis ici mais je suis arrivée bilingue et déjà avec beaucoup de confiance vis-à-vis des 2 langues en fait donc j'ai jamais vraiment eu l'impression d'être immigrée parce que quand je parle anglais la majorité du temps tout le monde pense que je suis britannique donc j'ai peut-être une perception un peu différente. Donc ça fait 20 ans que je suis en Angleterre j'ai aucune intention de retourner en France, j'adore y aller pour les vacances pour voir ma famille mais ma vie est ici j'ai un mari qui est britannique et nos 2 enfants sont tout petits ils n'ont que 2 et 3 ans et demi et je leur parle en française de manière religieuse on va à la crèche française le mercredi matin et je monte une école française pour qu'ils puissent aller à la crèche française le samedi matin, à Leicester donc j'espère que ça va marcher et voilà j'essaye le plus possible de leur parler en français mais ils me répondent en anglais.

390: je suis au ru depuis 8 ans les 8 dernières années je suis un peu plus senior que vous mais j'ai pourtant à la maison un jeune j'ai élevé 4 enfants qui sont maintenant des adultes et eux-mêmes parents aux Etats-Unis avec une mère française donc ce que vous décrivez je l'ai bien vécu essentiellement parce que je ne me posais pas trop de questions sur la langue etc ils sont euh quand bref non on ne va pas rentrer dans le débat je suis rentré en France j'ai épousé une nouvelle femme avec laquelle nous sommes partis en Asie j'ai adopté un petit garçon qui a 10 ans et dont on s'occupe beaucoup qui a un passeport malaysien français grâce à ses parents et qui est depuis 8 ans donc il en a 10 au ru je pense que la langue est qqch à laquelle il est très très sensible.

464 : j'ai 28 ans je suis arrivée en Angleterre il y a un peu plus de 2 ans et demi, de base je suis née au vietnam j'ai été adoptée par des parents français, donc le français est ma langue natale mon fils qui a 3 ans et demi parle français c'est sa langue maternelle sauf qu'ici il va à l'école anglaise donc il commence à apprendre l'anglais il me parle beaucoup plus français qu'anglais mais il commence à faire des mix des deux ce qui est assez mignon, il commence aussi à faire la différence entre les deux langues parce qu'à un moment il avait du mal à faire la différence entre les deux. Je voulais vraiment qu'il apprenne l'anglais parce que je sais qu'il parlera toujours français avec moi avec nos familles sachant que son père est français aussi mais je sais que bon l'anglais est primordial donc s'il peut avoir des bonnes bases etc ce serait bien. Pour l'instant je compte rester en Angleterre j'ai un cdi je ne sais pas encore pendant combien d'années parce que c'est un travail où on peut bouger selon nos évolutions mais en tout cas je pense pendant au moins les 2 prochaines années je pense que je serai là.

Est-ce que vous avez l'impression de parler suffisamment français dans votre vie de tous les jours ? Dans un contexte professionnel ?

464: je travaille en community management donc tout ce qui est gestion de réseaux sociaux dans une boîte française qui s'appelle [nom de la compagnie] qui a des studios un peu partout bon beaucoup de studios en France mais aussi on en a en Angleterre en Asie etc. Et donc j'ai eu un peu de mal à remplir le questionnaire parce que je parle autant français que anglais au boulot sachant qu'on a 8 langues parce qu'on gère toute la partie EMEA en fait on a 8 langues différentes donc encore plus de nationalités donc avec la plupart de mes collègues on parle anglais mais j'ai aussi des collègues français avec qui on parle français.

390 : alors moi j'ai depuis que je suis au ru j'ai travaillé dans des entreprises anglaises donc je ne parlais que l'anglais au travail avec qq fois des clients au canada au Québec et donc français enfin grosso mod le boulot était en anglais et quand on rentre à la maison on parle français enfin je parlais français. Au cours des dernières années j'ai fait des prestations pour des clients français et donc j'ai basculé en français.

263 : alors moi dans le milieu professionnel j'ai jamais parlé français enfin de temps en temps si je trouvais des collègues français par hasard mais j'ai toujours eu l'impression pendant les entrevues que c' était une super aubaine que je parle français super on est une boite internationale ça nous intéresse beaucoup et en fin de compte tout le monde parle anglais et d'ailleurs c'est frustrant parce que mon langage n'a pas vraiment évolué depuis l'âge de 18 ans et je me suis retrouvée un jour je sais plus ce que j'ai dit, en pleine réunion avec des français à dire ah c'est vachement intéressant et je me suis dit mais j'ai encore le langage d'une ado quoi ! Donc voilà c'est une frustration mais c'est vrai que j'ai quand même beaucoup parlé français au travail.

161: alors moi c'est très similaire à l. J'ai toujours travaillé pour des entreprises anglaises, je sais pas on est tous dans le même coin ? Parce que moi je suis à Loughborough au nord de Leicester donc on est tous dans le même coin ?

263 : moi je suis à Leicester

390 : Cambridge

464 : moi je suis au nord-est de Newcastle

161 : j'ai toujours travaillé avec des entreprises anglais à part une société française donc c'est pour ça je suis euh procurement manager et c'était une entreprise française donc effectivement j'avais des collègues français à ce moment là parce que je représentais la ? bu nord Europe mais donc voilà donc en fait on parle toujours anglais parce que de toute façon c'est un anglais c'est un terme spécifique donc j'étais coincée, je ne vais pas parler vachement bien mais c'était ? Parce que je n'avais pas les mots équivalent en français et j'ai eu beaucoup de négociations avec des fournisseurs et le peu de fournisseurs français que j'avais de toute façon je faisais les négociations en anglais je ne me présentais même pas en tant que française parce que d'un point de vue négociations c'était très bien d'un point de vue tactique ils faisaient leurs petits mots en en français en plus ils auraient pu deviner que mon prénom était français mais mon nom de famille ça noyait le poisson !

390: mais vous parlez sans accent ?

161 : alors je non non je le parle avec accent mais faut être anglais pour l'entendre, je le parle suffisamment couramment pour que les Français n'entendent pas mon accent et pensent que j'étais

anglais donc d'un point de vue tactique d'un point de vue négociations je faisais mieux de me taire et de récupérer quelques petites informations comme ça ! Mais voilà c'est anglais oui.

Dans un contexte plus privé ?

161: alors moi c'est marrant parce que moi chaque fois que mes enfants disent toujours ohlala maman dès qu'elle va au supermarché et qu'elle entend parler français elle est là oh vous voulez être ma copine ? Donc les enfants ils trouvent ça très drôle c'est vrai que j'ai qq français ou francophones dans mon réseau d'amis je suis arrivée en 94 le téléphone était super cher quand on téléphonait à l'international y avait pas de télé, y avait pas l'internet et au bout de 2 ans je me suis retrouvée à oublier ma langue et je suis retournée au bout d'un an voir mes parents et je leur parlais en fait je traduisais de l'anglais en français avec un très mauvais français et ma maman était horrifiée, donc du coup c'est là que je me suis dit oui une langue ça se travaille et on peut la perdre donc c'est pour ça que j'ai la télé française qui était très utile quand les enfants étaient petits maintenant qu'ils sont ados ils s'en fichent un petit peu mais c'est vrai que j'ai un besoin de me reconnecter enfin pas régulièrement mais ça fait du bien de pouvoir parler français. Et c'est pour ça que j'ai été très contente que vous me contactiez ! C'est un petit plus ça fait du bien de se sentir un peu à la maison parce que moi finalement mon partenaire est anglais et je parle anglais toute la journée et j'ai très peu d'occasions de parler français.

263 : de mon côté je parle anglais avec ma mère et je parle français avec le reste de ma famille mon père mes 3 sœurs et mon frère. Et donc quand je vivais en France c'était bien parce que j'avais un peu des deux mais depuis avoir déménagé en Angleterre je parle que avec mère qui après me raconte les histoires des tous les autres donc je lui parle en anglais je parle en anglais avec tout le monde ici en Angleterre donc je ne parlais presque plus français au départ surtout en étudiante je ne parlais presque plus français et ça ne m'a pas gênée plus que ça mais quand j'ai eu mon premier petit garçon je me suis dit bon faut vraiment que je lui parle en français et j'avais du mal au début j'avais vraiment du mal c'était rouillé je ne trouvais plus mes mots j'étais à la moitié de ma phrase et je me souvenais plus et c'est là que je me suis dit il faut que je me créé un réseau de français j'ai commencé à parler autour de moi j'ai pris contact avec une maman française et puis toutes les deux on a formé un groupe et puis on arrêtait pas d'essayer donc on a un groupe WhatsApp avec une dizaine de mamans françaises maintenant qui habitent à Leicester et on a toutes des enfants en bas âge et donc en fait on s'entraide on discute, Ophélie ce matin tu as parlé à 269 on a commencé ce petit réseau de français donc j'essaye le plus possible de les voir de leur parler surtout pour mes garçons d'entendre d'autres personnes parler français.

390: alors moi j'ai eu la chance (ou pas) d'avoir été marié à des femmes françaises et donc on parle français à la maison j'ai plutôt été celui qui parlait le mieux anglais mais avec un sale accent parce que je l'ai appris tard comme certains d'entre vous mais bon euh qu'est-ce que je voudrais rajouter sur le sujet je me suis rendu compte que mes enfants avaient besoin d'apprendre le français aux états unis je parle des 4 grands quand je leur disais que leur arrière-grand-mère allait venir et qu'elle avait 75 ans et qu'ils me disaient mais 75 ça fait combien alors c'était un peu difficile parce que bien évidemment je leur parlais en anglais ils répondaient en français. J'ai eu une relation avec une Américaine pendant qq années où là j'étais dans un environnement complètement anglais enfin américain ce qui est encore une autre histoire et je me suis rendu compte les progrès qu'on est quand on est dans la vie personnelle à utiliser parce que là aussi ça ouvre à d'autre vocabulaire mais c'est beaucoup plus riche, mais le danger c'est la déperdition et je voudrais vous raconter une petite histoire. C'était il y a très très très très longtemps je faisais mon premier voyage aux Etats-Unis j'avais 18 ans 19 ans et je débarque chez un Français qu'on connaissait comme ça comme ci qui était depuis 40 à Chicago et j'étais absolument bluffé comme il parlait le français avec un accent américaine mais

j'étais mais comment c'est possible il est né à Poitiers ou j'sais pas quoi et il parle anglais comme bon le français avec un accent horrible. Mais ce sera peut-être l'objet d'une autre conversation mais il paraît que quand on apprend une langue avant x années une deuxième langue, cette deuxième langue se met sur une partie du cerveau tandis que quand on apprend une langue après 10 ans ou après j'sais pas quelle année c'est à un autre endroit et donc à ce moment-là si on ne parle plus que sa nouvelle langue on perd la première. Alors je sais pas si c'est j'ai lu ça qq part. Et l'autre chose que je voudrais rajouter excusez-moi d'être si long c'est le premier ministre de la francophonie qui avait écrit un bouquin qui avait dit qqch qui m'a bluffé, on voit la vie notre perception de la réalité est fonction des mots qu'on utilise pour l'exprimer et ça…

464 : alors j'ai pas mal de choses à dire aussi parce que je suis une grande bavarde ! J'ai toujours beaucoup de contact avec ma famille et mes amis en France donc ça m'aide à continuer à parler français je me suis quand même rendu compte d'une chose et j'ai demandé à mes collègues français si c'était la même chose, on fait beaucoup d'anglicismes dans le sens où y a beaucoup de mots que ça se termine par ment par ion ou des trucs comme ça alors que ça se dit pas du tout, je sais que quand j'ai dit à mes parents que j'ai passé ma période de probation et ils m'ont dit mais ça se dit période d'essai en fait et je leur ai dit mais si si ça se dit et ils m'ont dit non non c'est probation en anglais mais en français non. On a eu plusieurs histoires d'accusations à [name of company] ces derniers mois donc c'est pareil on a beaucoup parlé d'allegations sauf que nous en français du coup on disait allégations et on s'est rendu compte qu'on faisait beaucoup beaucoup d'erreurs comme ça, et le problème c'est que comme on se comprend entre nous au bureau en parlant français mais avec des anglicismes je pense qu'il y a des moments où on ne se rend vraiment plus compte on fait vraiment plus attention et ce qui fait qu'il y a beaucoup de moment où je cherche mes mots et c'est un peu frustrant parce que j'ai pas envie de perdre mon français. Mon fils ce qui est marrant c'est que le français c'est sa langue maternelle mais comme il a entendu beaucoup d'anglais très très jeune il ne sait pas prononcer les r à la française donc il va faire des phrases en français mais avec des r à l'anglais ce qui est assez mignon mais je saurais pas l'aider, le guider. Euh et je la dernière chose que je voulais évoquer quand même c'était l'accent parce que j'ai quand même un accent français ça c'est sûr quand je parle anglais mais je me suis rendu compte qu'il ressort beaucoup quand je suis en situation de stress quand je suis dans un entretien des trucs comme ça j'ai un accent français mais c'est horrible je m'entends mais je me déteste ! C'est que d'habitude je me dis que mon accent ça passe et quand je suis stressée j'ai un accent je m'entends j'ai l'impression que j'ai appris l'anglais hier c'est une horreur ! Pour finir dans mon travail je voulais mettre un peu de contexte en fait on fait partie d'équipes de jeux, donc de jeux vidéo, et donc pour parler avec ses équipes pour communiquer on va tous parler anglais mais comme on gère des territoires locaux donc exemple pour moi la France je suis obligée de collaborer en français avec des Français donc c'est ça qui est bien c'est que ça fait un bon milieu en fait.

161 : je me reconnais beaucoup dans ce que tu dis, c'est que moi aussi j'ai un accent français qui est beaucoup plus fort quand je reviens de France mais aussi quand je suis fatiguée quand je suis fatiguée je cherche mes mots j'ai un accent bien plus fort, et ça demande, c'est la gymnastique de l'esprit en fait c'était pareil avec mes enfants quand ils étaient petits mon fils qui était le premier on se faisait des phrases de franglais parce qu'il cherchait ses mots il arrivait pas à parler donc c'était plus simple de parler franglais mais on s'est rendu compte qu'on était devenu une entité, personne d'autre pouvait comprendre c'est là que j'ai dit non, là on va, et ça a mis un an pour vraiment se forcer à faire la gymnastique de l'esprit à faire français français anglais anglais ce qui nous a aidé plus tard pour le lycée ils ont fait français a level, pour être rigoureux.

464 : mais c'est vrai que pour rebondir sur ce que disais s. Quand je suis fatiguée je perds mes mots mais c'est très frustrant mais par contre à l'inverse si je bois un peu j'ai un meilleur accent (rires) non mais c'est vrai en plus je sais que je pense que c'est un peu la désinhibition mais je fais moins attention à mon accent… Mais j'ai un accent génial, mes managers m'avaient dit une fois ils m'avaient dit avant les entretiens faudrait que tu boives du vin parce que comme ça t'auras un super accent tu stresses moins ! J'ai jamais essayé ! Mais c'est vrai que quand je suis fatiguée c'est vraiment l'inverse, l'accent vraiment très français et c'est comme si j'avais plus aucun vocabulaire.

390 : je ne sais pas si on sort du cadre, si non, y a des questions précises ? Je voudrais ajouter quelque chose, quand on a vécu une expérience, je dis ça on nous individus mais les enfants aussi quand ils jouent avec des petits copains ils sont avec un petit français et ensuite ils veulent raconter l'histoire avec une autre langue et en fait c'est super dur, et en fait c'est comme si au fur à mesure quand on est dans l'action dans l'activité et je pense que ça nous affecte aussi donc quand m dit ah oui parce que elle parlait à son collègue qui était j'sais pas à New York et puis ensuite elle parle au type de paris mais alors il faut traduire et ça c'est super dur et c'est pour ça qu'on fait des anglicismes parce que c'est un raccourci mais en fait ce qui serait important ce serait de respecter le contexte de l'expérience vécue

161: alors moi j'ai une anecdote combien de fois je traduis ce que ma famille me dit en français je lui re traduis avec un français plus simple en français. (rires)

464 : je voulais vous poser une question en rapport avec ça j'ai l'impression que mon accent dépend aussi des personnes à qui je parle càd que si je parle anglais à des gens qui ne sont pas natifs anglophones j'ai moins de mal que si je parle à des natifs anglophones parce que je pense que peut être le stress est pas le même qu'il relèveront moins mes fautes…

Dans quel contexte vous parleriez en anglais avec un francophone ?

390 : là encore c'est si on fait référence à un environnement professionnel anglophone donc deux francophones se rencontrent donc on parle d'un business case – je l'ai fait exprès- et donc bien évidemment on parle anglais parce que tout le référentiel est britannique c'est donc plus facile alors je parle pour vous toutes qui avez passé autant de temps dans un environnement anglophone et où parler anglais français anglais c'est égal comme dirait les suisses c'est neutre, donc c'est vraiment la circonstance, et si on est dans un environnement sur un projet en particulier alors à ce moment-là on parlera anglais et pas français.

161 : je suis d'accord parce que le référentiel est anglais donc je vais parler de request for quotation je vais pas choisir à traduire en français qu'est-ce c'est. Je ne sais même pas comment on dirait en français ! On comprend on est dans le même milieu. Sinon d'un point de vue personnel moi ce sera si on est 2 français et qu'il y a une seule personne anglaise qui est dans l'environnement proche pour pas l'exclure pour qu'elle comprenne. (Approbations des autres participants).

464 : moi je pense que c'est vraiment si on cite des choses qui sont déjà en anglais on va pas forcément traduire si on sait que l'autre personne peut comprendre. Le seul autre cas dans lequel je pourrais parler en anglais avec quelqu'un qui est francophone, c'est vraiment si on a l'impression que qqch sonne mieux en anglais qu'en français et que ça traduit mieux notre façon de penser et je sais que par ex ma meilleure amie est bilingue depuis toute petite et je sais qu'elle faisait ça et que j'ai pris l'habitude aussi. Et c'est vrai qu'il y a des moments où on essaye de formuler des choses en français et ça sonne pas très juste et justement on va passer à l'anglais ou inversement.

263 : par contre je sais pas comment vous vous sentez de ce côté-là mais moi quand j'ai choisi une langue pour quelqu'un c'est très difficile de lui parler dans l'autre langue. Ma mère par exemple parfois elle oubliait et elle me parlait en français et je me disais mais pourquoi tu me parles en français je me prenais une gifle quoi donc c'était un truc très personnel quoi donc je faudrait vraiment que je me force pour changer, donc si c'est juste quelques mots c'est normal mais si on est que 3 personnes et qu'il y a qu'une personne qui comprend pas l'autre langue je me forcerais mais c'est pas très naturel.

161: j'ai un autre exemple en fait, quand je suis en France avec mes enfants et que mes enfants parlent français avec toute la famille et qu'on va au supermarché et qu'ils veulent commenter la dame devant qui fait je ne sais pas quoi de pas très bien là ils vont la critiquer en anglais doucement ! Mais je leur ai dit « je ne veux plus vous entendre parler en anglais comme ça parce qu'il y a tellement de gens qui comprennent ! » mais oui les enfants ont fait ça aussi !

390: je pense aussi en l'occurrence mon gamin qui a 10 ans lui va écouter l'autre parler et se mettre au diapason de l'autre, c'est un peu différent que la question que vous nous posez et mon fils ainé quand il parle à ma femme qui n'est donc pas sa mère il lui parle en français parce qu'il pense que c'est plus facile donc y a aussi cette attention à l'autre et si on a un collègue Français qui parle moins bien je pense qu'on aura tendance à pas le snober et lui parler français.

Brexit, vous sentez vous une identité française, et comment vous sentez vous par rapport à la langue française ?

464 : moi je pense que ça fait partie de mon identité mais en même temps je pense que ce serait juste dommage de perdre ma langue natale mais après c'est vrai que je suis pas attachée plus que ça au côté français c'est un peu bizarre c'est un peu un mix des deux c'est un peu comme quand les gens me demandent par exemple si la France me manque ça va vraiment dépendre des moments en fait donc je pense que ça m'embête d'avoir l'impression que je perds du vocabulaire etc mais en même temps je sais que c'est normal donc c'est pas si grave que ça.

L : alors moi c'est un peu le contrepied de ce que je vous ai dit tout à l'heure, mais c'est un peu le paradoxe humain, je suis beaucoup plus sensible à la culture que à la langue càd que j'ai passé plus de 30 ans en dehors de la France, essentiellement ma vie d'adulte, et je revendique comment dire ma culture française mais je ne l'associe pas à la pratique de la langue je dis c'est contradictoire parce que tout à l'heure je vous ai dit que mais bon voilà c'est plus la culture. Mais je dois vous dire que depuis que je suis au ru je souffre mais alors terriblement parce que la culture britannique elle est vraiment vraiment très différente non seulement de la culture française mais de la culture américaine ça n'a rien à voir et je me suis fait bananer parce que je n'ai rien compris et je comprends toujours pas ce pays alors aidez-moi ça fait 8 ans que je suis là c'est peut-être pas trop tard !

263 : dans mon cas comme j'ai grandi avec les deux cultures déjà on avait déjà même par exemple à Noël on faisait un mélange des deux traditions britanniques et françaises donc j'ai toujours grandi avec cette impression de surtout avec le passage à l'euro je me suis toujours senti européenne, j'ai fait de l'espagnol et de l'italien au lycée donc je suis sortie de là avec plusieurs langues, j'ai vécu à Madrid pendant un an donc je me suis toujours sentie plutôt européenne. Mais par contre ce que je dirais c'est que bon j'ai passé grosso modo la moitié de ma vie en France et l'autre en Angleterre. Et je me sens toujours plus britannique en France, et française en Angleterre, je pense que ça fait ressortir les différents traits. Avant de me marier j'avais un nom de famillle très très français donc en plus des accents dans mon prénom et mon nom français tout de suite j'avais souvent des questions là-dessus et la première chose que je disais quand je me présentais c'était « et je suis française ». Donc pour moi c'était plus une question de culture que de langue mais ce que je dirais que je sens

quand même et c'est pour ça que je suis venue vivre en Angleterre, j'ai senti que j'avais plutôt un côté britannique qui était un peu mal à l'aise en France et je suis plus à l'aise ici, j'adore la culture, l'humour etc ça fait 20 ans que je suis ici, et les choses qui me manquent en France j'y vais de temps en temps pour ces choses-là ! Mais ouais je dirais que je me sens européenne plus que française si c'est pas irrespectueux !

161 : oui bah moi aussi je dois dire que je me sentais très européenne, pas forcément britannique, c'est pour ça que j'ai jamais postulé pour le passeport britannique pendant les 20 premières années donc oui j'ai en fait la langue pour moi était importante pour moi au début peut-être parce que j'avais des enfants petits et qu'il fallait que je suis la seule de ma famille en Angleterre toute ma famille est française parle pas anglais donc c'était très important que mes enfants parlent français qu'ils puissent aller en colonie de vacances chez les grands parents et qu'ils se débrouillent tout seuls, et en fait je dirais que dans les 5 dernières années alors je sais pas si c'est autour du référendum du Brexit ou pas mais ou mes enfants qui sont plus vieux et que finalement ils ont passé leur diplôme de français, ils parlent français, ils ont leur passeport français, ils peuvent aller en France tout seuls ils se débrouillent tout seuls donc y a eu tous ces événements qui se sont un peu convergés vers le fait que la culture soit devenue plus importante que la langue et c'est pour ça que je vais regarder Koh Lanta tous les vendredis soirs je vais regarder ma télé et mes informations françaises. C'est vrai que la langue c'est important de la pratiquer parce que si on la pratique pas on l'oublie mais c'est alors après la culture le passeport est ce que je me sens plus européenne, je me sens européenne, avec le Brexit j'ai dû demander le passeport britannique parce que c'était la solution la plus simple même si c'était très couteux et très compliqué qu'il a fallu que je fasse appel même si ça faisait 20 ans que j'habitais en Angleterre le processus a pris 18 mois, £2500 je vous passe les détails mais effectivement je me sens pas vraiment britannique mais j'apprécie la culture britannique mais c'est intéressant parce que ma culture britannique elle commence en 1994, donc tout ce qui est depuis 1994 je connais les comédies j'adore leur sens de l'humour mais voilà les années 80 début 90 je suis comme un enfant et quand on fait des réunions au travail et qu'on fait des petites anecdotes « ton premier concert » (rires) je vais leur parler de chanteurs français et eux ils vont me parler d'un chanteur de Sheffield, on était pas exposés à ces groupes là en France donc j'ai vraiment un point avant et après 1994 et même pour ma culture française parce que ma culture française va jusqu'en 94 et après depuis c'est plus compliqué !

Avant le Brexit ? Discriminations, regards insistants, ou expériences positives ? Changement dans l'attitude des Britanniques ?

161 : donc moi je suis arrivée en Angleterre j'avais 23 ans j'ai fait ma dernière année d'université en Angleterre et je suis restée ici et en fait quand j'allais au pub avec mon accent français qui est toujours là je parle très bien anglais mais mon accent est toujours là c'était toujours très sexy, tout le monde adorait mon accent français et je me rappelle d'avoir commenté plusieurs fois en demandant quelle était la différence, parce que les gens étaient très négatifs envers mes amis polonais qui avaient des accents polonais, et avaient ce regard négatif envers les étrangers polonais et finalement je suis comme eux pourquoi est-ce que vous me traitez différemment, et je me rappelle avoir eu cette question ah oui mais la France c'est vavavous c'est ouhlala y a ce côté un peu chic et glamour et sexy de la France et en fait je trouve que 2016 je suis passée du cote polonais on a été relégués avec tous les autres étrangers (rires) et ouais fin ça dépend alors après faut voir avec quel milieu on se mélange, mes amis mes collègues trouvent toujours ça très sexy mais c'est vrai que dans les pubs je fais plus attention à ce que je dis si ma voix va peut-être un peu moins porter je serai peut-être un peu plus quiet… Silencieux dans les pubs peut être un peu moins extravagante parce que je sais qu'il y a beaucoup de connotations négatives envers les français y compris.

263 : moi on m'a carrément reproché de ne pas avoir d'accent français et que ce serait mieux et plus sexy d'avoir un accent français. Moi c'est j'ai que eu du positif finalement on m'a toujours charriée parce que bon t'as toutes les anecdotes habituelles ou les blagues sur les français mais c'est pareil en France on m'a charriée sur le côté britannique donc j'ai eu des deux côtés donc ça m'a jamais vraiment touchée donc j'ai pas eu vraiment de remarques désagréables et puis pareil à s. Au niveau de ce que tu disais ah mais la France y a une grande histoire d'amour entre les deux pays donc j'ai pas eu de problème. Par contre le matin où on a reçu l'annonce pour le vote du Brexit j'étais enceinte hein mais j'ai pleuré j'ai eu le cœur brisé je me suis dit mince on va me regarder de manière différente. Donc moi j'ai ressenti qqch et j'ai eu un peu peur j'étais un peu réticente d'aller au travail de savoir ce que les gens allaient me dire je pensais que les gens allaient me dire allez tu prends ton passeport et tu t'en vas maintenant. Et en fait c'était complétement l'inverse et je sais qu'on a tendance à s'entourer des gens qui nous ressemblent et qui ont des valeurs similaires donc c'est peut-être pas une bonne anecdotes à raconter mais la majorité de mes collègues qui ont fait des commentaires là-dessus c'était que positif c'était ah mais toi c'est bon t'as un passeport français déjà you're saved, c'était comme si j'avais un avantage maintenant parce que je pouvais retenir cette carte européenne et puis eux par contre n'allaient pas pouvoir faire ça. Donc ils étaient presque plus dans le camp bon bah qu'est-ce qu'on peut faire pour obtenir une nationalité française ou autre parce qu'on n'a pas envie de rester dans ce pays. Donc j'ai que eu vraiment des commentaires positifs et quand j'ai commencé à parler français, quand mon premier fils est né au début je parlais tout doucement je chuchotais à mon petit bébé je lui chuchotais dans l'oreille pratiquement parce que j'avais un peu honte parce que tout le monde autour de moi parlait anglais et c'était juste une histoire de confiance je pense pas que c'était Brexit je pense que c'était vraiment une histoire de confiance en moi et je pensais que les gens allaient me regarder un peu bizarrement parce que je parlais pas en anglais, et j'ai toujours chanté en anglais quand j'allais à tous les groupes avec les mamans etc c'était toujours des chansons en anglais mais quand il fallait parler je parlais en français et avec mon deuxième j'ai beaucoup plus confiance en moi je vais crier quand ils sont au parc je leur crie un truc « allez venez par ici les garçons » j'ai beaucoup plus confiance donc ça ne m'a pas vraiment affectée c'était juste une question d'expérience et de temps pour moi.

390 : alors pour moi comme pour toi h c'était absolument la stupéfaction et la sidération on avait pris la décision on devait quitter Londres et aller à Cambridge et nous avions pris la décision d'acheter une maison eh bien dans les 24h on a appelé pour mettre un terme à cette acquisition et alors c'est toujours très difficile de savoir si c'est de la projection ou si voilà mais y a eu une crispation bon moi qui ai vécu dans d'autres pays et toujours étrangers et là ça rejoint la langue ma fille un jour elle devait avoir 15 ans 16 ans et elle commence à parler anglais avec un accent français et je la regarde et je lui dis mais je parle pas comme ça quand même elle me dit bah bien sûr papa et alors là je suis tombé de ma chaise et je me suis rendu compte que j'étais pardonnez-moi je fais un référent je ne fais ombrage à personne mais j'ai un nom de famille qui est un peu compliqué j'ai un arrière grand-père qui est venu du plateau anatolien c'est un arménien on en entend beaucoup parler actuellement et donc j'ai été élevé dans les années 70 quand j'étais adolescent y avait un type qui s'appelait pierre pechin et qui parlait le céggal la fôrmi et je me suis senti un véritable bougnoule aux états unis et un véritable étranger et complètement on était d'ailleurs on nous appelle pas des foreigners on nous appelle des aliens alors c'est vous dire comment on revient de loin. Donc j'ai revécu alors que je pensais être en Angleterre première erreur je pensais que c'était l'Europe c'était tout pareil alors en fait ça n'a rien à voir, j'étais venu en Angleterre j'avais 14 ans j'avais l'impression de connaitre ce pays, et alors c'était gamelle après gamelle et ce vote c'était encore un nouveau coup de pied aux fesses et après ça y a une sorte de mal-être bon on sait pas à chaque fois quand je bon je conduis comme un français je me fais klaxonner ouais c'est la route c'est machin qu'est-ce que

tu fais, tu traverses bah oui à paris on traverse quand on est piéton, non non ici c'est le taxi c'est nana bon, donc tout ça c'est venu exacerber des mauvaises choses, donc depuis le Brexit bon ça va faire maintenant quelques années mais je pense que moi j'ai envie de rentrer en France voilà. Et concernant la langue mon fils apprend le français à la maison il est totalement bilingue, il lit des livres, bon il a fallu y travailler le problème des conjugaisons cet été mais ça nous amène à préparer le retour et remettre le français un peu plus et dans la cellule familiale à être beaucoup plus déterminé à parler et laisser la place du français alors que si y avait pas eu le problème du Brexit je pense que pour moi la langue c'est pas très important puisque c'est très fluide on va de l'un à l'autre bon l'accent certes mais bon et mon fils ainé qui habite Londres il parle avec un accent comme vous, enfin comme h. (s rires : oui pas comme moi !) Et donc lui se fait recruter etc moi je sais que j'ai eu des chasseurs de têtes et ils étaient intéressés par le résumé ah le type est allé aux us à Singapour et puis d'un seul coup ils parlent au téléphone et ouhlalala ça va pas le faire du tout là ! Et donc moi dans la boite dans laquelle j'ai travaillé qui était à Walton on Thames j'étais le seul non british et j'ai souvenir à l'occasion, pardonnez-moi je transgresse, disgresse, y avait un petit déjeuner on avait passé la nuit machin et y avait le patron qui me dit en anglais dans le texte « louis you're odd » tout simplement parce que mon petit déjeuner c'était pas leur petit déjeuner, j'allais pas bouffer des flocons d'avoine, non, même si on le fait bouillir donc ça a beaucoup changé le Brexit !

464 : alors en fait le truc c'est que dans mon environnement de travail j'ai quand même de la chance parce qu'encore une fois on a 8 langues différentes donc on peut pas tellement se moquer des accents les uns des autres ou alors on le fait vraiment entre amis et dans ce cas-là tout le monde s'y met sur les accents les cultures mais voilà c'est vraiment pas fait de façon insultante c'est vraiment que parce qu'on est amis et que voilà on peut parler de ça. J'ai alors bon effectivement on m'a déjà fait des remarques sur mon accent mais c'était jamais méchant enfin ne me l'a jamais dit méchamment c'était juste ah bah tiens t'es française, et en même temps bon c'est vrai que je m'y attends à chaque fois donc ça me dérange pas plus que ça, surtout quand on travaille avec Montréal, avec Québec, donc souvent les gens ont tendance à dire ah une vraie française. Non après je sais que j'ai de la chance parce que j'ai des amis à qui on a fait plus de réflexions sur le côté français c'est peut être que même malgré mon accent français je fais quand même des efforts pour parler anglais au maximum avec les gens autour de moi alors que certains français vont s'isoler entre français et je sais que du coup l'attitude joue beaucoup dedans aussi dans le sens où si eux ils s'excluent forcement ils vont avoir plus de critiques ou de reproches et là où j'ai de la chance aussi c'est que comme je suis asiatiques les gens s'arrêtent plus sur le côté asiatique que le côté français en général.

161 : je voulais juste rajouter parce que je pensais que j'étais bien intégrée j'ai jamais eu de problème en plus de 20 ans en Angleterre et au bout de 20 ans en fait j'avais même oublié que j'étais française parce que bon effectivement je parle anglais avec un accent français mais j'ai toujours travaillé dans des entreprises anglaises avec des anglais je suis manager j'ai toujours travaillé avec des équipes de 10/ 20 personnes ils sont tous anglais enfin bon j'ai jamais eu de problèmes enfin bon j'étais tellement intégré que j'avais même oublié que j'étais française. Et en 2018 j'ai eu 6 incidents dans la même année, j'avais jamais eu de problèmes, on m'a jamais fait de réflexions, et je suis allée à l'hôpital pour faire des traitements, on m'a demandé si j'avais le droit d'avoir un traitement NHS gratuit, il a fallu que je prouve mais attendez, j'étais encore mariée avec un britannique à l'époque depuis plus de 20 ans, on m'a jamais posé cette question avant, pourquoi d'un seul coup les choses changent ? Ma maman est venue en vacances, malheureusement elle a eu une inflammation une cystite et il lui fallait juste des antibiotiques, le gp a refusé de la traiter il a fallu qu'on aille à l'hôpital au service des urgences et quand on est arrivé après ces 4h de queue mais qu'est-ce que vous faites là le médecin aurait dû vous traiter ah bah non non ils ont refusé machin ah bah non ils ont pas le droit. Et en fait on voit la différence entre les gens qui ont voté Brexit parce que si ils ont voté Brexit

ils vont vous faire mener une vie beaucoup plus difficile. J'ai à deux pas de portes de chez moi y avait des constructeurs des maçons j'ai fait une petite réflexion parce qu'ils étaient mal garés qu'ils bloquaient le passage et qu'on a des aveugles dans le coin donc je leur ai demandé de se garer normalement, bien sûr j'ai parlé en anglais mon accent et sorti mais qu'est-ce que tu fous là retourne dans ton pays. Et tous ces incidents j'avais jamais eu cette expérience pendant 22 ans et ça s'est tout fait en 2018, ça s'est un peu calmé je pense qu'on est un peu passé à autre chose avec covid et tout ça mais c'est vrai que je me suis sentie d'un seul coup étrangère. Et ça m'a je me suis pris une sacrée gifle dans la figure parce que mes deux enfants sont complétement intégrés et comme je dis j'avais un peu oublié que j'étais française, j'étais vraiment intégrée, et c'est là que je me suis dit bon il va falloir que je fasse le passeport britannique parce que ça ne peut qu'empirer. Et depuis j'ai rencontré d'autres français qui ont eu des expériences très similaires voire pires, et je pense qu'il y a vraiment une attitude différente envers les Français. Moi je me rappelle sur la place du marché y avait quelqu'un qui me tendait des fascicules j'étais pas trop concentrée il me met le fascicule sous la figure et c'était «votez Brexit » je le regarde et j'éclate de rire et je dis « j'ai pas le droit de voter » parce qu'à l'époque j'avais pas le passeport à l'époque et puis il me regarde et il me fait « euh retourne dans ton pays » je l'ai regardé je lui fais attends je suis a higher taxpayer depuis plus de 20 ans je suis sure que j'ai contribué plus que toi au pays enfin bon on va pas rentrer dans les débats mais bon il m'a pris à rebrousse poils d'un coup-là et voilà donc tout ça c'était jamais arrivé en 22 ans, en 22 ans c'était jamais arrivé. Bon après c'est avec le milieu avec lequel on se mélange j'ai pas du tout ce genre de problème au travail ils sont peut-être plus éduqués je sais pas mais c'est vrai que moi j'ai vraiment senti au point très proche à deux pas de ma porte que du coup j'avais peur de rentrer chez moi j'ai refait le tour du pâté de maison pour pas leur montrer où j'habitais j'ai eu peur, peur pour ma personne.

Est-ce que vous changeriez votre façon de parler français ou rentriez-vous en France.

464: moi j'ai un avis très tranché là-dessus c'est que je changerai pas ma façon de parler ni rien et je rentrerai pas non plus si j'ai pas envie de rentrer. Après le truc c'est que je peux comprendre que faire face à des rejets ou justement des paroles un peu dures du style rentre dans ton pays c'est vraiment un truc horrible mais en même temps j'étais avant ça j'étais bon là je viens de bordeaux mais avant ça j'étais dans une ville beaucoup plus petite jusqu'à mes 13/14 ans et j'ai fait face à beaucoup de racisme depuis que j'étais petite et je pense que du coup c'est le genre de trucs que j'entends même plus en fait je pense que bon c'est un peu triste mais d'un côté je pense que ça aide et il me semble pas qu'on m'ait fait des réflexions comme ça ici mais en même temps si on m'ne faisait je sais pas si je les prendrais en compte, je sais pas si j'y ferais attention. Et puis là avec le covid le fait d'être asiatique, bon je suis asiatique et je suis française j'ai pas trop de chance !

390 : 464 ce que tu décris est passionnant et ça raisonne avec ce qui nous intéresse, mon dernier né il a une tête je vais faire un raccourci, de chinois, et il a un nom qui est un peu compliqué aussi il a un passeport français mais ça lui sert pas à grand-chose, il est britannique donc en fait cette question d'identité est qqch qui est fondamental, au même titre que tu as senti la discrimination simplement par le regard, ce qui est assez difficile c'est de voir le changement du regard de l'autre à partir du moment où tu parles et je pense que c'est ça qui est assez terrible parce que je pense que tu as la chance de travailler dans une entreprise très internationale, moi j'ai suivi ma femme dans des pays différents, j'ai toujours travaillé dans des pme et bah dans des pme c'est pas la même chose que dans des multinationales, [nom de la compagnie de I464] vous êtes tous d'ailleurs donc c'est pas la même chose que quand on travaille dans des petites boîtes où on à affaire à des gens qui ne sont pas forcément allés très loin de chez eux et donc qui ont un regard un petit peu plus difficile.

464 : mais c'est vrai que cette question d'identité j'avais hésité à revenir dessus plus tôt quand on en a parlé mais j'ai oublié, je pense que c'est aussi pour ça que je suis pas tant attachée au fait d'être française, c'est parce qu'en fait y a des moments où je vais dire que je suis française et selon les moments je vais me sentir plus vietnamienne en fait. Alors que pourtant je connais beaucoup mieux la culture française puisque j'ai été élevée par une famille française qui connait très peu la culture vietnamienne en fait, mais je m'y suis intéressée en grandissant etc du cop je pense que ça dépend vraiment du sujet des gens à qui je parle etc et oui encore une fois c'est sûr que ça créé un mix un peu un décalage et je pense que même si y a eu beaucoup d'inconvénients quand j'étais plus jeune , j'ai appris à grandir avec et je pense que c'est un truc que maintenant j'arrive à gérer au quotidien.

161 : c'est intéressant mais c'est tragique en même temps parce que en fait tu peux accepter cette forme de racisme parce que tu as été exposée par j'imagine ton apparence depuis plus jeune donc on confirme bien que c'est une autre forme de racisme basée par l'accent et par un passeport.

464 : oui complétement c'est ça qui est triste c'est que le racisme se banalise beaucoup sur beaucoup de points et que du coup soit on fait avec comme ça a été mon cas, soit on arrive pas à faire avec ce qui est normal parce qu'on devrait pas à avoir à accepter ça mais dans ce cas-là effectivement ça complique beaucoup les choses aussi.

161: et je dois reconnaître que mes enfants se sentent anglais et leurs copains, bon ils ont de la chance ils vont dans une école privée donc ils ont moins de problèmes avec ça aussi mais ils vont pas dire qu'ils sont français. Ils sont anglais avec un passeport français pour passer la douane mais c'est tout ils sont anglais. Et je discutais avec un autre couple qui sont comment ça s'appelle ceux qui nous représentent en France ? Le consulat, qui habite à ? Je l'ai rencontré l'an dernier quand je devais renouveler mon passeport français qui me racontait des histoires horribles avec ses deux enfants qui ont toujours vécu en Angleterre mais qui sont comme c'est un couple français ils ont que des passeports français et c'est au point que les enfants qui étaient adolescents subissaient énormément des racisme alors qu'ils ont toujours vécu en Angleterre que leur accent français est inexistant parce qu'ils sont parfaits anglais, mais avec un passeport français du coup ils sont restés au pays.

390 : je dois partir, désolé, juste un petit mot, nous avons pris la décision il y a qq semaines de demander la nationalité britannique, vous allez dire il est gonflé lui, tout simplement parce qu'on a le indefinite right to remain et que donc si jamais on devait retourner en France on perdrait la possibilité de revenir au UK. Notre gamin qui a 10 ans lui il sera peut-être content de venir étudier à Cambridge ou oxford et puis surtout ça va nous permettre de peut-être voter bientôt et puis le rattachement du royaume uni !

161 : c'est un processus très compliqué !

390: alors je sais j'ai déjà commencé bon, ça m'a fait mal aux tripes de le demander, vraiment, et d'ailleurs beaucoup dans ma famille m'ont dit mais qu'est-ce que tu fabriques, ça va pas non ? Et euh j'ai dû demander à un parent de signer un papier il faut faire appel à des witness et autres à des témoins etc et cette femme m'a dit mais c'est pas possible tu demandes la nationalité, personne ne nous aime ça fait tellement plaisir que tu prennes la nationalité britannique ! Donc c'était reverse et je me demande d'ailleurs dans quelle mesure y a pas une escale et personne ne m'aime j'ai entendu tout à l'heure sur sky news c'est macron qui monte au créneau contre boris parce que les français pensent que en tout cas c'est très mélangé ! Et tout cas merci pour ce que vous faites, ça m'a fait très plaisir de vous rencontrer virtuellement tous dommage qu'on puisse pas retourner au pub j'y suis pas allé souvent mais je vois que s. Est une habituée !

Est-ce que le Brexit a eu une influence sur la façon dont vous élevez vos enfants ?

263 : désolée je vais devoir y aller aussi mais oui mes enfants sont trop petits de toute façon, b. Commence maintenant il comprend qu'il y a deux différentes langues et il comprend qu'il y a des étoiles sur son reward chart si il parle français, mais comme je les ai eu après Brexit de toute façon ça n'a pas vraiment changé. Mais je vous remercie beaucoup !

161 : mon fils a 19 ans et ma fille a 16 ans donc mon fils a passé son A level il y a un an et puis il a un nom très anglais donc il se fond dans la masse alors que ma fille a un prénom très français avec un accent, j'insiste beaucoup sur l'accent ! Mais voilà ils se sentent anglais et britanniques et ça n'a pas vraiment changé en plus bon comme ils sont dans une école privée ils sont moins exposés que comme je parlais du consulat honoraire, donc ils ont pas eu cette négativité on va dire, cependant être français à l'étranger c'est une autre complication en dehors du Brexit, l'an dernier mon fils a du poser une journée de travail juste pour aller au consulat renouveler son passeport qui était 2 semaines avant ses 18 ans, il était dégouté des complications d'être français à l'étranger. C'est compliqué de renouveler tous ces papiers à l'étranger, ça prend pas mal de temps il faut s'y prendre à l'avance, et si on n'habite pas à Londres c'est compliqué. Moi je pense que je renouvellerai mon passeport français, mais je pense que mes enfants ne vont peut-être pas le faire.

464 : c'est vrai que pour moi la question ne se pose pas encore trop parce que mon fils a 3 ans et demi donc il est encore petit pour l'instant il n'a jamais eu de problèmes d'intégration parce qu'il comprend très bien tout ce qu'on lui demande tout ce qu'on lui dit. Il a tendance à répondre en anglais au maximum parce qu'i identifie les personnes comme parlant anglais. Et c'est vrai que quand il rentre en France impossible de lui faire sortir un mot d'anglais si lui ne le veut pas quoi donc en fait il va parler anglais que si il connait tel ou tel mot en anglais uniquement par exemple tout ce qui est couleurs alphabet etc il connait ça en anglais uniquement pas très bien en français mais sinon non il n'a jamais eu de problème que ce soit avec ses nounous, à l'école avec ses camarades etc. J'avais un peu peur au bout d'un moment que le fait de parler anglais ça l'affecte du côté famille parce qu'en fait du côté de ma famille ça va ils parlent pas mal anglais ils se débrouillent mais du côté de son père pas du tout parce que c'est vraiment bon ça part un peu dans les clichés mais c'est vraiment la campagne etc et vraiment l'anglais c'est pas du tout ça et au final c'est assez marrant de voir qu'ils s'adaptent.

161 : mon expérience c'est qu'ils étaient assez flexibles étant petits mais ça change au moment de rentrer à l'école, les deux vers 5/6 ans. Mon fils allait dans une crèche anglaise donc il parlait anglais toute la journée il ne parlait pas français et c'est quand je suis tombée enceinte de ma fille ils ont 3 ans d'écart, donc à 3 ans je suis restée à la maison donc c'est là je l'ai forcé à apprendre le français mais une fois commencé l'école ils voulaient pas être différents dans la cour de récréation. Donc ils n'aimaient pas que je leur parle français dans la cour, donc moi j'ai pas eu trop ces problèmes, j'ai toujours eu confiance en moi donc moi je criais en français viens ici à travers le jardin d'enfants j'ai pas de soucis avec ça mais eux se sentaient différents et ils n'aimaient pas se sentir différents. A partir de 6/7ans quand ils ont commencé à écrire et qu'on a commencé à faire les carnets, comment ça s'appelle pendant l'été pour apprendre le français ? Les cahiers de vacances ! Je leur avais acheté des cahiers de vacances avec plein de couleurs assez ludiques comme ils parlaient le français mais ils ne savaient pas l'écrire blocage complet donc c'est à partir de 5/6 ans que ça a changé et finalement j'ai complètement arrêté parce que je voulais pas qu'ils se bloquent qu'ils se rebutent contre le français, donc on se parle français mais c'est l'école qui leur a appris la grammaire, l'orthographe parce qu'ils le parlaient qu'en phonétique.

464 : c'est vrai que pour moi ça a été un peu une question est ce que je préfère qu'il pratique plus le français ou plus l'anglais et c'est vrai que j'ai préféré que ce soit l'anglais parce que je me suis dit, je préférais qu'il ait un bon anglais écrit et oral parce que ça lui servira toujours plus ; et le français s'il

le parle tant mieux et il le parle c'est sa langue maternelle et c'est la langue avec laquelle je lui parle pareil avec notre famille mais je me suis dit s'il maitrise pas le français écrit à la perfection c'est pas grave il pourra toujours apprendre si au moins il peut comprendre ce qu'on lui dit en français se faire comprendre en français ça va mais je préférerais qu'il parle anglais je me dis ce serait trop bête de passer à côté de ça.

Qqch à ajouter?

161: je trouve ça très intéressant que tu fasses cette étude et j'espère que tu auras de bonnes conclusions et je suis impatiente de lire ton rapport !

464 : moi aussi et si t'as d'autres questions ou que tu as besoin d'éclaircissements, hésite pas !

FG 3

Date : 17 October 2020

Group: Children

Participants : 157 508 509

Présentez-vous.

509: Moi je suis arrivée au RU en 2011 donc ça fera 10 ans en janvier et je suis venue parce que j'avais passé un an en Australie j'ai pas pu rester à cause du visa et j'avais pas trop envie de rester en France, j'ai rencontré des gens en Australie qui habitaient en Angleterre donc je suis venue leur rendre visite et en fait je me suis sentie bien ici et voilà et puis j'ai trouvé un boulot en intérim et de fil en aiguille enfin c'est le boulot dans lequel je suis, la boîte dans laquelle je travaille toujours et de fil en anguille voilà et puis j'ai rencontré quelqu'un ici et puis de fantastiques amis aussi (note : les 3 participants de ce groupe se connaissent) et donc voilà pour l'instant on prévoit de rester là on a un petit garçon qui va avoir 4 ans bientôt on voudrait qu'il fasse une partie de son éducation ici, on trouve que c'est une chance pour lui de parler anglais français espagnol puisque son père est espagnol mais voilà d'avoir l'anglais dans la poche. Et puis voilà pour l'instant ici tout se passe plutôt bien côté boulot donc voilà on va rester encore qq années.

508 : Je suis arrivé ici j'étais venu déjà étudier en 2003 j'ai eu un MBA de London Metropolitan University, je suis rentré en France pour tenter ma chance essayer de trouver du boulot et puis comme tous les français qui sont en France à cette période ça a été le face à face avec trop de diplômes pas assez d'expérience trop ambitieux ce genre de choses et donc je suis revenu en Angleterre en sep 2006 et depuis ce jour-là je me suis plu direct en Angleterre et pareil j'ai rencontré de très bons amis et j'ai ma comment dire ma copine puisque nous ne sommes pas mariés qui est anglaise et nous avons un petit garçon qui va avoir 2 ans en novembre et donc on a acheté une maison il y a 2 ans aussi du côté de Colchester et donc nous notre vie pour l'instant elle se fera ici y aura pas de changement prévu au programme pour partir pour une raison ou une autre on a tous les deux un boulot à temps plein sur Londres et on se plait très bien là où on est pour le moment.

157 : Je suis arrivé en 2006 il me semble en Angleterre une des premières personnes que j'ai rencontré à l'époque c'est M. qui était mon coloc et on est restés de très bons amis et on a rencontré N. via M. en gros moi je me plais très très bien en Angleterre j'avais une bonne situation dans le sud de la France puisque moi je suis originaire d'Avignon et je voulais apprendre l'anglais et l'objectif c'était de quitter le cocon du sud où il fait beau et c'est sympa et d'aller se challenger pour faire autre chose et se découvrir donc ça a pas loupé et on vient juste d'avoir un petit garçon de 2/3 mois,

ma femme de Singapour et du coup voilà c'est un peu international lui il parle, enfin il parle pas encore à 3 mois ! Il va parler anglais, français et l'objectif c'est qu'il parle aussi mandarin.

Avez-vous l'impression de parler français assez régulièrement ? Professionnel ?

509 : Moi non c'est que anglais anglais je crois que je suis la seule européenne dans cette société… Oh si parfois ils me demandent « oh est ce que tu peux appeler tel ou tel truc pour réserver parce que tu parles français » ou même quelqu'un pour y avait un problème avec les taxes pour sa maison en France donc voilà pour rendre service mais non pas de raisons professionnelles de parler français.

508 : je suis assez d'accord avec N. je suis entre 2 boulots mais je n'ai pas l'occasion, enfin dans la société où je suis on est aux alentours de 400 et je dirais au moins 50 ou 60 Européens et une très grande majorité de français et comme tout tourne autour du business en Angleterre donc les personnes parlent anglais directement c'est très rare le français mais comme 509 si y a besoin pour une raison ou une autre on parle français. Je parle français avec le représentant de la branche à Genève mais c'est une fois tous les mois, pas forcément relié au travail c'est juste courtoisie professionnelle.

157 : Alors moi de mon côté y a qq années j'aurais dit non parce que effectivement je travaillais dans une société anglaise, là je travaille pour une société française donc ce qui fait que tous mes N+1 +2 etc sont tous français et par contre comme la spécificité du job c'est d'être en Angleterre et d'être en communication avec l'Angleterre toutes mes communications pros sont en anglais mais via le siège social qui en France bah tout se fait en français et mon équipe sur UK c'est 50/50 on parle avec les fournisseurs en anglais et avec mon équipe en français.

Dans un contexte privé ?

509 : Bon je dis mon mari, on n'est pas mariés mais c'est pas grave, il est espagnol mais il parle français donc on parle un petit peu français, en fait je dirais avant dans ma vie personnelle avant de le rencontrer avant d'avoir un enfant, je parlais très peu français, même avec lui puisqu'on se parlait en anglais parce que mon espagnol est pas vraiment au niveau et puis c'est l'habitude qu'on a pris, mais depuis qu'on a un enfant, puisqu'on veut lui inculquer, on fait cet effort qui est plus difficile pour moi que pour lui d'ailleurs de parler nos langues maternelles et après même nous entre nous si on parle français mais comme on a des partenaires étrangers quand on est tous ensemble on parle anglais la majorité du temps et puis après bon évidemment y a des contacts avec des mais en France mais ouais c'est pas aussi fréquent qu'avant ou la famille bien sur donc ouais la vie personnelle c'est surtout avec mon fils que j'ai l'impression de parler le plus français mais ouais c'est limité ouais.

508 : c'est difficile en fait d'avoir du temps comment dire une qualité de temps pour parler la langue maternelle que ce soit avec mon fils pareil ou avec ma partenaire, elle comprend un peu le français mais c'est pas pour autant qu'on va parler français la majorité des discussions va être en anglais c'est clair quand on se voit parce que (partenaires des 2 autres) parlent un peu français mais quand on va avoir une conversation on va beaucoup plus parler anglais. Je dirais si je devais donner un pourcentage du temps que je passe à parler français ce serait peut-être 10% à parler français avec mon fils, à lui apprendre les mots, en ce moment on fait les couleurs les animaux ce genre de choses-là pour avoir les premiers mots mais comme il va à la crèche il est dans un environnement anglais tous les jours, il va discuter avec sa mère qui va lui parler en anglais pour éviter on essaye de faire une séparation elle lui parle que anglais et moi que français pour qu'il comprenne qu'il y a deux langues à apprendre, et comme on alterne aussi par exemple y a une fois ça va être moi qui vais faire le bain et elle le mettre au lit, donc en fait le temps de qualité à lui parler français à lui apprendre le français est vraiment diminué, je dirais peut être 10% de la journée. Bon c'est vrai quand on parle si

j'appelle C. ou si avec N. on s'appelle ou qqch comme on parlera français exclusivement mais c'est très limité.

157 : Non de mon côté on parle que anglais en privé c'est vrai que ma partenaire parle un peu français elle a appris le français depuis un long moment parce que c'est vrai que quand on rentre en France c'est un peu compliqué pour moi de toujours faire la traduction donc en fait elle arrive à comprendre les mots quand on lui parle tout ça mais on le perd rapidement, même moi j'ai l'impression de perdre mon français (approbation des autres participants) et pourtant dans le milieu professionnel je parle français des fois on cherche des mots ça fait un peu JC Van Damme (rires) c'est un peu la loose mais bon donc après pour le petit l'objectif c'est qu'on ait une nounou à la maison qui parle que en gros chinois, donc en gros eux converse en chinois donc c'est bien parce que moi de mon côté j'améliore mon mandarin (rires) et donc avec le petit elle va parler anglais et comme disait 508 en gros quand on les met à la crèche ça va être exclusivement en anglais donc on essaye de trouver une crèche qui fasse les deux franco anglais pour d'être courant en français, anglais et pour plus tard aussi en chinois quoi.

Est-ce qqch qui vous manque de parler français ?

509 : moi personnellement ça me manque pas j'adore parler anglais c'est pour ça que je disais que c'était plus difficile pour moi de me forcer à parler français à mon fils que ça ne l'est pour mon mari qui lui a peut-être une relation plus force avec sa langue et sa culture en fait moi je suis très fière très contente d'être française c'est pas du tout le problème c'est juste que j'aime parler anglais je trouve ça plus simple et d'ailleurs c'est ce que disait C. après 10 ans on oublie un peu le français y a plein de choses en fait que je ne sais pas expliquer en français comme mon travail, y a plein de choses je je je trébuche sur les mots c'est pas fluide, et pour moi du coup l'anglais c'est devenu la langue de c'est simple c'est la facilité et donc ça me manque pas en fait après plus que la langue c'est plus l'identité c'est la culture française plus que la langue qui moi dont je suis fière donc voilà je trouve qu'on a des mauvais côtés mais on a aussi de très bons côtés après moi c'est pas le pays dans lequel je veux vivre ou travailler parce que voilà j'ai d'autres, y a des mentalités enfin voilà c'est différent mais ça ne veut pas dire que des choses qui ne sont pas bien mais voilà je ne sais pas si ça répond à la question. Mais j'ai pas ce d'ailleurs quand je suis arrivée en Angleterre je ne voulais pas voir des français parce que j'ai une très mauvaise expérience en Australie parce que j'ai tout de suite été avec des français qui m'ont plongée dans la communauté française et ça s'est très très mal passé enfin j'ai une très mauvaise expérience et quand je suis arrivée en Angleterre je ne voulais pas rencontrer de français, et donc quand j'ai commencé à chanter dans une chorale et que la conductrice m'a dit « Eh y a un français là bas » qui était donc 508 c'est comme ça qu'on s'est rencontrés et j'ai là mmh. Mais bon voilà, je recherchais pas du tout la communauté française, du tout.

508 : Pour moi parler français est ce que ça me manque non pas forcément. C'est vrai que y a des fois c'est bien d'avoir une conversation en français mais en même temps si j'avais envie de parler en français je peux appeler ma famille je peux appeler mes amis et puis on peut avoir une conversation mais c'est vrai comme disait N et C on perd beaucoup à la crèche par exemple ils me demandent, ils sont très ouverts sur les cultures, et ils me demandent de traduire des mots anglais en français et la dernière fois le mot c'était caterpillar et j'étais incapable de trouver, j'ai été obligé de faire une recherche google parce que vraiment c'est bête mais c'est ce qui est arrivé. (rires) Donc ça me manque pas en ce qui concerne l'identité, moi je pars toujours du principe que quand on est à Rome on fait ce que font les Romains. On est en Angleterre et même si c'est bien je suis y a comme dit N on a de très bons côtés en France mais aussi de très mauvais côtés on va passer la discussion sur l'administration française parce que… (rires) mais y a pour moi on a une si on va vivre dans un pays on a une obligation à s'adapter à la culture du pays (approbation) parce que si on est en France on

n'a pas envie de voir un anglais qui arrive et qu'il ouvre un pub et qu'il soit super anglais et que ça se passe comme en Angleterre, et je ne pense pas que les anglais aient envie qu'il y ait un français qui arrive et qui dise bah voilà moi je vais ouvrir un bar et ce sera que français et ce sera que ça et je refuse de m'ouvrir et de m'adapter à la culture. De mon côté j'ai été élevé dans une famille, ma grand-mère était espagnole et elle nous a donné ce petit brin de culture espagnol dans la famille donc j'ai toujours été exposé à ce côté je ne vais pas dire international, mais ce côté ouvert à la culture et non je dirais qu'il n'y a pas de perte d'identité. Mais ouais… Je ne sais pas si ça répond à la question non plus !

157 : Pour ma part je trouve que j'ai un bon équilibre entre le boulot et la vie perso donc en fait mon français je le pratique très régulièrement de toute manière je pense que tous les expats que ce soit l'Allemagne les états unis etc je pense que quand on a une volonté de s'expatrier c'est qu'on a envie de rechercher qqch et de manière générale on ne va pas aller en Angleterre pour parler exclusivement en français. Y a plein de gens qui sont sur les Cercle des Français sur Facebook à un moment donné c'est lâchez-vous essayez d'être beaucoup plus « intégrés » au pays plutôt que de se remettre tout le temps auprès des français. Maintenant c'est vrai qu'en Angleterre on a une grosse communauté qui fait que très souvent du côté de South Ken on entend beaucoup parler français. Maintenant non je trouve que je suis complètement en phase avec N et M dans le sens ou on a décidé de partir de la France pourtant je suis très fier d'être français pourtant j'ai un grand père qui était allemand, un grand père qui était italien, et mes deux grandes mères qui étaient françaises, donc ce qui fait un mix, et c'est vrai que en tout cas moi j'ai toujours été élevé avec l'éducation de respecter l'endroit où on allait. Donc bah c'est le respect de quand je suis en Angleterre j'essaye de parler le moins possible le français, quand je suis dans les rues même à Londres je me sens limite, pas à l'aise mais je me sens un peu bah t'es à Londres faut parler anglais quoi. Mais après si je suis avec des amis qui parlent exclusivement français c'est pas un souci quoi. (20min)

509 : Non en fait ce que je me demande c'est si y a pas deux sortes d'expatriés quoi, moi je suis venue de ma propre volonté et y a peut-être des expatriés qui sont envoyés par des sociétés françaises peut-être qu'ils ont une approche différente je ne sais pas c'est ce que je me demande. En fait c'est ce qui m'a intriguée dans votre étude c'est en fait je m'étais jamais posé la question de est ce que la langue française ou l'identité française peut être impactée par le Brexit ça m'a intriguée parce que ça m'a jamais traversé l'esprit et je me demande si y a pas cette distinction entre les gens qui viennent pas eux même et ceux qui sont envoyés, et ils font le choix de, ils sont d'accord, mais c'est peut être un état d'esprit qui est un peu différent.

Quelle différence faites-vous entre expatrié et immigré ?

508 : Je suis un peu en désaccord avec vous je dirais que c'est plutôt l'inverse, mon boulot je suis-je fais de la management d'expatriés en ce moment c'est exclusivement japonais et je dirais que quand on est expatriés c'est la société qui dit tu pars en Angleterre t'as pas le choix. Du moment qu'ils se disent c'est une mission, donc ils pourraient se dire bah c'est une mission je suis là pour 1 an, 3 ans 5 ans peut être, mais au bout d'un moment je retournerai de là où je vais faire ma vie donc pour moi ce sera Japonais donc je retourne au Japon. Donc pourquoi, je suis Japonais, avec ma famille Japonaise, je travaille dans une entreprise Japonaise et au bout d'un moment je retourne au Japon, donc pourquoi je serais j'irais m'identifier ou apprendre une nouvelle langue une nouvelle culture ou qqch comme ça. Alors que quelqu'un qui est vraiment immigré, quand on voit la génération en France d'après-guerre les immigrés c'étaient vraiment les personnes qui étaient venues d'Italie, d'Espagne, du Portugal ou de n'importe où pour rebâtir la France à l'époque d'après-guerre. Donc pour moi expatrié ce serait donc l'inverse, un immigré ce serait une personne qui viendrait par choix parce que dans le pays où ils sont ils n'ont pas forcément le futur qu'ils voudraient alors que les

expatriés ont choix ou pas forcément dans le sens où la boite les envoie ou pas, mais ils auraient dans un coin de leur tête qqch qui leur dit bah de toute façon je reviendrai dans ce pays-là.

509: Mais c'est vrai que pour moi expatriés c'est effectivement cette définition là aussi, donc moi je ne me considère pas comme une expatriée par exemple c'est rigolo. Je ne sais pas comment je m'appellerais mais pour moi expatrié c'est ça c'est être envoyé par une société en mission dans un autre pays.

157 : en fait on parle beaucoup de s'expatrier en fait je pense que c'est plus l'action de partir de son pays pour aller vers un autre pays.

509 : Oui oui je comprends la terminologie

157: On l'utilise beaucoup dans le milieu professionnel pour une mission de s'expatrier pour 6 mois en Russie et du coup 6 mois en Russie on va pas aller s'identifier en tant que Russe en disant je vais parler que Russe alors qu'effectivement quand on décide de nous-mêmes de s'expatrier dans un autre pays c'est différent on a une volonté de, on n'est pas là pour subir mais au contraire de pour se jeter à fond dedans et se dire tiens c'est génial, on découvre plein de choses quoi c'est un peu l'excitement plutôt que se dire putain je suis là par défaut ou par obligation.

509: Ouais voilà c'est ça quand quelqu'un dit j'suis un expat, j'suis expat, ouais voilà ce terme expat, c'est ouais j'ai été envoyé par ma boîte et c'est vrai que pour moi ils ont une mentalité qui est différente.

157: Pour moi les expats de société générale par exemple quand tu les vois, tu passes à côté d'eux t'entends parler que français, ils sont entre français… c'est vraiment une autre mentalité.

Avez-vous senti des changements dans l'attitude des Britanniques avant/après Brexit ?

509 : Moi personnellement non pas du tout, c'est pour ça que j'ai été très intriguée parce que j'ai jamais eu de commentaires, j'avais lu une fois un article disant que dans le bus revenant du lycée français à South Kensington des élèves s'étaient fait agressés parce qu'ils parlaient français et ça m'avait choquée parce que je prends le même bus, j'habite dans cette zone-là, j'étais là mais enfin je c'est qqch oui ça ça me ça m'avait jamais traversé l'esprit que ça pouvait être possible quoi mais après ça ne m'empêche pas de parler français avec mon fils à l'extérieur ça c'est pas un problème enfin au contraire si quelqu'un a un problème avec ça… ça m'embêterait donc non j'ai vu aucune différence, en fait quand j'ai lu votre questionnaire y a qqch qui m'a traversé l'esprit, je sais que si vous êtes déjà conditionné par le fait que parce que vous êtes français peut être que les autres vont pas vous accepter comme vous êtes parfois y a des choses qui se passe je l'ai vu dans ma famille par exemple, mon père par exemple quand il vient nous rendre visite plusieurs fois y a eu des altercations avec des anglais parce que dans son esprit il pense que parce qu'il est français les anglais ont un problème avec lui donc je pense que quand on est déjà conditionné comme ça ça ça part pas dans la bonne direction. On remarque des choses qui n'en sont pas, c'est une sorte de paranoïa qui existe pas mais qui créé ces tensions qui ne seraient pas là si, et moi je sais que c'est pas du tout la façon dont j'envisage les choses, je suis en Angleterre j'ai envie de m'intégrer, mais si j'ai envie de parler ma langue je ne pense pas que les anglais vont me flageller pour ça donc pour moi y a pas de souci mais je pense que quand on est peut-être un peu conditionné dans ah je suis différent dans ce pays peut être que ça va être mal vu bah peut être que c'est là que ça créé, on créé soi-même des tensions. La seule chose que moi le Brexit quand ça a été annoncé j'étais très triste parce que je trouve ça vraiment dommage la seule chose c'était pas vraiment la langue mais l'espace d'un instant je me suis dit je me suis pas sentie acceptée, on se sent un peu rejetés ouais. Ça c'est la seule chose

mais bon après ça passe parce qu'on se rend compte qu'en fait ça change rien mais sur le moment voilà c'est le sentiment que j'ai eu ah ok on n'est pas tellement les bienvenus finalement.

508 : De mon côté non j'ai pas vu de changement après le Brexit mais comme N. je j'étais vraiment déçu en fait parce qu'il y a eu tellement de rivalité entre la France et l'Angleterre avec toutes les guerres etc, mais y a toujours eu cet espoir de mon côté je sais pas pourquoi que la France et l'Angleterre dans les moments difficiles seraient tous les deux unis pour justement essayer de s'entre aider plutôt que se diviser. Et j'ai vraiment eu cette impression qu'il y avait une division qui se créait mais j'ai pas vu forcement de différence la seule fois où j'ai eu une altercation, enfin pas une altercation mais je dirais un commentaire bah c'était au début où je suis arrivé en 2006 un truc comme ça j'étais avec Y. que C connait bien on allait au cinéma et on prend un bus et on parlait français parce que Y. est belge et on allait au cinéma et y a un anglais qui s'impose et qui dit « où est ce que t'habites ? » et il dit « t'es en Angleterre alors parle anglais ou un truc comme ça. Mais je pense que la seule fois ou y aurait une altercation ce sera vraiment avec les personnes qui n'ont pas vraiment cette éducation ou cette envie de s'éduquer ou toutes ces personnes qui auraient un côté nationaliste ou qui refusent si vous voulez le, qui seraient un peu chauvinistes et qui auraient ce côté bah je suis anglais, comme un Français qui dirait bah je suis en France, moi je parle français et voilà c'est comme ça. Et je crois que la seule fois où il y aurait un commentaire ce serait vraiment pour les personnes qui auraient ce refus d'accepter, j'ai pas envie de dire racisme, mais j'ai envie de dire les personnes qui ont une forte connotation nationaliste et fierté par rapport à leur pays qui font dire moi je m'en fous de toute façon, voilà. Mais ce qui est marrant c'est que ce sont le genre de personnes qui vont aller en vacances en Espagne mais en fait ils vont aller dans un village qui a été absorbé par la culture anglaise et ils vont passer leurs vacances en Espagne au pub (rires) et pour moi si y a un commentaire par vraiment ces personnes qui ont, qui sont tellement engrenées dans leur culture et qui refusent tout ce qui est à côté cette mentalité ce qu'ils appellent la mentalité ilienne, on est sur notre île et on s'en fout du reste quoi y a pas ce côté continental ce côté latin qui fait que nous c'est un plaisir enfin pour moi dans ma famille ça a toujours été un plaisir de recevoir quelqu'un d'une culture différente de savoir ah bah tiens comment ça se passe dans votre pays, ce côté on a toujours eu envie de savoir de faire partager cette culture française bah écoute ça c'est du vin de notre pays ramène en, et on a toujours eu ce côté-là et on a jamais eu de problème avec… Donc c'est une bonne question mais je crois que pour moi y a un très fort coté social en fait qui amènerait à ce genre de commentaires genre t'es en Angleterre t'as pas le droit de parler français quoi.

157 : Pour ma part oui j'ai eu un changement très clairement et je rejoins ce que M. dit, c'est le côté d'où viennent les gens, y a ce côté en Angleterre ce qu'on appelle le low class, c'est des gens qui soit sont sous benefit soit qui n'ont pas forcément une grande éducation et qui ont des jobs un peu basiques, soit manutentionnaire, préparateur de commandes etc etc. Et depuis 10 ans y a eu une immigration massive quand on voit qu'il a 1 million de polonais en Angleterre les deuxièmes je crois que c'est les roumains etc etc pour discuter souvent avec les anglais on a ce côté où ils sont très polis très courtois très accueillants mais quand on discute un peu plus en profondeur sur l'immigration etc on sent quand même qu'il y a un espèce de non-dit qui est là et qui fait que ils sont ouverts tant que ça leur convient et que côté business ça leur rapporte qqch et que d'un autre côté ils se disent « ouais y a quand même beaucoup trop d'immigrés en Angleterre ». Alors forcément parce que y a d'énorme colonies d'inde y a beaucoup d'immigration qui viennent de là du Pakistan de l'inde, y a beaucoup d'immigrants qui viennent des pays de l'est des pays plus pauvres du coup ça amène des gens qui sont entre guillemets russes et qui parlent un peu plus leur langue et qui en ont vraiment rien à faire de s'intégrer et qui sont là essentiellement pour gagner de l'argent pour ramener de l'argent dans leur pays. Donc en fait il y a vraiment des différentes façons de penser et moi je vois à travers mon travail parce que je suis amené à aller à Manchester à Liverpool à Sheffield

dans les coins perdus et on a eu plein de réflexions. Alors moi j'étais avec un de mes anciens collaborateurs qui était belge qui parlait un anglais mais parfait on aurait même dit qu'il venait du nord de l'Angleterre mais quand on parlait ils nous disaient mais d'où vous venez vous êtes de France, une société française ils nous disaient mais du coup quand est ce que ah mais vous habitez là mais vous allez repartir dans votre pays ou… ? Enfin on sentait des questions hyper… hyper bizarres quoi, après le Brexit on a vraiment senti ce changement où finalement ce vote officialisait un peu plus de raisonnement qui était un peu sous latent entre guillemets. Un peu comme à l'heure actuelle on voit aux Etats-Unis avec Trump qui a des points de vue extrêmement racistes mais du coup bah ça conforte les gens qui y pensent. Enfin voilà en tout cas moi je l'ai vu je dirais plus dans le countryside où les gens sont plus proches de perdre un boulot etc.

508 : J'ai eu qq commentaires mais j'y ai jamais vraiment prêté attention, y a toujours, quand y a eu le Brexit y aura eu au moins un Anglais qui sera venu vers moi et qui m'aura dit oh bah tu vas pas pouvoir repartir on va être obligé de te garder ou un truc comme ça, donc toujours comme dirait C. c'est un peu caché.

157 : Le pire c'est quand enfin moi ça m'est arrivé plusieurs quand j'étais dans un pub etc quand tu discutes avec les anglais ah tu viens d'où etc et après qq pintes bah les langues se délient un peu plus et j'ai déjà entendu des conversations d'anglais où les anglais étaient hyper hyper racistes mais ouvertement quoi et avec moi comme si « ah putain faut qu'ils partent tous ces polonais machin y en a un paquet etc » et voilà donc en creusant un peu voilà ils sont pas aussi ouverts qu'on le pensait !

Oui ça montre qu'ils font peut-être des différences entre les nationalités (approbations)

157 : Ouais les Roumains, les Polonais, les pays de l'est pour eux c'est vraiment ils viennent pour commettre des crimes, ils parlent avec une langue qui fait un peu barbare, ils ont aucune classe aucune éducation, enfin voilà c'est un peu le retour que j'ai eu.

Quelles langues parlez-vous avec vos enfants?

157 : Bon je vais pas parler de mon fils [il a 3 mois] mais un de mes gars habitent à Manchester il est français et il est marié avec une anglaise de Newcastle et il a deux garçons et du coup en fait ses deux garçons sont anglais, ils parlent anglais c'est vrai que lui il a pas parlé français avec eux donc en fait ils parlent pas français du tout ou alors ils parlent que qq bribes de mots, je lui ai demandé bah c'est dommage pourquoi t'as pas parlé en français avec eux, et il me disait en fait bah j'ai commencé à leur parler et puis vu que en gros ils comprenaient pas ce que je leur disais je me sentais mis à l'écart, puisqu'en fait elle était anglaise, ils vont dans une école anglaise et du coup bah il m'a dit bah j'ai arrêté de parler français parce que je me sentais un peu plus à l'écart d'eux pour se rapprocher bah du coup il a parlé anglais avec eux tout le temps. Donc pour moi c'est vraiment la chose la plus importante et c'est vrai que moi j'ai quand je lui parle je lui parle en français mais je peux lui parler aussi en anglais donc après je sais qu'il est encore trop petit pour comprendre mais c'est vrai que je me force entre guillemets parce que pour moi c'est plus simple parce que la miss elle parle anglais, on est en Angleterre voilà.

509: ça moi c'est qqch qu'on m'a dit dès le début faut vraiment vraiment que tu lui parles dans ta langue maternelle et donc mon mari en espagnol aussi et c'est qqch que j'ai fait depuis qu'il était tout bébé en fait. Après je repensais à la question du questionnaire sur les enfants est ce que ça m'embêterait s'ils ne parlaient pas français, c'est pas, je trouve que ce serait une opportunité manquée s'ils ne parlaient pas français parce que même si je sais à l'heure actuelle les technologies certainement on va pouvoir traduire les choses euh très facilement je pense que c'est même pour le développement de son cerveau je trouve que c'est une chance d'avoir, d'être exposé en fait à deux

ou trois langues et moi c'est plus dans ce sens là où ça m'embêterait qu'il parle pas français. Bon pour l'instant il comprend tout ce qu'on lui dit donc moi je lui parle en français mon mari en espagnol bon il répond en anglais mais on commence à voir que dans ses phrases en anglais il met des petits mots français et espagnol ici et là donc on se dit que ça va venir et surtout on essaye de l'inscrire au lycée français enfin à l'école française parce que pour nous c'est important et on pense aussi que l'éducation est voilà qui est donnée dans cet établissement pour le futur est bon pour lui mais c'est pour lui donner cette chance-là d'être exposé à plusieurs langues, donc c'est pas la question du français j'allais dire per sake mais voilà c'est l'exposition à différentes cultures à différentes langues mais oui pour moi c'est quand même important qu'il parle français surtout quand on a notre famille qui est encore en France je vois avec ses grands-parents en ce moment c'est un peu difficile parce qu'il répond en anglais et mes parents sont un peu mmh ? Parce qu'ils parlent pas vraiment anglais. Donc voilà c'est juste pour ça aussi c'est pour la les connexions entre familles aussi.

508 : C'est exactement ça c'est pas forcément le fait qu'il si c'est vraiment une question d'avoir cette exposition et puis on sait jamais si ça se trouve enfin moi la façon dont je vois ça c'est j'ai fait le chemin de la France vers l'Angleterre mais si ça se trouve dans 20 ans dans 30 ans mon fils se dira bah moi tu sais quoi j'ai envie de faire ma carrière en France et il aura déjà ce côté français il aura pas forcément la culture mais il aura déjà la langue et pour lui c'est bénéfique et comme dit N. bien sûr il y a la famille moi mes parents ils parlent pas un mot d'anglais ils ont pas forcément l'envie d'apprendre eux aussi quoi donc y a c'est vraiment pour l'ouvrir et pour le développement ça a été on peut lire c'est ça qui est incroyable je pense que pour chaque personne dans notre groupe d'amis qui a été enceinte le nombre de livres qu'on a lu là-dessus c'est y a un point commun c'est si y a la chance d'y avoir 2 ou 3 langues pour le développement de l'enfant c'est tellement bénéfique pour lui d'avoir ce côté-là ça va lui ouvrir une partie du cerveau si ça se trouve il parlera juste un petit peu, on a la chance y a une école à Colchester juste à côté de là où on habite qui font des une fois par semaine ils font des petits cours en français pour lui apprendre les bases etc donc ça c'est qqch que j'ai envie de faire pour lui il va me haïr parce que ce sera tous les samedis matins (rires) mais je pense que quand il aura quand il comprendra qu'il a cette chance de parler deux langues il m'en remerciera parce que déjà un s'il a envie de parler une autre langue ça se trouve il dira bah moi j'ai envie de faire une carrière en Amérique du sud bah ce sera beaucoup plus simple pour lui d'apprendre l'espagnol le portugais pour apprendre n'importe quoi ça l'aidera et c'est tellement bénéfique pour lui je pense comme disait C. j'ai aussi un ami sa femme est anglaise ils ont deux enfants surdoués en plus et il a refusé de leur parler français et c'est perdu parce que bah les enfants oui ils seront anglais mais ils auront pas ce côté culturel, ils seront très intelligents mais ça s'arrêtera et voilà quoi y aura pas le côté international, culturel et l'ouverture à cette culture enfin je pense ensuite je peux me tromper.

157 : Moi je trouve que c'est une chance qu'on nos enfants de pouvoir avoir la possibilité de parler des langues bilingues, quand on voit A. qui est anglais et qui parle français comme nous quoi il est arrivé à 10/12 ans en France et il parle complément français anglais il est bilingue quoi, et je trouve que c'est une opportunité pour nos enfants on a tous des partenaires des femmes des maris peu importe qui sont pas français dans notre groupe c'est rigolo y a espagnol de Singapour c'est complètement international et c'est une chance enfin moi le petit si il peut parler 3 langues le chinois le français et l'anglais bah déjà il part avec de sacrés bagages dans la vie professionnelle, et ça fait partie de son identité sa culture d'être à la fois mixte entre guillemets venant de plusieurs nationalités.

Qqch à ajouter?

509 : Non mais c'est un sujet intéressant en fait moi j'y avais pas pensé et je me rends compte en vous écoutant parler oui je vis surement dans une bulle j'ai l'impression de vivre dans une bulle parce

que j'ai pas eu moi ce genre de commentaires, de choses sur la langue français donc j'ai l'impression peut être de ne pas vivre….

508 : Tu vis à Londres 509!

157 : En fait on vit à 5min pratiquement dans le même quartier mais la seule différence c'est que moi je voyage plus dans le countryside et tous les fournisseurs les purs anglais entre guillemets bah

509: Mais après tu as raison dans le sens où les anglais sont très, moi je vois mes collègues en fait, évidemment on a des conversations un peu en surface enfin voilà effectivement si je creusais mais c'est peut être que j'ai pas trop envie de creuser non plus…

157 : Creuse pas !

509 : Mais peut être que je découvrirais des choses mais en fait ce qui est intéressant à part dans notre groupe d'amis enfin moi je sais que personnellement je n'ai pas d'ami Anglais, à part (femme de l'un d'entre eux) parce que y a une forme de barrière, y a quand même une différence de culture voilà c'est…

157 : ça c'est un point qui est hyper intéressant c'est vrai que les Anglais même s'ils sont hyper accueillants dans un pub ils vont te parler alors qu'en français va être plus qu'est ce que tu me veux toi, les anglais sont les premiers dans les conversations à, les anglais entre guillemets vont rester qu'avec les anglais quoi (approbations), ils sont allés à Cambridge ensemble etc. Moi j'ai plus d'amis anglais parce que la miss travaille dans une boite avec un environnement plus anglais ce qui fait que j'ai plus accès à ce genre de personnes là mais d'une manière générale on restera toujours finalement des immigrés quoi…

509: Mais même j'ai développé des relations un petit peu plus personnelles avec certains de mes collègues mais même là ça reste très comment dire politiquement correct parce qu'ils ont ce côté où ils vont pas se dévoiler en fait.

508 : Les Anglais on les connaît vraiment pour comment dire ils cachent leurs émotions (approbations) et je suis assez enfin je suis totalement d'accord avec 509 c'est qu'il y a des Anglais avec qui j'ai travaillé j'ai passé beaucoup de temps mais c'est toujours moi y a un truc qui m'a choqué au départ un truc que j'ai un peu pris à cœur quand y a un anglais qui quand on quitte un boulot etc qui dit « on garde le contact » mais en fait c'est du vent c'est vraiment pour être poli !

509: Ils sont polis ils sont très très polis.

Moi je l'ai pris au sérieux la première fois, j'avais dit « bon au fait je reviens à Leicester » et personne répond bon tant pis oops. (rires)

508 : En fait en France c'est vrai que on aime bien ce côté, c'est le côté français que j'adore, c'est que quand on se lie d'amitié avec quelqu'un ça va toujours être un plaisir de voir cette personne, et si on est en train de manger et qu'il y a quelqu'un qui se pointe à l'improviste on va lui dire « bah prends une chaise mange un morceau avec nous et alors comment ça va ta vie qu'est ce que tu fais etc. » alors qu'en Angleterre c'est vraiment c'est rare déjà d'avoir quelqu'un qui vient à l'improviste chez toi pour boire l'apéro etc mais en fait ça ne se fait pas d'un côté ou de l'autre, faut vraiment organiser qqch et même là y a beaucoup d'anglais qui disent oui oui mais en fait ça veut dire non non. (rires)

157 : Mais en fait quand j'y pense à ça je me dis est ce qu'en France on n'est finalement pas un peu pareil, je me rappelle j'avais mes parents qui avaient des amis américains des amis anglais et même

s'ils parlaient anglais français couramment etc bah on a pas plus garder contact parce qu'on a aussi notre environnement qu'on a grandi avec les amis des parents qui grandissent aussi avec les enfants est ce que finalement c'est pas aussi un peu la même chose en France ? Combien d'anglais vont dire j'ai plein d'mais français etc je suis pas sûr que ce soit la même chose non plus.

509: Non mais ça veut dire qu'en tant qu'expats ou je sais pas comment on s'appelle on est ouais immigrés on est sera toujours un petit peu à part ce qui moi me dérange pas mais c'est sûr.

508 : On peut pas forcer les gens à faire qqch qu'ils ont pas envie de faire c'est surtout ça !

157 : C'est beau, très philosophe !

FG 4

Date : 17 October 2020

Group : Children

Participants : 500, 214, 358

Présentez-vous.

214: J'ai 45 ans je suis-je vis à bristol depuis bientôt 20 ans maintenant j'ai déménagé de paris en 2001 je faisais un stage à airbus ici j'avais fait 2 stages à Airbus ici et j'avais beaucoup aimé la ville et j'avais décidé de revenir m'installer de vivre ici donc j'y suis depuis 20 ans. J'ai deux enfants qui ont 10 et 12 ans et je suis mariée avec un Anglais qu'est-ce que je fais alors j'ai fait pas mal de choses mais là je suis tutrice j'enseigne le français des affaires dans des entreprises françaises ici à Bristol et dans le privé aussi je travaille aussi pour un cabinet médical pas loin d'ici aussi, je fais plein de choses voilà !

500: Je suis établie en Angleterre à Southampton depuis 1986 je suis mariée avec un irlandais de Belfast et on s'est installés tous les deux ici on a eu des enfants moi j'ai été prof toute ma vie professionnelle ici à Southampton et voilà donc j'ai pas mal d'expériences de la vie anglaise pour le moment.

358 : Je suis arrivée en 2014 donc ça fait 6 ans et demi là j'habite à Liverpool mais j'ai aussi habité à Southampton, j'ai aussi habité à Londres et à Cardiff donc dans plusieurs villes du royaume uni. Et moi je suis mariée à un Portugais et on a un petit garçon qui a 2 ans. Professionnellement je suis en transition parce qu'avant je travaillais pour le service client d'une maison d'édition et là je change pour travailler en freelance pour une application de randonnée, je fais de la traduction pour une application de randonnée américaine, donc traduction de l'anglais au français. Je suis en plein en train de changer ce mois-ci.

214: En général on revient toujours soit par l'amour soit à cause du travail ! (Approbations)

Parler français contexte professionnel ?

500: Moi oui j'étais prof enfin directrice d'une MFL department donc on parlait français et espagnol mais par contre j'étais aussi directrice dans l'école secondaire, head of year head of house et ça c'était tout en anglais par contre.

214 : Moi c'est pareil que F. sauf que moi j'étais pas dans une école proprement dit mais je travaillais dans des écoles de langues donc avec des adultes et donc pareil beaucoup bah le français l'anglais et là pareil avec mon travail avec des adultes c'est toujours en français et qq fois traductions en anglais.

358 : Moi je parle en français avec mes clients mais uniquement en anglais avec mes collègues.

Quelles langues parlez-vous dans un contexte privé ?

214 : Y a une grosse communauté française à Bristol donc oui on mais après c'est pas, c'est via les réseaux sociaux c'est pas les soirées entre amis, enfin dans le temps c'était un peu comme ça mais là ça s'est restreint un petit peu plus ouais.

358: Pas du tout. Moi je parle en français avec mon fils mais sinon je parle que en français avec ma famille mais donc sur les réseaux sociaux donc pas en direct.

500: Oui bah moi je parle français avec mes enfants avec les amis mais c'est pareil maintenant les choses sont plus limitées vu la situation sanitaire. Mais bon oui en général je converse avec ma famille et mes amis en France via les réseaux tous les trucs différents où j'écris en français ou je parle en français.

Identité française ?

500 : Je pense que c'est vrai moi on m'a toujours dit mais pourquoi ton accent anglais ne s'est jamais amélioré bah j'ai jamais voulu l'améliorer ça me va très bien mon accent français que j'ai dans mon anglais et y a beaucoup de gens qui m'ont toujours demandé ah bon mais t'habites là depuis 86 et tu fais toujours les mêmes erreurs en anglais t'as toujours le même accent bah oui c'est comme ça !

214 : Ah c'est marrant parce que moi je l'ai pas et on me dit souvent fin moi on m'a toujours dit c'est bizarre on dirait pas que t'es française ! Je l'ai pas non seulement je l'ai pas mais en plus toutes les références que j'utilise c'est des références on va dire anglais que ce soit l'humour britannique tout ça toutes mes références sont anglais, enfin françaises aussi mais j'ai pas on s'étonne toujours de dire c'est marrant on dirait pas que t'es française. On me prend souvent pour une Indienne ou Pakistanaise !

358: J'aimerais bien perdre l'accent mais j'y arrive pas (rires)

214: L'accent français c'est sexy moi je trouve ça sexy !

Brexit avant après, quelles expériences avez-vous eues?

214 : Bah moi ça m'est arrivé une fois quand mes enfants étaient tout petits et je m'en souviendrai toute ma vie parce que c'était assez bizarre, j'emmenais mes enfants dans un parc, j'avais un chien à l'époque, il faisait très chaud mais j'avais mis, attaché le chien parce que j'étais dans le parc avec le chien et je lui avais donné donc de l'eau etc fin bon voilà et donc on était assis avec les enfants ils avaient 4 et 6 ans quelque chose comme ça et y a un groupe de jeunes qui arrivent plutôt adolescents etc qui disent ouais on va appeler le RSPTA pour vous dénoncer parce que vous vous occupez pas très bien de votre chien et j'étais là n'importe quoi mon chien il est là il a de l'eau et tout à coup y avait du monde, y avait mes enfants ils ne comprenaient pas et je leur ai dit mais c'est quoi votre problème j'étais je leur disais d'arrêter et tout machin et y en a qui m'a dit un petit jeune qui m'a dit en anglais « rentre chez toi, rentre dans ton pays t'as rien à faire ici » et tout d'un coup j'étais braiment ça m'a voilà je l'ai regardé et j'étais mais à ton âge de dire un truc comme ça et j'avais les larmes aux yeux je pleurais quoi parce que c'était j'étais vraiment voilà choquée. Et donc ça c'était avant mais ça m'a quand même marquée. Mais après non, pas d'incident de ce genre après c'est un petit peu moi qui ouvre un petit peu quand je vois des choses qui se passent qui sont pas très bien j'ouvre ma bouche on va dire pour rester polie ! (rires) Mais j'ai vu des choses et voilà j'ai dû répondre.

358 : Moi je trouve que c'est pas trop avec les français enfin j'ai vu des choses mais c'était plutôt avec d'autres nationalités genre des européens de l'est peut être avec des indiens je ne sais pas mais je trouve qu'avec les français j'ai jamais vu de différence avec la communauté française. Moi j'ai pas peur de parler français dans la rue par contre mon copain qui est portugais lui il déteste parler en portugais dans la rue lui quand on est dans la rue il veut qu'on parle en anglais parce que lui il se sent pas à l'aise justement des regards mais je trouve que quand on parle en français les anglais ils nous regardent pas spécialement. Je ressens pas le racisme envers les français.

500: Bon bah alors moi je vais vous parler un peu de mon expérience sur plusieurs décennies j'ai toujours travaillé dans une city school les écoles de Southampton secondaires y a toujours eu un racisme latent qui s'est manifesté à plusieurs occasions. Bon finalement 'c'est arrivé plusieurs fois mais ça a toujours été corrigé par l'école ça a toujours été enregistré etc. Bon ça c'était l'école. En dehors de l'école je trouvais que c'était assez c'était plutôt bien d'une façon générale j'ai jamais eu de problèmes chez moi autour de chez moi aucun problème. Mais je trouve que le Brexit oui a exacerbé oui la mentalité raciste de certaines catégories et y en a beaucoup ici à Southampton et je crois que bon parce qu'on a une grande population polonaise dans la ville ça a aussi posé des problèmes et certainement d'autres problèmes pour eux mais moi j'ai remarqué de toute façon et j'ai été abordée dans la rue après le Brexit parce que effectivement je parlais français avec un de mes enfants, bon mes enfants sont des adultes maintenant y en a un qui a 31 ans et l'autre 28 donc ils sont adultes. Et bon cette personne je lui dis mais j'habite là, « mais non c'est pas votre pays votre accent est épouvantable vous venez d'où etc » bon enfin bref je trouve que oui y a eu une exacerbation de ce truc latent qui existait je savais dans mon domaine professionnel mais après Brexit je l'ai rencontré en dehors de mon milieu professionnel. Voilà.

214: Ouais c'est vrai qu'il y avait un racisme silencieux depuis des années mais moi c'est pareil après Brexit je peux pas vous montrer parce que je suis sur l'ordinateur mais à l'extérieur y a ici c'est majorité blanc y a pas beaucoup d'étrangers voilà ici c'est un quartier plutôt voilà mais y a plein de maisons où tout d'un coup y a des union jacks et des drapeaux (approbations) y en a 5/10 tu vois c'est du n'importe quoi ça y était pas avant moi quand je sors pour aller me balader etc je vois et je me dis mais c'est quoi ça. C'est pas ouais c'est ça.

500 : Et puis y compris les voisins bon nous on est dans une zone Brexit et les voisins qui « ah oui oui mais nous on a voté Brexit faut que ça change bien sûr c'est pas vraiment vous ! Vous c'est pas pareil » (approbations) et tout ça c'est malsain c'est des choses que je ne voyais pas avant dans ma vie et qui sont arrivées par Brexit.

214 : Quand il y a eu l'événement de la statue de Colston à Bristol après une semaine après je fais de la moto j'étais dans un club avant mais je connais plein de clubs ici et ils ont fait un espèce de rassemblement pour protéger les autres statuts et des amis à moi que je connaissais qui avaient je me disais qu'ils acceptaient tout le monde et j'ai vu qu'ils étaient alliés avec des gens du BNP, du parti fasciste tu vois c'est quoi l'autre, EDL l'autre mouvement voilà et j'étais choquée je voyais à la télé et je me disais mais ça c'est des gens que je connais avec qui je m'amuse on fait des virées à moto et moi ça m'a … j'ai pas compris et ça me déçoit parce que j'ai des gens autour de moi là des voisins pareil aussi qui ont voté Brexit et tout mais aussi des gens que je connais qui ont voté et voilà je suis déçue, je suis vraiment déçue et voilà d'entendre Boris Johnson qui dit que voilà ils vont sortir sans deal c'est… Fin voilà quoi c'est pas ce que c'était avant.

500: Quand je suis arrivée ici en 1986 on n'étaient pas encore vraiment très intégrés quoi je me souviens très bien qu'il avait fallu passer par les douanes pour ramener mes affaires de paris etc et je vois ça revenir et c'est pas nostalgique pour moi c'est l'horreur je me dis que on fait un pas en arrière

énorme où on avait enfin c'était tellement difficile à l'époque d'envoyer de l'argent de passer des coups de téléphone des trucs comme ça et maintenant je ne sais même pas comment ça va se passer après le Brexit après le 31 décembre et si on va pas revenir à tout ça enfin bon enfin…

Quelles langues parlez-vous avec vos enfants ?

500: Un est né en France et l'autre en Angleterre. Alors le premier est né à Saint Cloud et puis de toute façon on était ici etc le deuxième est né à Southampton. J'ai toujours pris des jeunes filles au pair française parce que je savais très bien que l'influence était énorme pour le développement etc et j'ai donc insisté pour avoir des jeunes filles au pair pendant plusieurs années ce qui a facilité bien entendu pour eux d'être bilingues mais cependant je mettrai un petit bémol pour le deuxième y a quand même une influence anglaise sur la langue qui est quand même beaucoup plus importante que le premier et le deuxième il comprend tout à faire il parle etc mais il a un accent plus prononcé que le premier enfin tous les deux sont bilingues, trilingues ils parlent espagnol aussi. Ils s'en servent pas forcément dans la vie professionnelle. L'un est un prof d'anglais mais enfin il fait aussi foreign language et le deuxième est ingénieur civil donc oui qq fois pour des petits trucs machins pour traduire des trucs mais voilà ils ont tous les deux leurs papiers français et irlandais puisque leur père est irlandais.

214 : Bah moi les miens ils ont… ah pardon je te coupe toujours la parole je suis désolée ! Je vais faire vite moi les miens ont 10 et 12 ans au début j'avais commencé à leur parler français et après je dois vous avouer que j'ai arrêté pas parce que je voulais pas mais parce que je travaillais énormément et donc je rentrais très tard le soir et non j'ai même pas d'excuses mais ils sont paresseux avec leur français c'est un français vraiment comme on dit en anglais pidgin french, donc voilà j'ai pas vraiment je m'en mais bon ils l'apprennent à l'école et tout ils s'en sortent bien mais je ne pourrais pas dire qu'ils sont bilingues et j'en prends entière responsabilité.

358 : Donc moi je parle en français avec mon fils mais il va à la garderie en anglais donc son anglais est bien meilleur que son français même si je lui ai toujours parlé en français.

Changeriez la façon dont vous parlez à vos enfants à cause du Brexit ?

214 : Bah oui parce que moi de toute façon j'ai l'intention de rentrer et je le fais en partie pour moi parce que j'ai envie de rentrer mais je le fais aussi parce que je veux que mes enfants voient la culture française et pourquoi pas étudient aussi en France. Donc c'est pour ça que mais non absolument c'est important pour eux enfin pour moi et pour eux.

500 : Oui mais finalement on ne choisit pas, moi y en a un qui a fait des études en France…

214 : Ah mais oui oui j'ai pas, je les force pas donc pour moi eux ils font leurs études ici mais je veux leur donner l'opportunité aussi de…

500 : D'avoir le choix.

214 : Oui voilà d'avoir le choix. Alors moi ma situation je vais vous expliquer aussi parce qu'on est pas j'ai on a l'intention, on se sépare moi et mon mari donc ils vont rester ici pendant leur scolarité pendant 1 an et moi je m'installe en France et si ça leur convient là bas eh bah ils iront à l'école là bas mais je ne les force pas.

Vos enfants vous ont-ils déjà parlé de leur identité ?

214: Bah c'est vrai qu'ils ont posé la question pas mal de fois en disant nous on est plus qu'anglais qu'on est français parce que leur français est pas super mais je leur explique que c'est deux

nationalités différentes c'est un mélange des deux quoi. Et après ils prennent ce qu'ils veulent mais non ils n'ont pas de problèmes identitaires proprement dit ils savent très bien que moi je suis d'origine algérienne que mes parents sont algériens voilà qu'ils sont musulmans enfin voilà ils comprennent et que leur papa il est du nord de l'Angleterre etc non voilà ils n'ont pas vraiment de crise identitaire comme moi j'avais fait quand j'étais plus jeune où je ne savais pas si j'étais française ou enfin voilà moi j'avais vraiment ouais moi c'était un problème. Parce que à la maison on me disait que j'étais algérienne et à l'école on me disait bah non mais t'es née en France t'es française et c'était compliqué excusez l'expression mais j'avais vraiment le derrière entre deux chaises. Et c'était nan c'était difficile pour moi. Vraiment. Mais pour eux non.

Quelque chose à ajouter ?

500 : Non c'est bien c'était très intéressant

358 : Au niveau de la langue pour les enfants qui sont nés en Angleterre vu que l'anglais c'est une langue dominante ils vont toujours la parler comme des natifs donc je pense pas qu'ils aient la peur fin qu'il faut arrêter de parler français à la maison parce que l'anglais va toujours l'emporter à partir du moment où ils sont, même à la maison ils vont parler anglais comme des anglais.

500 : Je crois que on créé nos propres règles en fin de compte moi-même quand les enfants me parlaient en anglais je répondais en français c'était systématique donc on créé notre propre environnement pour eux de la façon qui nous convient le mieux et si ça nous convient mieux pour un milieu familial que ce soit en anglais à ce moment-là oui effectivement le français va souffrir mais bon je pense que c'est quand même important qu'ils conservent leur identité à travers la langue mais pas seulement la langue parlée mais aussi écrite et tout ce qui va avec la culture

214 : Oui tout ce qui va avec la culture française

500 : Voilà et ça c'est et les contacts avec la France telle qu'elle est maintenant c'est important, moi les miens ils ont fait leurs 3 jours ils ont leurs papiers ils votent.

358 : C'est surtout important pour la famille enfin je ne sais pas comment vos familles réagissent mais pour moi ma famille pour eux c'est important que mon fils parle bien français quoi je sais pas comment ils vivent le fait toi que tes enfants parlent pas…

214 : Ah non mais t'as raison moi ma mère mes parents sont très en colère après moi parce que j'ai pas forcé et c'est compliqué/

500 : Ils parlent pas anglais ?

214 : Non mes parents ils parlent arabe kabyle français mais pas l'anglais ça leur est difficile et là je sais que ma mère elle m'engueule tout le temps elle me dit je comprends pas pourquoi tu leur as pas appris le français ! Mais ils le parlent mais si tu veux c'est plus facile pour eux l'anglais. Le papa il leur parle anglais et moi c'est pareil j'avais pas… Non c'est vrai c'est un gros problème. Je me fais tout le temps engueuler par mes parents. Ah non mais ma mère elle est vraiment, et puis y a mon père aussi derrière qui en rajoute mais ma mère elle est pas contente du tout ! C'est vrai que c'est problématique et je me rends compte maintenant c'est dommage mais j'espère qu'à l'école ils vont pouvoir s'améliorer parce qu'ils prennent des cours de français mais c'est pas encore ils sont pas là quoi ils sont pas bilingues quoi puis ils ont 10 ans et 12 ans j'aurais dû commencer vraiment très jeunes, enfin je l'ai fait mais j'ai pas, j'ai lâché, c'est pas simple du tout parce que je bossais vraiment énormément je rentrais très tard le soir j'avais trois jobs mais après j'ai pas d'excuses non plus c'est pas, c'est possible c'est faisable y a plein de mamans qui l'ont fait….

500 : C'est pas des excuses de toute façon il faut faire comme on veut comme on peut, les enfants ils arrivent toujours à communiquer avec leurs grand parents.

214 : Non mais après les enfants voilà ils arrivent à communiquer avec leurs cousins y a pas de problèmes c'est pas ils sont pas non plus voilà maintenant avec google translate tout ça ils peuvent faire des trucs et ils peuvent se comprendre, non mais vraiment c'était compliqué et puis le papa il parlait tout le temps anglais donc ils étaient tout le temps ensemble à la maison le soir donc moi je rentre j'ai pas envie de parler français quoi c'est plus facile pour moi voilà.

FG 5

Date : 17 October 2020

Group: Before 2016

Participants : 134, 253

Avez-vous des occasions de parler français dans votre vie quotidienne?

134 : Oui j'ai des amis français qui habitent en Angleterre aussi pas beaucoup c'est plus des Anglais parce que ça fait longtemps que je suis ici et je dirais que même avec des amis français on parle des fois en anglais parce qu'ils ont des copains des copines qui ne parlent pas français donc on parle des fois plus anglais avec eux aussi ça dépend, sur WhatsApp par exemple on parle anglais mais quand on est en face à face et qu'il n'y a pas les autres on parle français.

Raisons de parler anglais avec un francophone ?

134 : Ça dépend des fois ça arrive qu'on parle anglais comme ça y a pas vraiment de, ça sort anglais quoi mais après non c'est juste si on est au restaurant ??

Avez-vous remarqué un changement dans l'attitude des Britanniques après le Brexit ?

134 : J'ai la malchance d'avoir un accent français très fort, j'aimerais bien le perdre mais je le perds pas, mais donc parfois quand je parle anglais avec mon accent français ils savent déjà que je suis français donc ils sont pas trop négatifs par rapport à ça mais c'est vrai que au travail qu'on m'a déjà fait la remarque des fois avant le Brexit qu'il fallait que j'évite de parler français avec mes collègues français qu'il fallait que je parle anglais même si y avait des anglais qui étaient pas dans la conversation tu vois, enfin vous voyez, mais qui étaient à côté on m'a dit de parler anglais parce que sinon des fois ils le prenaient mal et ils faisaient un petit peu comme si on parlait d'eux alors qu'on parlait pas d'eux donc ça faisait un peu négatif. Mais après y a pas vraiment de négatif, par rapport à mes collègues qui sont plus polonais ou roumains on me fait pas de remarques, c'est plutôt positif dans l'ensemble.

134 : J'ai plus l'habitude de parler anglais maintenant et même quand on est avec les Français on parle anglais on essaye de parler plus anglais quand y a des gens autour de nous, je dirais qu'on parle un peu plus anglais, des fois quand on est dans la rue on essaye de parler anglais parce qu'on veut pas que les gens se retournent sur nous. Je dirais que c'est un peu plus anglais mais pas vraiment trop négatif.

Comptez-vous rester à l'avenir

134 : Ça fait longtemps que je suis ici, j'ai acheté une maison donc c'est un peu difficile de partir comme ça du jour au lendemain, mais c'est vrai que des fois au travail on en parle beaucoup, on a le 4 o'clock on appelle ça le Brexit Time, c'est là où on commence un petit peu à parler Brexit y a un

collègue au travail au bureau qui a voté Brexit et on commence à le ??? j'y pense pour être franc entre l'aspect social, transformer mon permis en permis français, quand je vais en France j'ai plus le côté social parce qu'il vont annuler l'assurance européenne, même pour parler avec ma famille si on n'a plus l'illimité pour parler ça change donc c'est vrai que j'y pense pour l'instant ça va pas arriver mais faudra voir comment ça change l'an prochain, et puis avec Covid qui est arrivé y a eu pas mal de licenciements donc c'est peut être si jamais ils me licenciaient j'aimerais pas mais si ça arrive ça peut être une possibilité.

253

Pouvez-vous vous présenter ?

253 : Je suis arrivée au Royaume-Uni il y a 6 ans de ça, presque exactement. Je suis venue pour les études pour faire une thèse et maintenant je travaille toujours en Angleterre à l'université je fais un travail de post doctorat.

Quand utilisez-vous la langue française ? Dans le milieu professionel ?

253: Alors j'ai une collègue française mais on parle toujours en anglais au travail, y a que dernièrement j'ai envie de dire comme on fait des meetings en visio un par un finalement on utilise le français parce qu'on est que toutes les deux mais sinon au travail c'est l'anglais et au début de ma thèse j'avais aussi beaucoup de contacts en France pour avoir des échantillons on va dire donc j'avais pas mal de contacts dans le cadre du travail mais c'était des collaborations étrangères avec des contacts en France.

Dans un contexte privé?

253: Oui j'ai beaucoup d'amis français donc on se parle toujours en français à part s'il y a des gens qui ne parlent pas français dans le lot dans ce cas là on parle en anglais y a aucun problème pour aucun de nous en fait.

Contextes dans lesquels vous ne parleriez pas en français avec un francophone ?

253: Non c'est vraiment s'il y a des gens qui ne peuvent pas suivre la conversation en français, dans un autre contexte je vois pas trop d'autres raisons pourquoi je parlerais… Ouais.

Parlez-vous « suffisamment » français ? Identité, êtes-vous attachée à votre langue ?

253 : Oui je pense que le français la preuve est que j'ai beaucoup d'amis français même en étant à l'étranger aussi quelque chose que j'ai vu en arrivant ici c'est que je me suis mis à écouter beaucoup plus de musique française qu'avant euh alors qu'avant j'écoutais vraiment tous les trucs anglais tout ça mais maintenant je sens le besoin d'écouter des choses en français euh lire je lis toujours des livres en français aussi euh j'ai pas forcément envie de lire en anglais parce que je lis suffisamment au travail au quotidien alors ouais.

Différence avant après Brexit par rapport à la langue ?

253 : Euh non juste dernièrement mais finalement c'est pas lié au Brexit c'est lié plus au covid où j'étais dans un sorte de parc national avec des amis français donc on parlait français et y a cette dame anglaise qui est venue « mais vous parlez anglais ? qu'est-ce que vous faites là ? Les gens ils viennent ils se font pas tester ils ramènent le virus » on lui a dit « bah en fait on habite ici donc euh » donc voilà ça été agressif, pas lié au Brexit mais ça a quand même cette notion de voyage d'être étranger et d'être regardé comme étant… J'ai un environnement très international donc il y a très peu de discriminations vis-à-vis des gens qui ne sont pas natifs anglais dans mon environnement.

Vous êtes à Bristol ?

253 : Oui, à Bristol avec Airbus et EDF y a énormément de français.

Qqch à ajouter ? Souhaitez-vous rester ?

253 : Alors de base j'étais pas venue pour rester bon ça fait 6 ans que je suis là mais c'est pas dans mes plans de rester, donc pas beaucoup plus. Bien sûr le Brexit y joue parce que quand on était dans l'incertitude à savoir si faudra un visa ce genre de choses moi j'ai toujours dit si du jour au lendemain ils nous imposent un visa je préfère quitter le pays que de ne me sentir plus accueillie en fait… donc bon là y a le settle status donc ça allait à peu près quand même plus soft on va dire la transition mais on sent quand même que ça a un peu changé, je trouve qu'il y a beaucoup de gens qui sont partis et y en a beaucoup moins qui sont arrivés aussi depuis ce vote-là. J'étais là pour le vote du Brexit, j'étais là pour la période de transition et toute la période de transition les gens qui étaient là depuis longtemps ont décidé de rentrer alors qu'il y a avait des fois des gens qui voulaient faire leur vie ici donc… En tout cas le vote du Brexit ça a été un coup dur pour tout le monde on va dire, ça a été vécu moi au travail j'ai vu des collègues pleurer que j'avais jamais vu pleurer, même s'excuser voilà du Brexit quoi donc c'est quand même un impact important.

Est-ce que vous arrêteriez de parler français si la situation tournait mal ? Quelle est votre position là-dessus.

253 : Non ma famille est en France donc si je veux leur parler je leur parle en français.

Mais par exemple dans la rue vous n'arrêteriez pas non plus ?

253 : Non. Non je n'ai pas l'impression que ça ait un impact sur ma façon de parler au quotidien c'est vraiment l'environnement si y a des français ou pas qui fait que je parle français mais pas le regard des autres.

FG 6

Date : 29 October 2020

Group : Before 2016

Participants : 47, 160,472, 375

Présentez-vous.

375 : Je suis en Angleterre depuis 2003 donc ça fait très longtemps j'avais 15 ans quand on a déménagé avec ma famille, ma sœur mon père et ma mère et le noyau familial se trouve toujours en Angleterre ma sœur et moi à Cambridge et mes parents à York, et ça va maintenant faire plus de temps enfin j'ai passé plus longtemps de ma vie en Angleterre que en France.

47 : Je suis arrivée en Angleterre fin 2012 donc ça fait 8 ans je trouvais qu'il n'y avait pas beaucoup de travail et d'opportunités en France donc j'ai pour ça que je suis venue ici et je suis venue à Londres et j'ai emménagé à Birmingham y a 2 ans parce que je trouvais que londrès était trop cher en fait donc en fait je travaillais vraiment comme une folle je cumulais trois jobs en même temps et à la fin du mois j'arrivais même pas à faire des économies donc j'ai décidé de venir à Birmingham là où c'est moins cher et ici en fait je suis prof de français et consultante en recrutement voilà.

472 : Je suis venue en Angleterre en 2013 j'ai déménagé plusieurs fois en Angleterre je suis au départ venue pour un travail que j'ai trouvé à distance, j'ai au départ passé 18 mois dans le sud de l'Angleterre et j'ai ensuite déménagé à Newcastle en 2014 et j'ai ensuite passé 2 ans à York et je suis

maintenant retournée à côté de Newcastle où j'ai rencontré mon copain il y a 3 ans donc pour l'instant j'ai l'intention de rester.

160 : Je suis à Londres depuis 2014 mais je suis déjà venue j'ai vécu 6 mois à Cambridge avant et un an à Londres 1 an dans le passé. J'ai fait les langues étrangères donc pour moi c'était vraiment une évidence que j'aille vivre à l'étranger en dehors de la France. En général c'était Londres un peu pour les mêmes raisons que M. pour le travail juste après l'université j'étais diplômée et ça me paraissait évident qu'en France c'est juste trop difficile ou en tout cas on n'a pas la force qu'on a ici c'est que d'un côté donc c'était l'une des raisons et est-ce que je pense y rester ? Oui. Après j'adore voyager donc je dis pas que j'y resterai en continu mais oui je me vois pas du tout rester en France. Et je travaille en logistique. Voilà.

Français au travail ?

47: moi dans le cadre de mon travail du coup j'utilise beaucoup le français vu que j'enseigne le français en collège et je donne aussi des cours de français le soir en tutoring tous les jours donc voilà et en plus de ça je suis consultante en recrutement donc je recrute des nannies qui sont pour la plupart françaises donc du coup même quand je fais des entretiens avec les filles donc du coup c'est en français donc du coup dans le cadre de mon travail oui, et dans la vie de tous les jours du coup c'est l'anglais quoi. Après j'ai pas mal d'amis français donc c'est aussi pas mal en français finalement, et après mon copain en anglais parce qu'il est anglais et ma coloc en anglais parce qu'elle est fin voilà quoi, donc même dans le cadre privé c'est anglais mais beaucoup français.

472: Moi c'est l'inverse au travail je parle pas du tout français, j'ai travaillé dans plusieurs entreprises j'ai beaucoup bougé mais c'était toujours l'anglais. J'ai jamais été dans des grandes villes donc peut être qu'il y a aussi un impact là-dessus donc j'utilise pas du tout le français dans le travail, ici mon copain est anglais donc à part de parler français au téléphone avec ma famille j'utilise pas beaucoup le français en fait !

160 : Pour moi ouais je dirais que c'est plutôt anglais aussi c'est rare que je parle français. J'avoue que comme j'ai fait les langues moi je suis un peu en mode j'aime pas parler avec des français en général pas que j'aime pas mais j'ai toujours eu l'idée qu'il fallait rester avec les locaux parce que je suis perfectionniste avec la langue ce qui ne marche pas vraiment parce que je pense qu'on devient mauvais dans les deux langues mais bref c'est l'idée à la base. Du coup ouais non mes meilleurs potes enfin surtout ma meilleure pote est anglaise donc c'est privilégié l'anglais mais après si j'ai rencontré des français ici mais après souvent je trouve qu'il partent donc j'ai jamais eu je parle français régulièrement, et au boulot c'est anglais anglais ouais. Très rarement je parle en français en fait.

375 : Moi c'est pareil du coup au boulot c'est en anglais tout le temps mais mon mari est français donc on parle en français même si ces derniers temps l'anglais s'immisce dans les conversations de plus en plus que ce soit des petits « oh that's okay » des petites expressions par ci par là c'est vrai qu'on fait pas trop gaffe quoi et autrement oui parler français avec la famille mais sinon l'anglais c'est 80% 90% de la journée.

Dans quels contextes parleriez-vous anglais avec un Français ?

(375 et 160 commencent à répondre en même temps)

160: Moi…ah vas-y, vas-y.

375 : Si quand y a des français enfin ça arrive de moins en moins enfin je sais que au début ou pendant mes études ou que ça faisait pas longtemps qu'on avait emménagé si on a des français

autour et qu'il y a des anglais je fais attention de pas exclure les locaux même si je sais par exemple on a des amis elle elle est française et lui il est anglais et pour l'instant son niveau de français c'est pas trop trop ça et très souvent elle bah ça nous arrive naturellement on parle en français alors j'essaye de faire attention peut être des fois de dévier la conversation en anglais mais ouais des fois ça cause un petit peu de tensions mais bon j'essaye de faire attention.

47: Dans le cadre de mon travail par exemple dans mon département on est deux français et trois anglais donc forcément voilà avec les français on va parler en français mais voilà dès qu'il y a un collègue anglais qui rentre dans le bureau ou quoi que ce soit on va de suite parler en anglais par respect finalement. Mais c'est tout.

472 : J'ai pas forcément d'autres exemples non plus effectivement c'est si y a d'autres anglais qui parlent pas français autour parler anglais pour respecter je pense pas forcément à d'autres exemples dans lequel ça s'applique.

160 : Pour moi c'est plus la même chose que ce que L. disait quand je suis avec une copine française on n'arrive plus trop à parler français donc naturellement ça va venir en anglais en fait mais c'est pas forcément voulu mais du coup voilà après ça m'est arrivé dans mon ancienne entreprise on était beaucoup d'étrangers donc parfois on parlait en français si y avait des français mais c'était plus le plaisir en fait de parler la langue mais effectivement si y avait des gens autour ou qu'on voulait pas se faire comprendre c'est arrivé mais sinon on essaye de parler anglais.

47 : Avec 160, c'est vrai qu'en fait bah moi ça fait 8 ans que j'habite ici et même si j'enseigne le français et que je parle beaucoup le français y a quand même des mots qui ne vont pas du tout venir naturellement qui vont me venir en anglais donc ça m'est arrivé tellement de fois d'aller chercher dans le dictionnaire de l'anglais au français et c'est la honte. (approbations, rires) Y a vraiment des mots qui ne viennent pas en français en fait c'est hallucinant ça fait presque peur ! Les gens pensent qu'on fait exprès mais en fait non pas du tout.

Quelle place a votre identité française dans votre vie? La langue française ?

472: Je pense que pour mon cas je pense plus avoir un élément, surtout en Angleterre, vu qu'il y a beaucoup d'anglais qui parlent pas d'autres langues, le fait qu'on se dit qu'on ait pas une autre identité quelque part mais qu'on ait voilà qu'on puisse faire autre chose que parler anglais, pas forcément dans le sens enfin j'ai pas l'impression que ce soit le fait que ce soit français mais que certaines autres personnes se disent « ah tu parles une autre langue tu as une autre culture » plus la différence par rapport aux anglais qui pour qui il est plus rare d'avoir une autre langue.

375: Moi je pense que la langue c'est un élément mais par exemple tout ce qui touche à la bouffe et tout je m'identifie énormément à ça également donc je dirais que c'est pas forcément que le fait de parler français c'est une partie dans l'ensemble.

160 : Ouais pour moi je pense qu'effectivement, encore encore une fois parce que j'ai fait les langues, donc je suis très attachée aux mots et je peux passer des journées à parler à propos des langues et à comparer, et du coup depuis que je vis ici depuis maintenant 6 ans je trouve que je vois quand même encore plus les différences et qu'effectivement la langue française c'est vrai j'ai l'impression que oui ça m'identifie dans le sens que on construit les phrases vraiment différemment donc des fois ça m'arrive de me dire que c'est vraiment une autre mentalité, c'est vraiment une autre façon de penser dans le boulot c'est pareil quand j'écris des mails en anglais je sais que je suis pas native et je sais que ma tournure de phrase serait différente en français et je pense que j'aurais même du mal à m'adapter pour travailler dans une entreprise française donc oui que dans un sens la

langue en elle-même fait que je suis française et je suis attachée à la langue. Et même nos phrases sont vraiment longues par exemple, et même en anglais enfin avec une copine on parlait de ça qui est anglaise c'est quand on dit des mots nous en français je crois quand on parle on est très attaché à la signification des mots alors que les anglais sont attachés au contexte donc j'ai pas mal galéré quand je suis arrivée ici pour moi ils me disaient un mot je le prenais pour acquis enfin je sais pas je pouvais prendre quelque chose mal alors que dans le contexte ah non non ça voulait rien dire, donc du coup oui je pense quand même que la langue pour moi c'est une part de mon identité.

47 : Je suis d'accord avec ce que vient de dire C. effectivement quand on me dit « oh it's amazing it's great it's wonderful » nous peut être que dans le même contexte en français on utiliserait pas du tout le même vocabulaire, donc quand on me disait au départ je me souviens à l'époque j'avais passé une interview et pour une poste dans une famille australienne à l'époque j'étais nanny et quand je suis partie ils m'ont juste dit « oh you're amazing you're great blablabla » et après ils m'ont pas prise je me suis dit c'est bizarre ils m'avaient dit que j'étais exceptionnelle etc donc dépendamment dans le même contexte on utiliserait pas du tout le même vocabulaire en fait c'est tout à fait vrai. Par exemple dans le cadre du travail au départ pour écrire des mails je devais demander à mon collègue français qui est là depuis très longtemps de m'aider, parce qu'en fait la façon dont nous on écrit nos mails ils peuvent penser qu'on est un peu malpolis en fait, qu'on n'est pas assez polis et eux ils sont tellement polis dans les mails il faut vraiment « best regards, I hope this finds you well » enfin voilà des choses comme ça en fait.

Avant/après Brexit ?

47 : Donc je pense que moi j'ai noté 3 choses importantes en fait, la 1ère des choses juste avant le non juste après le Brexit donc en juin 2016 j'ai passé un entretien à Kingston University pour faire le PGCE, équivalent du CAPES, langues donc espagnol français et quelques jours après donc c'était après le vote du Brexit ils m'ont écrit pour dire au final on ne propose plus le PGCE langues à l'université à cause du Brexit, donc ça faisait que quelques jours après finalement. Donc déjà ça c'est la première des choses qui m'a frappé et c'était vraiment juste après le Brexit. Après la deuxième des choses toujours dans le cadre du travail c'est qu'en ce moment il y a vraiment un problème dans le recrutement des profs de langues en fait parce que normalement on a des profs qui viennent d'Italie d'Espagne etc de différents pays européens pour enseigner les langues mais du coup y a moins cela donc le recrutement des professeurs de langues est vraiment un problème en ce moment et depuis 4 ans du coup et dans le cadre de mon autre job du coup en ce moment et ça c'est plus depuis on va dire 2 ans il est plus difficile de recruter des nannies françaises donc j'ai des facilités à recruter par exemple je sais pas des italiennes ou des espagnoles beaucoup plus mais recruter des nannies françaises en ce moment c'est beaucoup plus difficile. Y a moins de candidates mais du coup on sait pas en fait est ce que justement c'est à cause du Brexit donc les françaises ne veulent plus forcément venir ici être nounou, on ne sait pas, mais en tout cas avant le Brexit fin je recevais peut être 50 CV de françaises par jour des fois, mais là y a des semaines où si on reçoit 2 CV c'est bien, donc y a une énorme différence. Et aussi j'avais noté qu'il y a moins de programmes de langues en fait donc de façon générale à l'université et dernier point que j'ai noté toujours dans le cadre du travail c'est que les élèves, les Anglais du coup, choisissent beaucoup moins les langues comme option au brevet et au bac ces 4 dernières années y a vraiment un comment on dit en tout cas y a moins d'élèves qui choisissent les langues comme option. Donc ça c'est les choses principales que j'ai remarquées durant ces 4 dernières années finalement. Dans notre établissement avant y avait allemand espagnol et français donc là à partir de cette année l'allemand et l'espagnol c'est la dernière année et on ne va garder que le français parce qu'il n'y a pas assez d'élèves qui choisissent de toute façon l'allemand et l'espagnol donc on va juste garder le français puisque c'est obligatoire au niveau du programme.

160 : Je travaille en logistique du coup on est hyper impactés par le Brexit depuis le début donc c'est plus professionnel effectivement c'est une grande question donc même maintenant je travaille au département de la santé par exemple et on sait pas covid + Brexit c'est quand même la grande question pour janvier. Sinon personnellement je me souviens de mon sentiment au lendemain du Brexit où je me suis sentie comme une étrangère vraiment je m'étais jamais sentie comme ça avant donc ça m'a fait bizarre et un peu je me sens honteuse de dire ça parce que ceux qui sont réfugiés et tout ça qu'est ce qu'ils doivent vivre dans leur vie quitter leur pays et tout ça je me suis dit nous on a de la chance qu'on choisisse mais eux ils choisissent pas vraiment que c'était mon ressenti. Après je crois qu'en 6 ans y a eu deux expériences où y a eu du racisme contre les français où j'étais dedans mais on était un grand groupe de français et j'arrive pas à me souvenir si c'était avant ou après le Brexit mais je pense juste que c'était des personnes idiotes comme ça arrive partout mais sinon non j'ai pas eu de, y a eu plein de blagues où j'allais me marier avec tous mes potes anglais ou anglaise enfin des choses comme ça donc j'ai trouvé ça mignon parce que je voulais rester donc c'était des blagues comme ça. Mais sinon non je me souviens que mon entreprise à l'époque m'avaient dit qu'ils m'aideraient si Brexit pour les papiers mais je me souviens pas vraiment de changement pour le moment ce que j'entends c'est d'actualité c'est que apparemment j'ai pas réalisé mais c'est la grande question la semaine prochaine avec les élections américaines si l'Angleterre va se rapprocher des états unis et j'ai peur pour ça si vraiment Trump gagne j'ai peur que là on verra un changement énorme dans la mentalité qui est déjà un pays anglophone déjà et comme on connait tout ça j'ai un peu peur que là l'impact sera énorme par rapport au Brexit et pour nous et notre avenir ici mais bon pour l'instant je sais pas trop.

472 : Moi j'ai pas forcement eu de noté de changement directement on va dire effectivement le lendemain ou les semaines qui ont suivi y a eu pas mal forcement de discussions de commentaires de choses comme ça, après je vivais déjà dans le nord de l'Angleterre et j'avais plus eu de pas non plus de racisme mais de commentaires sur le fait que je sois française dans le sud par rapport au nord donc je pense que dans le nord vu qu'il y a un petit peu moins d'étrangers peut être que dans le sud les gens sont plus, bon y a forcément des idiots y en a partout, mais les gens sont globalement un peu plus ouverts d'esprit et le fait que j'avais été en Angleterre depuis plusieurs années avant le Brexit la plupart des commentaires que j'ai eu c'était plutôt du genre oh mais t'es là depuis longtemps en gros c'est pas contre toi quoi c'est pas contre les gens comme toi le fait qu'on soit là depuis longtemps c'est toujours la remarque des anglais mais tu es déjà là tu es installée donc tu as pas de raisons de t'inquiéter fin j'ai pas forcément eu de remarques négatives ou après y a forcément les blagues de c'est bon tu peux rester on va pas te mettre dehors les choses comme ça mais c'est pas non plus complétement négatif quoi.

375 : Oui moi c'est pareil j'ai pas eu de mauvaise expérience on va dire après l'annonce le vote, mais ouais si j'ai quand même eu ce ressenti de qu'il y a vraiment quelque chose qui changeait autant avant je me posais pas du tout la question d'être française en Angleterre vu qu'e plus déjà ça faisait déjà très longtemps que j'étais là je me sentais bien intégrée et c'est vrai que maintenant je le remets quand même un peu plus en question et c'est limite si je m'attache pas un peu plus à mon passeport français alors qu'avant je me posais pas la question c'était le, un des grands bénéfices de l'Europe c'est voilà on se sent européens on se sent français mais on se sent aussi appartenir à quelque chose de plus grand. Mais par rapport à ce que j'ai vécu à d'autres expériences j'ai trouvé que c'était beaucoup plus envers enfin les aspects négatifs les commentaires et tout ça tout ce que je voyais c'était plus envers les gens venant de l'Europe de l'est donc beaucoup de polonais tout ça enfin des gens dans mon entourage qui ont vécu des choses négatives mais moi spécifiquement non ça a s'est plutôt bien passé c'est pareil vu que j'étais implantée depuis longtemps ça les

commentaires que les gens faisaient c'était mais toi ça t'affecte pas trop ça fait longtemps que t'es là mais ça a fait quelque chose quand même.

Identité ?

375 : Non enfin je pense pour l'instant mon mari et moi oui ça va faire 10 ans on s'est connus ici on bosse tous les deux ici on est bien établis donc pour l'instant on n'a pas l'intention de partir, mais c'est vrai la question que les gens posent beaucoup enfin surtout une copine qui est elle bulgare mais qui a appliqué à la nationalité britannique enfin moi je me vois pas trop encore dans cette démarche là parce que j'associe mon passeport à ma culture et mon identité mais bon c'est pas défini pour l'instant on se sent bien à Cambridge on a l'intention d'avoir une famille bientôt donc oui on se dit les 10 prochaines années mais bon c'était ce que mes parents se disaient aussi y a presque 20 ans mais bon on sait jamais.

47 : Tu peux répéter la question ? Bah de toute façon dans mon travail ils ont besoin que je parle français tout le temps que je parle de ma culture et comment on vit en France donc non pas forcément. Mais après je suis d'accord avec L. j'associe mon passeport à ma culture à ma langue à mon identité donc je demanderai jamais la nationalité anglaise tout simplement parce que je ne me sentirai jamais anglaise, je suis fière d'être française je suis française et du coup voilà même si jamais un jour je admettons je me marie avec un anglais et du coup j'ai des enfants anglais je ne demanderai pas la nationalité parce que je ne me sens pas anglaise. Mais par rapport aux européens de l'est effectivement quand y a eu donc juste après le Brexit donc des attaques parfois physiques contre des Polonais moi ça m'avait vraiment choquée et un jour j'avais demandé à un Anglais mais pourquoi en fait c'est quoi le problème avec les Polonais en fait j'ai demandé et on m'a répondu c'est parce qu'ils sont nombreux. C'est parce qu'ils sont 1 million en fait moi je savais pas. C'est triste quoi juste parce qu'ils sont nombreux c'est vraiment bizarre mais bon.

472 : Oui moi j'ai à peu près la même expérience c'est quelque chose que j'ai jamais compris dans le nord de l'Angleterre c'est pareil j'ai eu beaucoup la remarque juste après le Brexit en disant c'est pas contre les français qu'on a voté c'est surtout contre les européens de l'est j'ai jamais compris pourquoi et j'ai fait la même remarque j'ai demandé plusieurs fois à des anglais quelle différence j'ai avec des gens qui viennent de Pologne qui travaillent autant que nous qui font exactement la même chose mais les anglais peuvent pas expliquer pourquoi donc c'est toujours bizarre enfin je ne comprends pas. Après effectivement je pense que vu qu'on n'a pas cette expérience et que en soi on est quand même les bienvenus en Angleterre je vrai que je considérerai pas quitter l'Angleterre par rapport à ça si j'étais effectivement dans le cas où ils voudraient pas de mon origine et de ma culture je pense que c'est sûr que je me poserais la question après j'ai pas la même approche par rapport à la nationalité moi au contraire je suis en train de faire les papiers pour avoir la nationalité anglaise plus d'un côté légal on va dire justement dans l'idée d'avoir des enfants et d'acheter une maison plus, je pense que je le considérais pas avant le Brexit mais maintenant que le Brexit est passé je me suis dit que je préférerais avoir la nationalité anglaise pour avoir cette protection pas du tout dans le sens de perdre la culture française parce que de toute façon on reste français et ça changera rien ouais on sera toujours français mais voilà après c'est plus dans le sens où vu que j'ai l'intention de rester je préfère encore avoir la nationalité anglaise en plus de française.

160: Moi pareil surtout ce que vous dites sur les polonais moi ce que j'entends ici les échos en tout cas mes colocs anglais mes potes ils sont tous à l'unanimité à me dire en rigolant que de toute façon les anglais ne veulent pas faire le boulot que les immigrés font ici donc ils disent dans l'hôtellerie les Costa les Café Nero partout ils rigolent quand ils entendent même je pense ceux qui ont voté Brexit ils disent bah non mais c'est ridicule parce que de toure façon tous les immigrés sous-entendu les

nous les européens y compris les polonais font les boulots que les anglais, enfin c'est ce qu'ils disent moi je sais pas, que les anglais ne veulent pas faire. Donc c'est assez ironique parce qu'on va voir ce qui va se passer après si vraiment y a un exode. Sinon je suis tout à fait d'accord avec Ci pour la nationalité moi la première chose que j'ai fait en fait c'est regarder si y avait la double nationalité et on peut donc je renierai jamais si je devais choisir entre français et un autre je le ferai jamais amis comme je sais qu'on peut avoir deux ça ne me dérange pas du tout mais effectivement en fait avec la pandémie et peut être le Brexit mais surtout la pandémie j'ai réalisé que j'étais française et que je serai jamais anglaise et peut être qu'avant je me disais j'ai tellement vécu ici que ça y est je suis un peu anglaise mais au final je serai toujours française, et effectivement je pense que si on me faisait sentir que j'étais pas la bienvenue, après moi j'ai l'air plutôt indienne, je peux avoir d'autre réflexions aussi mais ironiquement j'ai plus de réflexions en France parce qu'on m'a toujours fait sentir que j'étais pas française de par ma couleur de peau donc est ce que c'est pour ça que je suis partie je pense pas mais bon c'est vraiment une bonne question si j'habitais dans un pays où on me faisais sentir que je ne suis pas la bienvenue je me poserais des questions je pense que j'irais en Irlande parce que j'ai vécu là-bas et que ils sont cool parce que j'adore juste parler une langue étrangère je me vois pas du tout rentrer en France mais après effectivement comme disait Ci je pense que les français sont vraiment bien vus même si on se tape des réflexions des fois vous les français vous êtes arrogants tout ça je pense qu'on nous fait aussi sentir qu'on est arrogants parce que aussi on a toujours des bons compliments, on adore la langue etc donc je ne vois pas cette situation arriver mais bon on ne sait jamais !

FG 7

Date : 31 October 2020

Group : Before 2016

Participants : 376, 25, 189, 100

Présentez-vous.

189 : Je suis Breton je suis arrivé à Birmingham en 1995 donc ça fait très longtemps que je suis là ; je suis enseignant j'enseigne le français l'espagnol et le latin dans un collège et lycée public à Birmingham et est-ce que je compte y rester bon ça fait 25 ans j'ai une maison une famille etc etc mais on pense quand même à un moment ou un autre rentrer en France le Brexit y est pour quelque chose et aussi l'âge de ma mère qui bah qui comme tout le monde les parents vieillissent et on n'est pas à côté donc et puis là cette situation cette année a été encore un peu plus difficile qu'on peut pas aller forcement mais c'est vrai qu'on y pense on y pense quand même. Bon après quand la maison sera payée etc donc y a encore qq obstacles.

100 : Je suis arrivée à Londres en 2011 pour le mariage royal voilà c'était ça et je suis journaliste et j'avais plus d'emploi en France en fait et je me suis dit que quitte à faire un taf alimentaire autant aller le faire en Angleterre et voir ce qui se passe parce que j'apprendrai, je reviendrai au moins bilingue et en fait j'ai trouvé un boulot de journaliste et je suis pas partie enfin je suis restée ! Et avec le Brexit j'ai fait la demande de nationalité britannique que j'ai eue et je comptais pas partir et là j'en sais rien.

25 : Je suis arrivée à Lon… euh non je suis arrivée au Royaume-Uni en 2008 pour les études donc je voulais y aller pour la fac en fait mais c'était pas forcément un déménagement définitif je me suis dit bah si ça me plait vraiment pas, j'étais au pays de galles à Cardiff, si ça me plaît vraiment pas c'est que 3 ans et je peux rentrer en France après, et puis après bah j'ai fait une thèse et puis après j'ai

trouvé un travail et donc je suis toujours là. Donc voilà ça fait 12 ans maintenant je me suis jamais vraiment j'ai jamais pris la décision définitive de est ce que je veux rester pour toujours ou rentrer mais c'est vrai que plus j'étais bien installée même au travail, j'aime la mentalité des anglais maintenant je suis à Londres et j'aime beaucoup cette ville et tout ça mais je commence à me poser des questions je suis aussi en train de demander la nationalité je suis en cours je suis en train de finir le dossier ne serait-ce que parce que si je pars qq années disons dans un autre pays l'Allemagne ou je ne sais quoi comme ça je sais que je peux revenir j'ai un statut qu'on peut pas m'enlever parce que c'est vrai que j'aime beaucoup ce pays et c'est possible que je revienne après mais je me pose des questions avec le Brexit c'est surtout la qualité de vie si la livre continue à baisser beaucoup si on ne sait plus ce qui a dans notre nourriture au supermarché c'est quand même des choses qui m'inquiète parce que c'est baisser la qualité de vie.

376: j'habite à Liverpool je suis arrivée ici en 2005 en tant qu'assistante de langue donc j'étais à la base ici pour une année j'ai re signé pour une deuxième puis j'ai fait mon PGCE j'ai démarré en enseignant dans le secondaire puis le primaire et là j'enseigne à l'université aussi en tant qu'associate lecturer, je fais une journée par semaine donc je voulais faire autre chose à côté, j'ai démissionné... j'ai toujours fait plusieurs boulots en même temps parce que dans les langues je trouve que c'est difficile de trouver vraiment un poste à moins vraiment d'être dans le secondaire de faire plusieurs langues comme J. moi je faisais que le français donc j'ai toujours fait plusieurs choses à droite à gauche donc j'avais deux boulots un en sixth form et un à l'université donc j'ai quitté celui du sixth form et j'ai commencé un travail de traductrice littéraire pour une maison d'édition en France donc parallèlement à l'enseignement à l'université et voilà. ?? (Brexit ?) Ça coïncidait un peu avec ma première grossesse, que je suis devenue maman, alors du coup ça, je sais pas ça dépend de certaines choses, mes enfants plus la langue française ?? la culture commence à me manquer donc j'y pense parfois.

Parlez-vous français régulièrement ?

376 : En étant avec des collègues surtout dans le secondaire qui faisait des langues aussi, avec les collègues français disons que on parlait français sauf quand y avait des anglais autour par politesse et pour les collègues anglais qui connaissaient le français on parlait toujours en anglais je pense qu'il y avait peut être une petite gène ou une petite appréhension de parler français alors c'était toujours en anglais.

25 : Moi je parle très très régulièrement en français parce que malgré le fait que je sois ici depuis 12 ans, finalement tous les gens de qui je suis le plus proche ça a fini par être des français pourtant j'ai pas mal d'amis anglais mais là je vois par exemple avec la situation actuelle où on n'a plus trop le droit de voir des gens, j'ai un groupe de 3 amis français que je retrouve de temps en temps pour faire des jeux de société, une autre amie qui vient de déménager très près de chez moi qui est aussi française et je me dis je me suis pas rendu compte que ça se faisait mais je parle très souvent avec des français donc voilà on parle beaucoup français. Au travail j'ai peu de collègues qui sont français je travaille dans les médias mais pour une association cancer research UK y a peu de français mais on s'est trouvés entre français !

189 : Moi quand je suis arrivé en 1995 j'avais pris la décision de pas du tout parler français je voulais en fait perfectionner mon anglais donc j'ai pas parlé français du tout et jusqu'en 2005 quand je suis arrivé dans l'école dans laquelle je suis encore, où là y avait des collègues français et donc là on parle français régulièrement. C'est vrai que quand il y a des collègues, là on a 2 collègues britanniques ils aiment bien quand on parle en français parce que ils écoutent et bien sûr ils comprennent mais que eux répondent en français c'est un peu plus compliqué c'est vrai parce que je pense que comme L.

disait y a peut-être une, surtout quand il y a plusieurs natifs qui parlent très vite etc. ça peut être un petit peu intimidant ça je peux comprendre. On utilise par contre le français même avec eux si on a, si on veut dire quelque chose et qu'on ne veut pas être compris (rires). A la maison, j'ai rencontré mon mari en 95 donc on est ensemble depuis 25 ans, il parle un tout petit peu français il a fait français jusqu'au GCSE level et en fait il parle assez bien et il était francophile déjà donc la radio française a toujours été allumée tout le temps tout le temps et la télévision aussi et la télévision française depuis très longtemps je me suis connecté je me rappelle à la fin des années 90 avec les paraboles et tout et tout et c'est vrai que on est quand même baignés dans une atmosphère francophone à la maison bien qu'on ne parle pas français ensemble ! C'est complètement idiot.

376 : C'est la tour Eiffel derrière d'ailleurs ?

189 : Oui tout à fait ! C'est vrai qu'on est très, il adore la France il est, en fait il connaît même plus je vais dire de d'artistes modernes on va dire français au niveau musical etc et me fait découvrir des choses que moi j'ai pas forcément … Donc on est quand même baignés là-dedans. Après dans la vie quotidienne j'ai assez peu d'amis français, j'en ai pratiquement pas qui vivent ici je parle à part les collègues donc on parle pas forcément français, mais non mais on est quand même baignés dans cette culture en tout cas.

100 : J'ai fait à peu près pareil en fait quand je suis arrivée j'ai refusé complètement de me mélanger aux français parce que je me suis dit que quitte à fin fallait vraiment que je revienne bilingue et puis je viens pas dans un pays pour rester dans ma communauté enfin la communauté et parler après que français je connaissais qq français qui étaient déjà à Londres et justement c'était tout ce que je ne voulait pas faire, et parce que eux ne parlaient, ils vivaient vraiment comme des français mais à Londres, bon en plus près de South Kensington etc et c'est pas du tout ma came ! Je ne suis pas dans la finance pour être très claire. Et en fait j'ai rencontré assez facilement pas mal d'anglais, enfin surtout d'irlandais, c'est avec les irlandais que j'ai le plus sympathisé c'est marrant mais voilà et ça tourne beaucoup autour de la musique notamment parce que je vais beaucoup à des concerts et je passe des disques et du coup de fil en aiguille par la musique et par l'extérieur en fait je me suis créé un bon cercle d'amis et qui donc ne sont pas du tout français. Et en revanche dans le travail comme je suis rédactrice en chef du bureau français de l'agence de presse pour laquelle, c'est pas l'AFP, c'est une petite agence de contenu, je parle la moitié du temps en français avec les journalistes qui, les traducteurs qui travaillent en français et la moitié du temps en anglais avec les boss parce que la boite est anglais et aussi comme j'ai développé du brand content qui se fait dans d'autres langues par exemple je ne parle pas russe donc c'est l'anglais que je vais utiliser pour discuter avec les autres traducteurs ou rédacteurs.

Parleriez-vous en anglais avec un francophone ?

100 : Quand quelqu'un parle pas du tout le français en fait peu importe la langue qu'il parle s'il est en Angleterre en général il parle anglais et donc du coup c'est pour que tout le monde comprenne sinon je trouve ça hyper malpoli quoi.

25 : Oui dès qu'il y a un anglophone dans la conversation et encore j'ai remarqué que tout le monde ne le fait pas, des fois y a des français dans la conversation qui vont sans cesse repasser en français, je sais pas si c'est par manque de politesse mais peut être par habitude ou parce que ils savent qu'il y a des français qui les comprennent et donc naturellement ça repasse mais c'est quand même j'ai l'impression les gens qui ont peut être passé moins de temps dans le pays. Sinon tous les jours c'est normal de parler anglais dès qu'il y a une personne qui ne comprend pas ce qu'on dit.

189 : Je dirais aussi avec les collègues quelques fois c'est plus simple si on doit utiliser de la terminologie professionnelle, et quelques fois c'est un hasard complet aussi et ça m'est arrivé souvent on parle en anglais et après une ou deux minutes on se regarde en souriant et on se dit « bah on parle en anglais ensemble alors qu'il n'y a pas d'autre… » et là on se remet en français en incluant les mots anglais qui vont aller avec qq fois c'est pas vraiment traduisible en français y a des termes ou alors c'est plus simple de le dire parce que c'est le vocabulaire que l'on connait tous les jours au travail mais c'est vrai que ça arrive qu'on oublie parce qu'on est dans un tel contexte anglophone, ou on continue par exemple on a une conversation en anglais donc y a deux français un anglais dans la conversation en anglais, l'anglais s'en va on continue en anglais un petit peu puis après on se rend compte et de fil en aiguille on se dit bah non on va continuer en français c'est assez fréquent ça !

376 : J'allais dire exactement la même chose oui, qq fois on ne se rend pas compte certains termes même avec un français il va y avoir un terme par exemple pour le travail qui vraiment en anglais et la traduction est pas géniale en français ou c'est pas exactement ce qu'on veut dire alors ???

Quelle place a votre identité française/la langue française dans votre vie?

376 : Moi personnellement je me reconnais très bien là-dedans parce que comme je disais tout à l'heure en ayant des enfants c'est pour moi c'est primordial que mes enfants parlent français. Qu'on parte ou qu'on reste je veux que mes enfants parlent français, qu'ils soient bilingues bien sûr qu'ils parlent anglais puisque le papa est irlandais mais le français était toujours important pour moi parce que ma famille est en France mais en ayant les enfants ça a pris d'avantage d'importance encore, et pour aussi qu'ils communiquent avec leur famille en France, et rien que pour la langue.

25 : Moi je dirais plutôt entre deux parce que au tout début quand j'étais à la fac y avait très peu de français autour justement comme un peu les autres je voulais ne pas, j'évitais en fait les français, je vivais dans une maison avec que des colocs anglais et tout ça et en fait je parlais plus du tout français quand j' étais dans le pays, et quand je rentrais j'avais du mal les premiers jours je cherchais mes mots quand je parlais parce que je commençais un peu à perdre comme je rentrais que pour les vacances scolaires, mais mon anglais était bien meilleur j'avais l'accent les gens pouvaient pas savoir d'où je venais et tout ça bon maintenant c'est fini mais même à ce moment là j'étais toujours la française quoi je le cachais pas je parlais même sans parler français je parlais de la culture française chez nous on fait comme ça, oui je bois du chocolat chaud dans un bol ça apparemment ils ont appris ça à l'école et quand ils m'ont vu faire j'ai vu tous les colocs se rapprocher de moi silencieusement en mode « ah mais c'est vrai ??? » (rires) ça m'a jamais dérangée d'être un peu le porte-drapeau de la France je trouve ça super donc même si on parle pas toujours français par politesse ou juste par contexte c'est vrai je pense qu'on est très attachés à on est français et on est fiers d'être français et voilà.

100: Moi j'imagine pas ne plus du tout parler français, déjà j'écris en français par le travail et puis ce que j'aime bien justement c'est avoir les deux langues on peut lire des livres en version originale des deux côtés et c'est pas mal parce que les deux cultures sont très riches niveau littéraire, et puis de toute façon y a tellement de français dans l'anglais, comment voulez-vous qu'on fasse ?

189 : Pardon j'ai interrompu quelqu'un ?

100 : Non non allez-y allez-y !

189 : Non pareil c'est c'est… peut être une petite fierté ouais je pense qu'on est quand même assez, sans vouloir le cacher on est assez fiers je pense de, on peut être très critiques par rapport à la

France ou par rapport à plusieurs mais quand même on est très attachés à nos valeurs. Et ce qui s'est passé récemment en France [*note : interview juste après l'assassinat de Samuel Paty*] on en a parlé à l'école et réexpliquer les principes qui ne sont pas vraiment compris surtout avec des enfants on a beaucoup d'enfants musulmans par exemple et donc expliquer le principe de laïcité de liberté d'expression etc donc toutes ces valeurs culturelles oui mais aussi toutes les valeurs de la société française j'enseigne en A level aussi donc on parle beaucoup d'immigration d'intégration de culture etc et je pense qu'on défend toujours ces principes, donc non seulement de la langue mais aussi de la vision que l'on a de la, même si on n'est pas forcément toujours d'accord, et je pense qu'on a cette richesse d'avoir cet œil externe quand même de de on regarde ce qui se passe avec un peu de recul je trouve, par rapport à je pense par exemple à mes amis qui vivent en France qui vont avoir un discours assez différent je pense mais quand même on est je pense fiers et on va toujours vouloir défendre non seulement la langue la culture mais aussi la vision française on va dire des choses, c'est mon ressenti en tout cas.

Avez-vous vu des différences avant / après Brexit dans les attitudes des Britanniques lorsque vous parliez en français par exemple ?

376 : Moi personnellement plus par rapport à mon accent si on remarque mon accent, pas si on m'entend parler en français pas trop, quelques fois des regards mais j'en suis pas sure c'est pas, est ce que c'est parce que je parle français mais ça peut être autre chose. Par rapport à mon accent oui j'ai eu du côté gentil on va commencer par le gentil, par exemple les serveurs au restaurant qui disent « merci » ou bien le « bonjour je m'appelle putain » c'est gentil et après il va y avoir aussi les personnes peut-être un petit peu moins éduquées qui pensent que parce qu'on a un accent forcément on parle moins bien anglais, forcément on est moins intelligent qu'eux et qui regardent un petit peu de haut et qui font une petite réflexion… Je me souviens une fois à la piscine j'avais une femme qui me parlait, bon à Liverpool les gens se parlent très facilement de tout et de rien c'est ça qui est très bien dans cette ville, et une dame qui m'adresse la parole dans la piscine et je lui réponds, et elle entend mon accent, elle me dit « oh vous n'êtes pas anglaise ? » je lui dis « non » et elle me répond « Oh okay désolée ! » et elle est partie nager ailleurs. Ou qu'on me demande « vous connaissez ce mot là ? » euh bah oui quand même oui avec des mots tous simples ça arrive enfin bref c'est tout. Ça m'arrive pas trop souvent quand même heureusement parce que mon accent n'est pas si horrible que ça mais non c'est ponctuel. Par rapport au ressenti face à Brexit j'ai plus d'appréhension de parler en français ou même de me faire entendre en anglais avec mon accent et j'arrive pas trop à identifier si c'est moi qui deviens parano ou si y a une différence dans la façon dont les gens se comportent.

100 : Déjà mes amis, une partie en fait parce que certains avaient voté Brexit, quand il y a eu le Brexit ils ont fait une espèce de, une sorte de hug géant, ne pars pas t'es ici chez toi et les autres c'est des cons. Avec ceux qui avaient voté Brexit on est restés amis pas très longtemps (rires) parce que en fait ce que je pense c'est le pub quand on arrive à l'heure de fermeture quasiment les langues sont plus déliées et moi j'ai pas trop trop bien vécu le « non mais c'est pas contre toi mais les étrangers dehors mais toi on te connaît mais les autres dehors » et en fait j'avais l'impression d'être de retour dans ce qui se passait déjà dans les années 80/90 en France avec la montée du FN et moi ça me faisait déjà rigoler les gens qui, parce que mon père est métisse, et dans le village où on partait en vacances les gens ont quand même élu mon père au conseil municipal c'est ça qui est formidable, mais ils votaient à majorité FN et disaient «ah mais ton père c'est pas pareil on le connaît » en gros c'est un bon nègre quoi, clairement c'est ça, désolée d'employer ce mot là mais c'est clairement l'image comme ça. Donc là c'était ce retour-là, donc on n'est pas restés amis très longtemps et après en revanche dans les transports ça m'est arrivé de me faire emmerder ouais. Une espèce de mec qui ressemblait plus à

un Red neck qu'autre chose qui, c'était en plein jour enfin c'était même pas le soir ou quoi, il a posé ses pieds genre dans le bus en face de moi il a posé ses pieds juste à côté sur le siège à côté je lui fais « non fin y a mon manteau y a mes jambes enfin non quoi » et il me fait « de toute façon ici c'est pour les anglais casse toi t'as pas à t'asseoir là » et en fait ça m'a tellement énervée en plus je sortais du boulot et donc j'étais vraiment j'étais pas de bonne humeur et je me suis pas laissée faire je lui ai dit « et quoi sinon je sais pas tu me plantes tu me frappes bah vas y viens on se frappe quoi » et il était vraiment genre gros et tout et personne n'a réagi dans le bus mais le fait je crois de dire ça il s'y attendait pas trop, à un moment il s'est levé il s'est penché sur moi pour me menacer, je l'ai regardé j'ai fait « mmh mmh ? Et vas y frappe moi ? » et en fait il s'est reculé et il est parti et ça a été ça c'était vraiment que de l'intimidation et de la menace et personne dans le bus en revanche a réagi les gens étaient dans leur bouquin dans leur smartphone etc et y a juste le chauffeur a attendu beaucoup plus longtemps qu'il descende au stop mais personne n'a rien fait. Et ce genre de trucs pas très agréables c'est arrivé quoi, enfin après y a eu des trucs moins tendus au niveau climat quoi mais c'est plus des réflexions, je sais plus c'est après on peut pas trop savoir si c'est vraiment parce que les gens sont racistes ou xénophobes ou parce qu'ils ont eu une mauvaise journée ou parce qu'on se fait des idées je sais pas trop, là c'était clair voilà. Ça dépend des quartiers ça dépend des heures, pour le niveau d'alcoolémie des gens en fait voilà aussi c'est ça.

189 : moi je dois dire que j'ai de la chance j'ai pas d'accent quand je parle en anglais, apparemment d'après ce qu'on me dit je peux passer pour un anglais assez facilement, mais j'ai jamais ressenti pour le moment en tout cas le fait de pas pouvoir parler français, bon il est rare que je parle français par exemple dans le bus, ou à moins que je sois au téléphone mais c'est très très rare, par contre moi je dirais je sais pas peut être que je me trompe mais dans cette xénophobie linguistique je ne pense pas que le français soit au même niveau que d'autres langues, j'en parlais justement avec ma belle mère hier, qui est très conservatrice qui n'a pas voté le Brexit d'après ce qu'elle me dit mais bon après moi je ne connais personne qui ait voté pour le Brexit, ou en tout cas qui l'ont avoué on va dire, mais je pense qu'il y a une différence dans je disais si je parlais roumain ou si je parlais polonais peut être que les réactions seraient différentes je pense qu'il y a les, c'est une mauvaise expression, mais il y a les bons immigrés et puis les moins bons, je pense qu'il y a ça je, mon beau frère y a très longtemps m'avait avoué avoir voté pour le BNP, je ne sais pas si vous vous souvenez, et je lui dis ouais, il me dit « ouais mais y a trop d'étrangers machin machin » et je lui dis « bah oui comme moi » « ah mais non toi c'est différent t'es français » Ah. Donc je pense qu'il y a quand même une certaine hiérarchie linguistique, je pense qu'il y a des langues qui poseront peut être plus de problèmes par exemple j'ai entendu y a une grande communauté chinoise à Birmingham et euh et c'est vrai que quelque fois y a quelqu'un à l'avant du bus et y a quelqu'un à l'arrière et ils se parlent donc bon forcément ils parlent fort, bon c'est pas très très poli mais ça c'est autre chose, mais on sent bien une crispation plus que si y avait une autre langue qui était, après on entend plein de langues c'est comme à Londres, comme quoi que ce soit on entend plein de langues parlées toute la journée c'est pas forcément l'anglais qu'on entend donc mais je pense qu'il y a certaines langues qui seraient peut être plus acceptables que d'autres, après je sais pas j'ai pas fait d'études là-dessus mais je pense que le français ne doit pas être dans le top 3 des langues qu'il faut pas parler, à mon avis.

376 : Oui il y a le côté vacances, le français et l'espagnol c'est les Anglais ont tendance à aller en vacances en France en Espagne donc pour eux le français l'espagnol c'est l'exotisme dans le bon sens du terme entre guillemets.

100 : Je pense qu'il y a quand même aussi un côté historique que les gens n'oublient pas forcément. Parce qu'ils ont quand même eu deux trois petites reines françaises, les armoiries de la reine c'est en français, euh moi quand je suis arrivée au début ici mon médecin je savais pas trop lui expliquer ou

quand il me prescrivait des médicaments j'ai fait du latin et du coup fin voilà on parlait entre anglais français latin donc y a un truc quand même c'est inclus dans leur culture le français quelque part.

25 : Oui et puis il y a un côté respect de la culture, pour eux le français c'est classe, la langue française c'est classe la culture française oh la nourriture oh le vin oh le fromage donc pour eux c'est positif parce que c'est qq chose qu'ils respectent et qu'ils envient même qq part un tout petit peu donc je pense que ça ça influence beaucoup parce que moi c'est pareil j'ai jamais eu aucun problème, aucune remarque, bon après je suis à Londres c'est vrai que c'est pas vraiment un coin qui est très pro Brexit, mais j'ai même plus eu des excuses en fait pendant la première année ou 2 années d'après dès que ça parlait de Brexit à la télé ou dans les conversations y avait toujours des gens qui s'excusaient en fait, quand j'ai eu mon settled status et que j'étais toute contente et que je l'avais posté sur les réseaux sociaux y en a qui ont dit ah c'est bien mais c'est dommage que tu doives faire ça quoi que tu doives t'enregistrer quelque part, donc et pourtant je suis sure qu'il y a statistiquement je connais forcément des gens qui ont voté pour le Brexit, mais je pense que nous « on ne compte pas là-dedans » on est des victimes innocentes c'est pas pour nous.

376: et aussi par rapport, en général si je dis que je suis française automatiquement on va me demander « vous êtes prof » et j'ai entendu des polonais dire que quand ils disaient qu'ils étaient polonais on leur demandait automatiquement s'ils faisaient le ménage, ce genre de métiers y a vraiment une différence de perception.

Abandonner votre langue ou partir ?

189 : Bah moi je n'y ai pas vraiment pensé c'est mon métier au quotidien, j'enseigne le français donc je vois pas, après j'ai qq remarques à l'école mais c'est plus selon la classe où ils sont, certains apprennent l'espagnol d'autres apprennent le français, mais ça c'est juste une loterie complète, et certains m'ont dit pourquoi j'apprends pas l'espagnol, pourquoi j'apprends le français mais à part ça je vois pas comment après si on m'obligeait à ne plus parler français ou si je me sentais menacé bon là j'ai pas eu comme la plupart d'entre nous mais non je ne serais pas prêt à ne plus utiliser le français il est hors de question mais je vois pas comment ça pourrait arriver mais bon c'est scénario catastrophe. Mais après tout dépend des communautés dans lesquelles on vit, tout dépend des villes j'imagine etc etc avec généralement on les gens que les français vont fréquenter avec qui ils vont devenir amis j'imagine ce sont des gens assez ouverts généralement donc le risque je dirais est moindre parce que le milieu social dans lequel on va graviter à part les rencontres fortuites dans le bus généralement dans le cercle d'amis c'est des gens qui sont assez ouverts à la base parce qu'ils ne seraient pas amis avec vous sinon.

25: Je suis totalement d'accord ça ne me viendrait pas à l'idée d'abandonner de parler français déjà c'est quelque chose je pense où on résisterait dans le sens où si quelqu'un faisait des remarques comme C. on trouve pas ça normal donc on serait pas d'accord mais en plus moi c'est quelque chose enfin c'est peu nier qui on est quoi ça veut dire cacher ne plus parler la langue avoir peur ça veut dire qu'on est dans un environnement hostile et pour moi c'est quelque chose qu'on fait de cacher sa langue quand est dans un endroit où on est par nécessité parce que nous si on peut partir, si on peut vivre dans plein d'autres pays parce qu'on a un passeport français si on a un métier qui peut où on peut trouver ailleurs ben moi dans ce cas là je resterais pas parce que je serais dans un environnement hostile ça ne m'intéresse pas je préfère aller ailleurs où je serais acceptée.

376 : Depuis que j'ai commencé la traduction littéraire au contraire je m'intéresse, je me réintéresse à la langue française d'autant plus avant j'avais plutôt dans l'optique comme tout le monde de rester à l'écart des français, de lire en anglais, à la base puis j'ai fait le chemin inverse pour rattraper les lacunes du français que j'ai un peu accumulées au cours des années à force de ne pas pratiquer,

d'utiliser toujours le même vocabulaire avec certaines personnes, y a des mots qu'on utilise plus, du coup je re apprends un peu et je ne me vois pas ne plus parler en français et oui je partirais aussi parce que je ne me sens plus chez moi.

100 : Moi c'est une situation que j'ai du mal à envisager de ne plus pouvoir parler français. Après je passe mon temps enfin j'écris beaucoup plus que je parle, donc au final j'écris mieux en français que je parle français mais ça poserait vraiment un gros dilemme parce que j'ai pas envie de partir en vrai ! (rires)

FG 8

Date : 10 November 2020

Group : Post Brexit

Participants : 122, 154, 336, 316

316: J'étais en Erasmus enfin je suis venue en Erasmus en 2018 pour un semestre et j'ai rencontré mon copain qui continuait ses études ici et qui est anglais et du coup je suis revenue en septembre 2019 pour habiter ici en fait. Et je fais des études de FLE à distance à l'université du Mans en fait mais j'habite ici tout le temps. Pour les prochaines années je pense rester mais peut-être 2/3 ans mais enfin pour l'instant je reste parce que mon copain fait ses études ici.

122 : Bon c'est un petit peu compliqué bon la première fois que je suis arrivé au Royaume-Uni c'était en 2014 donc j'étais étudiant Erasmus, ensuite j'ai travaillé comme assistant de langues à Londres en 2015/2016 et je suis parti juste avant que le referendum ait eu lieu et je suis retourné en France pour étudier, j'ai fait une année de maitrise et ensuite je suis revenu au royaume uni en 2017. Et depuis je suis à Londres donc ça fait 3 ans maintenant en fait j'ai enseigné en tant que lecteur à l'université de Glasgow, pendant 1 année universitaire et ensuite je suis descendu je suis allé à Londres et depuis là je travaille dans un établissement secondaire j'enseigne le français et voilà.

154 : Moi j'ai fini mes études en 2019 et après j'ai déménagé début janvier 2020 à Nottingham c'était pour le boulot et en fait on s'était fixé avec ma copine d'y rester 2/3 ans et donc voilà on s'était fixé ça et c'est toujours d'actualité toujours 2/3 ans parce qu'on a envie de revenir en France. On est tous les deux français.

336 : Je suis en France depuis l'été 2018 je suis partie en Erasmus j'ai fait une année en tant qu'assistante de langue. Et là je travaille ??

Dans quels contextes utilisez-vous le français ?

316 : Moi du coup comme je fais mes études en ligne en fait toutes mes études sont en français mais c'est un peu particulier parce que c'est tout de l'écrit de la lecture mais j'ai pas du tout d'interaction en français avec mes enfin pas mes collègues mais mes camarades de classe on va dire et en fait la seule fois où je parle français c'est quand j'appelle mes parents en fait et voilà.

122 : Donc en ce qui me concerne je parle en français lorsque je suis dans une salle de classe je suis forcément obligé de parler en anglais aussi parce que mes étudiants ne suivent pas forcément la cadence, avec mes collègues j'ai une collègue qui est franco-britannique donc je parle un peu français et anglais et avec le reste de mes collègues je parle en anglais. Donc c'est un peu difficile je ne pourrais pas donner un pourcentage de combien de temps je parle en français en anglais euh grosso modo peut être 50/50 et à la maison je parle français avec mes colocataires et bon je ne parle

pas tant que ça à mes parents donc on va dire que dans le cadre privé je ne parle pas tellement français sauf avec certains de mes amis à l'extérieur c'est un peu compliqué on va dire.

154 : Au boulot c'est pratiquement que anglais j'ai quand même quelques amis français et ça arrive qu'on parle un peu français si on est entre nous par exemple mais dès qu'il y a une troisième personne qui arrive qui parle pas français forcément on parle en anglais. Et à la maison du coup vu que ma copine est française du coup oui.

336 : Quand j'étais en formation j'avais une prof de langues qui était avec moi et même si cette personne était anglaise et on était en Erasmus ensemble et elle demandait à ce qu'on parle français mais sinon c'est rare.

Quelle place dans votre vie ont votre identité française et la langue française ?

316 :J'ai oublié de dire que cette année j'ai que des colocs français. Mais du coup je sais pas si ça me manque vraiment de parler français je me rends pas forcément compte mais par contre je me rends compte que j'aurais besoin de parler français plus souvent avec mes colocs en fait des fois quand on parle qu'anglais pendant qq jours j'ai du mal à me remettre au français fin je sais pas.

122 : Comment dire. Je fais partie d'un club de lecture français c'est une Britannique qui a étudié le français à l'université donc j'ai décidé d'y participer j'y suis toujours membre justement pour pouvoir lire pour pouvoir parler de littérature à un niveau pas forcément très élevé c'est pas non plus de la littérature etc. donc on en parle juste pour parler ?? donc ça me plait, est ce que ça me manque de parler français ? J'ai pas tellement un manque parce que je parle français pendant les cours même si j'ai parfois l'impression que mon niveau baisse du fait d'être entouré d'élèves qui essaient de parler en français mais j'ai parfois l'impression que mon niveau baisse à cause d'eux, parce que je suis obligé forcément de parler à un niveau médiocre on va dire parce que sinon ils ne vont pas comprendre si je m'adressais à eux d'une manière, comme si je m'adressais à un francophone donc j'ai tendance à utiliser des expressions très basiques à la répéter à les employer encore et toujours de façon à ce qu'ils puissent mémoriser ces expressions et du coup j'ai l'impression qu'en faisant cela je perds mon français à devenir un peu je sais pas j'ai l'impression de d'être bête juste la façon de parler ça me rend mal à l'aise on va dire ! Mais sinon j'ai pas vraiment, je ressens pas ce manque, pas tellement, je lis, je suis l'actualité, je regarde les média etc donc non on ne va pas dire que ça me manque puisque je suis toujours en train de parler plus ou moins tous les jours en français.

154 : Bah pareil pour moi pas forcément, mais par contre des fois quand je passe des journées intenses au boulot où il faut parler beaucoup anglais des fois en rentrant j'arrive pas forcément à trouver mes mots en français, enfin j'ai le mot anglais qui me vient, ça me prend quelques secondes pour retrouver la traduction c'est bizarre au final mais voilà. Mais sinon ç me manque pas particulièrement.

336: C'est vrai que les mots anglais sortent, parfois c'est très frustrant mais après, ?? mais c'est surtout au début que les gens aient pas les mêmes références que moi on se sent un peu isolés, mais j'ai remarqué plus facile de se rapprocher plus vite des gens en partageant une langue y a pas une espèce de façade de langage un peu standard c'est plus facile d'exprimer sa personnalité à travers la langue qu'on maîtrise, qq part on s'est rendu compte avec ces amis notamment que des fois on devenait un peu des caricatures françaises, on utilise des expressions que jamais on utiliserait en France, débiles et un peu beauf comme à la revoyure ou des choses comme ça je ne sais pas ce que c'est mais on s'est rendu compte que oui effectivement on se mettait à devenir des caricatures de…Je pense que ça nous manque un peu dans un certain sens en tout cas.

Avez-vous eu des expériences qu'elles soient positives ou négatives par rapport à votre langue depuis le Brexit?

316 : Moi j'ai jamais eu de réactions négatives en tout cas ou je m'en rends peut être pas compte si c'est des regards ou quoi j'y prête peut être pas attention mais ça a jamais été un soucis après comme j'étais en Erasmus j'ai l'impression que j'avais beaucoup d'amis étrangers aussi donc les commentaires que j'ai peu avoir dans le sens oh tu parles français j'aime trop l'accent français est ce que tu peux dire des trucs en français etc c'était souvent des non britanniques mais j'ai aussi eu des britanniques qui ont fait ça je sais que en soirée, pré covid on va dire, si je parlais français avec quelqu'un on nous arrêtait souvent dans la rue et c'était souvent des jeunes des étudiants qui venaient nous voir et nous dire « ah vous parlez français ! » et c'était soit des étudiants qui étaient franco britanniques souvent, même très souvent ça m'a étonnée et donc qui nous parlaient français assez couramment ou soit des étudiants qui voulaient juste dire « je m'appelle blablabla » et c'est tout c'est juste des choses positives donc voilà.

122 : En ce qui me concerne, est ce que vous m'entendez toujours ? Je n'ai jamais été en difficulté j'ai toujours à chaque fois que j'ai voulu parler français j'ai parlé français, j'ai jamais reçu de commentaires négatifs parce que je parlais français, bon en l'occurrence j'évolue dans un contexte qui est favorable à l'apprentissage des langues étrangères donc forcément je ne recevrai pas de commentaires négatifs à ce sujet. Euh même avant le referendum, bon je travaillais encore dans un établissement secondaire et l'année d'avant j'étais étudiant Erasmus donc là encore je n'ai jamais, non non je ne me souviens pas avoir été ciblé du fait de mes qualités de locuteur français non (rires), y a eu un seul incident mais pas qui a eu lieu chez moi c'est une de mes colocataires qui parlait français avec un autre de mes colocataires qui se disputait avec un autre colocataire qui parlait anglais qui lui demandait de pas parler français devant lui parce qu'il ne comprenait pas mais je ne pense vraiment pas que ça avait un lien avec le Brexit, parce qu'en l'occurrence on avait des problèmes avec ce colocataire parce qu'il buvait tout le temps, qu'il était irresponsable, ça n'avait strictement rien à voir avec le contexte géopolitique !

154 : Du coup au boulot non pas vraiment parce que c'est généralement plutôt l'anglais qu'on utilise ou c'est pas très dérangeant et pareil pas d'expérience vraiment négative ou en tout cas je m'en suis pas aperçu mais j'ai un bon souvenir par rapport à ça c'était le deuxième jour où on est arrivés donc on a décidé de faire un resto le soir et on est arrivés au restau c'était vraiment rempli rempli donc on était en train de se demander ce qu'on allait faire et le patron qui faisait le barman aussi a entendu qu'on parlait français et nous a demandé si on était français donc on a répondu et du coup il nous a libéré une table pour nous alors que c'était plein et donc voilà c'était juste un petit truc sympa et il nous a dit de parler français etc

336 : Moi j'ai pas eu de commentaires négatifs c'est plutôt « ah moi la France » mais bon ça reste un pays quoi ça leur donne pas pour autant envie d'apprendre le français mais ils ont une image de nous qui est super démesurée, mais j'ai eu une expérience liée au Brexit justement qui m'a fait réaliser à quel point ils avaient une image de la France et par alliance de la langue française qui était un peu étrange, quand j'étais à Bath, et j'ai déjà rencontré quelqu'un qui à peu près de mon âge enfin voilà une personne tout à fait ordinaire qui me disait « ah oui moi j'ai voté pour le Brexit » et du coup je le demande « ah oui ? » et il me fait « ah oui oui non c'est pour l'immigration parce que… » et je pense qu'il a dû voir à mon visage que y a quelque chose qui allait pas dans ce qu'il me disait et il me fait « ah non non mais pas pour toi » sous-entendu pas contre les français, y a une sorte de décalage je pense dans ce que les gens s'imaginent du Brexit.

Rentrer en France ?

316 : un peu comme 122 qui évolue dans un milieu plutôt positif pour les langues étrangères parce que en tant que prof de FLE, le fait de parler français fait un peu notre identité et notre métier aussi donc je pense que au contraire c'est parce que je parle français que je resterais parce que je pourrais pas enseigner le même FLE en France qu'ici après je ne pense pas rester ici toute ma vie mais ce serait pour d'autres raisons. Voilà.

122 : Euh alors je pense qu'il faut vraiment prendre en compte le contexte dans lequel les gens vivent je vis à Londres donc je ne me danger sur le plan de l'identité absolument pas euh bon après ça reste une démocratie libérale avec une espèce de tradition d'ouverture même si les langues étrangères n'ont pas, en particulier dans le milieu de l'éducation y a pas énormément d'étudiants qui décident d'étudier des langues étrangères jusqu'au A level mais je ne pense pas que, enfin je ne sais pas si je resterai en grande bretagne toute ma vie ça ne fait pas partie de mon plan en tout cas mais ça n'a strictement rien à voir avec le fait de ne plus me sentir français à cause du contexte britannique et du Brexit de toute façon le terme d'identité est extrêmement complexe à définir je me sens pas que français je suis bon je suis européen culturellement parlant mais sur le plan politique je me sens plus français que britannique ou européen mais c'est autre chose.

154 : Oui voilà aussi pareil c'est pas par rapport au Brexit en plus on est arrivés après le Brexit donc on savait déjà mais c'était vraiment voilà pour professionnellement avoir un avantage professionnellement si vous voulez c'était aussi une bonne expérience d'habiter dans un autre pays et tout ouais c'était vraiment ça et mais dans l'éventualité où ça deviendrait un peu difficile est ce que ça nous ferait rentrer plus vite ou pas bah pas forcément parce qu'au travail on parle vraiment anglais et le français c'est que le soir donc je ne pense pas que ça nous ferait partir plus vite mais bon dans tous les cas ??

336: Si je dois rester je dois rester et si je dois partir je partirai mais c'est vrai qu'avant de partir je me définissait pas vraiment comme française tout ça mais je me suis mis à me sentir beaucoup plus française en arrivant ici comme si le fait d'arriver avait fait ressortir certaines choses ah ouais en fait ça colle quand même beaucoup à ce qu'on appelle l'identité française. Après c'est vrai que ça va faire trois ans que je suis ici donc c'est vrai qu'il y a un moment où même en rentrant en France il y a des choses, si je rentrais en France y a des choses de l'anglais qui me manquerait.

Autre chose?

122 : Juste un commentaire parce que l'une des raisons qui m'a poussé à participer à ce à ton étude d'une certaine manière, j'ai quand même l'impression que très souvent sur les réseaux sociaux qu'on dramatise tout en fait je sais que le Brexit va poser des problèmes sur le plan économique notamment mais je pense qu'il faut être démocrate on peut pour ou contre je pense qu'on a tout simplement pas le choix qu'on soit britannique ou pas d'ailleurs puisque le ministre a été élu et en faire je sais pas une guerre culturelle me pose problème à titre personnel je ne pense pas que ça fasse partie de la réalité actuelle en tout cas des français.

FG 9

Date : 14 November 2020

Groupe : Post Brexit

Participants : 201 228 307

Présentez-vous.

228 : Je suis arrivée en Angleterre il y a un peu plus de 2 ans aussi la raison était que j'avais terminé mes études en France où j'avais rencontré mon copain qui est moitié français moitié anglais et quand on a terminé nos études on était un peu libres de faire ce qu'on veut si on veut on a tout le monde qui est pour nous en fait et on s'était dit, on s'est pas en fait donné de contraintes et y a eu une offre en Angleterre et moi j'ai dit écoute je suis jamais allée en Angleterre j'ai jamais vécu en Angleterre pourquoi pas, du coup on a déménagé en Angleterre y a ouais 2 ans euh est ce que je compte y rester je sais pas c'est vrai que là avec le confinement et le fait d'être très éloigné de la famille et de tout le monde ça m'a donné très très envie de rentrer en France euh c'est dans la tête on va dire pas spécialement à cause de l'Angleterre on va dire parce que j'aime beaucoup les Anglais, j'aime beaucoup la mentalité, j'aime beaucoup la façon de vivre, je pense que c'est plus le manque de la France que le dégout de l'Angleterre qui me ferait rentrer.

201 : Ok si tu veux je peux prendre la suite. Moi je suis arrivée en Angleterre la première fois en 2016 je suis restée 1 an et j'ai rencontré mon copain aussi qui n'est pas anglais mais qui est indien mais qui faisait son doctorat ici à Birmingham et après moi j'ai dû rentrer en France pour finir mes études pendant un an et je suis revenue en 2018 donc pour faire aussi un doctorat donc je suis pour l'instant doctorante et j'habite ici avec mon copain qui là maintenant a fini son doctorat et a un boulot dans son université et euh donc forcément vu que mon copain est Indien y a plus de considérations de visa pour lui en plus de moi donc on ne sait pas trop si on va rester ici pour l'instant on est assez contents on adore Manchester enfin je suis à Manchester on adore la ville et mon copain adore son boulot et voudrait rester dans l'organisation dans laquelle il est et voudrait y rester donc on sait pas trop surtout que pour rentrer en France faudrait qu'il ait un visa, un boulot, qu'il apprenne le français enfin c'est compliqué quoi. Et du coup comme je suis ici avec mon copain le confinement ça va j'ai l'habitude de d'être loin de ma famille donc ça m'embête genre pour Noël avec mes grands-parents et tout mais en gros ça va à peu près.

307 : Bonjour alors pour moi ma première année en Angleterre c'était y a 4 ans, j'étais aussi assistant de langue, et pendant cette année-là, bizarrement, j'ai rencontré ma copine je pense qu'on a tous un parcours similaire (rires) après cette année d'assistanat j'ai dû finir mes études et je suis revenu en Angleterre l'année dernière et on vit ensemble depuis l'année dernière en tout cas et on pense pour l'instant vivre ici sur le court terme et sur le long terme on se voit pas vivre en Angleterre du tout surtout à cause du Brexit en fait, comment ça va se passer pour nous citoyens européens, soit rester si y a pas trop de contraintes mais on se voit plus déménager en Europe plutôt que de rester en Angleterre. Voilà.

Quand parlez-vous français ?

228: Je veux bien commencer encore, alors quand j'ai déménagé en Angleterre j'étais dans une boite anglaise mais dans la branche française donc je parlais anglais avec mes collègues, je parlais français avec les clients, donc là c'était vraiment à la maison on parlait français, au travail on parlait français donc j'avais pas du tout ce sentiment de pas assez parler français euh là depuis qu'on a déménagé dans une autre ville y a un an et demi, deux ans maintenant euh je parle que anglais dans mon contexte professionnel que anglais personne ne parle français ou alors deux trois mots pour dire qu'ils parlent un peu français mais non c'est complètement en anglais donc le seul moment où je parle français ça va être ici avec mon copain ou quand j'interagis sur les réseaux avec mes amis et ma famille. Euh, je vais pas dire que j'ai pas l'impression de parler assez français parce que je pense que par rapport à d'autres expatriés j'ai quand même encore plus avec le confinement mais au moins 50% de mon temps où je parle français mais clairement je me rends compte de plus en plus j'ai du mal à parler français, là par exemple j'ai l'impression qu'il y a des phrases qui n'ont aucun sens euh chose que ne m'arrivait jamais avant j'avais toujours un français assez, très correct et presque pas

soutenu mais voilà je m'exprimais sans problème euh là je pense que de pas le parler dans un contexte professionnel j'ai plus de mal rien qu'envoyer un mail très, en français nos standards sont un peu plus élevés forcément, mais j'ai besoin de plus réfléchir alors que c'est quelque chose que j'avais pas besoin de faire avant du tout.

201 : Si on garde le même ordre alors je continue, euh alors je parle pas du tout français dans le contexte professionnel quand j'ai commencé le doctorat y avait une autre personne qui était française qui était doctorante et elle a fini genre 3 mois après que j'ai commencé donc depuis je parle pas du tout français euh dans même mon contexte personnel bah mon copain parle pas français comme je disais donc je parle anglais à la maison et j'ai rencontré très peu de français à Manchester aussi donc euh peut être même aucun je crois donc non je parle pas français (rires) je parle juste français quand je parle à mes amis en France ou à ma famille et comme J. j'ai l'impression de galérer un max en français des fois fin ma mère est prof d'anglais donc je fais pas trop gaffe en plus parce que des fois quand je trouve pas le mot je le dis en anglais parce que je sais qu'elle va comprendre mais du coup j'ai l'impression d'être une snob pas possible (rires) quand je parle à mes amis qui sont là t'arrêtes pas de parler en anglais et tout mais bon du coup ouais je galère et je pense que si je devais parler en français dans le contexte pro je ce serait encore plus difficile parce que j'écris ma thèse en anglais et le vocabulaire en français je l'ai pas du tout quoi, pas du tout.

307 : Alors pour ma part c'est plus ou moins similaire je parle jamais français à la maison, même si ma copine parle français de temps en temps on a des conversations mais ça reste très très limité je connais aucun français là où j'habite, aucun, et je pense que la dernière fois que j'ai parlé français je pense que c'était avec mes parents c'était hier et la dernière fois c'était genre y a un mois pour vous dire que je parle jamais français ! En général bah par rapport au contexte professionnel j'ai commencé un PGCE et y a une de mes collègues qui est française mais on parle tout le temps en anglais ici et ça fait que j'ai l'impression que je parle très mal français en ce moment ça fait bizarre mon cerveau va exploser j'aime pas du tout ça cette sensation ! Mais c'est vrai que mon seul lien avec le français ça reste quand je lis l'actualité et à part ça c'est zéro.

Avez-vous un sentiment de manque, l'impression de ne pas parler « assez » français?

307 : Franchement ouais, je sens que mon français devient de plus en plus bizarre et pas mauvais mais moins standard en fait oui je le ressens, je sens que mon français se calque avec l'anglais et dans ma tête ça me semble assez bizarre en fait ça me semble pas du tout normal.

Dans quel contexte parleriez-vous anglais avec un francophone ?

228 : Au travail éventuellement c'est vrai que dans mon ancienne boîte on était des groupes enfin on avait plusieurs entités donc y avait l'entité français et puis allemande etc forcément quand on faisait des réunions tous ensemble on parlait anglais et à ce moment-là j'interagissais en anglais avec mes collègues mais c'était quand même le français qui arrive naturellement en premier quand je parle avec un français ou une française ça c'est sûr que, à part peut-être dans un contexte où on va être en soirée comme beaucoup de gens ont cité j'imagine où on va parler en anglais pour isoler une personne ou plus mais même dans des grands groupes comme en soirée c'est vrai que s'il y a un français ça va me faire tellement plaisir que je vais probablement parler un petit peu en français.

201 : Moi pour moi c'est aussi dans le contexte pro je parlais en anglais avec la française avec qui j'interagissais avant qu'elle finisse pour pas isoler les autres et puis des fois ça nous arrivait de parler français parce qu'on se rendait compte que ça faisait longtemps qu'on n'avait pas parlé français donc voilà mais ouais même parfois je pense que c'est aussi une question d'effort quoi si j'ai passé toute

ma journée à parler anglais, que je viens de passer 2h à rédiger un truc en anglais j'ai pas l'idée de passer au français fin je reste dans la même langue sinon ça commence à tout se croiser ça va plus.

307 : Pour ma part c'est je parle avec ma coloc française sans qu'on est en face to face donc voilà sinon c'est toujours en anglais tout le temps quand on est avec d'autres personnes qui sont avec nous anglaises forcément on va parler en anglais on va pas commencer à parler français à part si on a quelque chose qui est particulier qu'on peut pas vraiment partager à tout le monde oui c'est sûr qu'on va peut-être switcher en français et pas forcément parler en anglais oui.

Avez-vous subi des discriminations depuis le Brexit?

228 : Honnêtement personnellement jamais, je n'ai jamais reçu aucun commentaire, déjà j'ai très peu de mal à imaginer que le Brexit est dans un mois et demi euh ces 4 dernières années on en a tellement entendu parler que j'ai même pas l'impression que c'est quelque chose de concret et que ça ne va même pas arriver donc déjà par rapport à ça pas spécialement, après j'ai honnêtement jamais eu de problème avec ma langue alors que je la parle avec mon copain tous les jours donc dans la rue au supermarché partout je n'ai jamais eu de regard étrange de commentaire ou alors ça va être des commentaires positifs de mes collègues par exemple oh c'est trop mignon l'accent français c'est trop joli oh continue de parler français, mais jamais de commentaire négatif, alors je ne sais pas si c'est parce que je suis très chanceuse ou si c'est tout le monde qui a cette même expérience, ce même ressenti mais de mon côté en tout cas aucun problème.

201: Personnellement je n'ai jamais eu de commentaire négatif non plus plutôt même des commentaires positifs, enfin je ne sais pas si c'est positif c'est plutôt « ah j'avais pas réalisé que t'étais français parce que t'as pas trop d'accent » et alors qu'il y en a d'autres qui immédiatement savent que je suis française donc je ne sais pas si j'ai un accent ou pas. Mais non pas du tout de commentaires négatifs mais je pense que c'est aussi lié au milieux sociaux que je fréquente, enfin le milieu universitaire est pas réputé pour être très xénophobe on va dire parce que j'ai eu des copines qui étaient en Angleterre autour de 2016 aussi qui travaillaient dans les bars ou dans les restos par exemple et qui elles ont eu des réflexions négatives par des clients c'est bon le Brexit c'est fini va faire tes valises et rentre chez toi, des trucs assez sévères quand même donc je pense que ça joue beaucoup le milieu qu'on fréquente en fait.

307: Euh je pense pas avoir eu de commentaire négatif ou même de commentaire positif quand je parlais avec quelqu'un non je pense jamais avoir expérimenté ce genre de choses mais après c'est vrai ça dépend de notre milieu et aussi de où on est géographiquement enfin surtout si on est dans une ville qui a voté majoritairement contre Brexit on est sûr de ne pas avoir ce genre de commentaires mais si on se retrouve je sais pas où vous avez habité, où vous habitez en ce moment mais je sais pas peut être dans le nord ce serait une histoire un peu différente, en tout cas après c'est c'est…

228 : C'est possible moi personnellement je suis à Bristol donc c'est quand même une ville avec un gros mélange culturel je pense que c'est peut être un petit peu plus accepté même j'imagine Londres c'est pareil, je sais pas quelle région a voté quoi donc je parle vraiment en terme de ville et de l'image que j'en ai mais je peux imaginer que des grandes villes où y a déjà beaucoup de melting pot et de gens d'origines différentes c'est peut-être plus accepté que dans une petit village au fin fond du nord effectivement je sais pas peut être que c'est un peu différent.

201 : J'ai habité à Birmingham qui est un peu le centre leave de l'Angleterre en tout cas et même là j'ai pas eu de réflexion négative donc. Mais c'est là que la personne dont je parlais tout à l'heure a eu des réflexions dans les bars donc peut être que oui, Manchester en tout cas pas du tout, j'ai habité

que dans le Nord de l'Angleterre donc je connais que ça et enfin ça va quoi mais après peut être que c'est moi et pas d'autres personnes.

(J'explique là où la recherche en est et le cas Polonais/Roumain dans les études sur lesquelles je me base)

228: Dans mon entreprise y a une grande communauté de personnes qui viennent de l'Europe de l'est et dont j'entends régulièrement des critiques en fait sur eux personnellement alors je ne pense que ce soit leur nationalité qui pose problème mais le fait qu'ils ne parlent pas du tout la langue anglaise et je pense qu'il y a ce problème d'intégration aussi mais après peut être que vous vous avez discuté avec des gens qui étaient de Pologne mais qui parlaient très bien anglais et dans ce cas ça doit peut être aussi influencer mais je sais que nous les critiques sont très basées sur le fait qu'ils viennent mais y a pas d'intégration en fait avec le pays parce qu'ils ne parlent pas du tout la langue ça veut dire qu'on est obligés de faire leurs contrats en russe on est obligés de faire donc c'est très compliqué.

J'explique la différence expat/immigré dans ma recherche

228 : Alors du coup quel est le pourcentage de français qui restent en Angleterre ?

Difficile à dire, car on n'a que les chiffres des français enregistrés au registres des expatriés.

Qu'en est-il de votre identité française ? La langue a-t-elle une place importante dans votre identité ?

228 : Alors je vais dire que j'ai jamais quand j'étais en France en tout cas je me considérais pas comme une française chauvine qui voulait faire sa vie en France dont le français c'était ma nation ma patrie pas du tout j'étais même très contente de quitter la France je ne m'y retrouvais pas dans plein de choses et c'est en fait depuis que je suis en Angleterre que j'ai réalisé à quel point j'étais française principalement pas forcément au niveau de la langue mais c'est vrai que je me rends compte que la personne que je suis profondément est français c'est-à-dire que je parle bien anglais je me débrouille bien j'ai pas un accent je voilà j'ai jamais eu de critiques par rapport à mon anglais mais clairement je ne suis pas la même personne quand je parle anglais et quand je parle français, je me considère moins drôle, même si mon vocabulaire est correct en anglais il n'est pas aussi poussé qu'en français donc forcément dès que je veux faire une phrase une argumentation ça va être beaucoup plus simpliste que si je l'avais faite en français et du coup je pense que vraiment la personne vraiment que je suis est française et est forcément liée à ma langue française puisque c'est la langue dans laquelle je m'exprime le mieux et où je peux vraiment faire transparaître ma personnalité mon ouais ma culture et tout en fait en français, et même si j'arrive plus ou moins en anglais c'est pas la même chose c'est pas la même personne et c'est pas 100% moi je trouve en tout cas.

201 : C'est marrant parce que moi je trouve que c'est l'opposé parce que j'ai toujours enfin c'est bizarre mais j'ai toujours su que je voulais pas rester en France depuis que j'étais au collège je savais que je voulais partir habiter ailleurs c'était hyper important pour moi je ne sais pas pourquoi, mais du coup ça veut dire que en fait j'ai pas habité en France plus de 4 mois d'affilé depuis 2015 donc ça va faire 5 ans et du coup quasiment toute ma vie est en anglais ou ailleurs donc j'ai habité en suède j'ai habité au Kosovo j'ai habité ici j'ai beaucoup bougé en fait et du coup mon identité de française elle a plutôt été donnée par les autres que par moi-même parce que c'est quelque chose qu'il faut que tu dises sinon les gens ils arrivent pas à te placer et ou c'est les autres qui te disent ah oui t'es française ok donc tu dois être comme ci comme ça et c'est vrai que sur certaines choses je me rends compte que je suis française donc par exemple la semaine dernière j'ai fait une ah comment ça se dit, j'ai demandé une provisional license pour avoir quelque chose qui n'est pas justement français quand on

me demande une pièce d'identité parce que les gens sont toujours confus c'est français le permis de conduire je connais pas, donc je me suis dit tant qu'à faire ça coûte pas cher ok, et là ils me demandent pour prouver mon identité de renvoyer ma carte d'identité, par la poste et ça ça me paraît quelque chose de absolument dingue parce qu'en France la première chose qu'on nous apprend c'est tu ne donnes jamais les copies originales de tes documents c'est pas possible quoi, enfin voilà des trucs comme ça où je me dis c'est pas possible fin… Là je suis carrément française. Mais sinon non au niveau de la langue oui je me sens différente en anglais ou en français mais comme ça fait très longtemps que je parle en anglais quasiment tous les jours j'ai l'impression que j'arrive plus à dire ce que je veux en anglais qu'en français et je pense que c'est aussi parce que j'écris une thèse en anglais donc j'ai l'habitude de faire des arguments en anglais et donc je me sens plus moi-même en anglais qu'en français c'est très bizarre ouais c'est très très bizarre mais c'est comme ça pour l'instant.

307: C'est assez je trouve ça assez bizarre de se dire que c'est toujours l'autre qui nous définit à la fin c'est jamais soi et j'ai l'impression que c'est on m'a toujours dit ah mais t'es français en fait et moi je me suis jamais identifié comme français jamais de ma vie en fait quand je rencontre des gens je pense pas à dire ouais moi je suis français et ainsi de suite donc voilà à part si je sens ?? d'une politique très très à droite bien sûr, mais moi je trouve ça bizarre de me dire que c'est les gens qui te définissent et pas toi-même enfin je pense pas me être me enfin ah ! Je me sens pas français en fait en fait en Angleterre pas du tout je pense pas ni être anglais ou quoi que ce soit je pense juste être moi-même après tout par rapport au lieu où on vit peut être qu'on se définit comme anglais ou français en fait. Y a des gens qui vivent depuis x années en France qui vont jamais se définir comme français pourtant ils ont la carte d'identité française et ainsi de suite et des gens qui vivent en Angleterre depuis x années qui ont le passeport et ainsi de suite mais qui vont jamais s'identifier donc je pense que l'identité est mouvante elle est pas figée donc je pense pas être français, je pense pas ni être anglais ou je pense pas être quoi que ce soit en fait.

FG 10

Date : 14 November 2020

Group : Post Brexit

Participants : 148, 310, 493

Présentez-vous.

148 : Je suis arrivée en avril 2019 je suis ici parce que mon conjoint travaille ici sinon moi je travaille par internet donc ça m'a pas changé grand-chose et mon conjoint il est venu ici du fait du Brexit, je dis pas grâce ou à cause mais du fait du Brexit parce qu'il travaille dans une entreprise qui a décidé de faire de la production ici au RU la production était basée en France et donc avec le Brexit les taxes les complications etc l'entreprise a décidé de faire de la production ce qu'ils ne faisaient pas avant donc du coup il est venu pour faire du transfert de technologie. Voilà on a deux enfants mais qui sont en France et qui sont grands, c'est pas notre première expérience d'expatriation on vit tous les deux en plein centre-ville de Nottingham.

310 : Je suis arrivée en septembre 2017 à Londres parce que j'ai fait des études de langues en France et j'ai été assistante de langue aussi pendant 2 ans et voilà ça m'a tellement plu que j'ai eu l'opportunité de faire un PGCE c'est les études pour faire professeur de langues enfin professeur en général en Angleterre, du coup j'ai fait ça l'année dernière et cette année je travaille en tant que prof de français dans une école à Londres.

493 : Je suis arrivé en 2013 mais j'étais déjà à Londres en 2007, de 2007 à 2009, mais après je suis parti en Australie et je suis revenu ici en 2013 donc je suis là depuis 8 ans ? 7 ans ? ouais c'est ça et euh je travaille pour une compagnie française pour [nom de la compagnie] donc je travaille en français et je sais pas combien de temps je vais rester ici je suis bien pour l'instant donc ouais je sais pas pour le futur.

Quand parlez-vous français ? Parlez-vous « assez » français ?

310: Alors moi oui du coup parce que mes collègues j'ai une collègue française aussi et une autre collègue prof de français donc j'ai l'opportunité de parler avec elles français on le fait pas forcément naturellement parce que bah du fait qu'il y ait d'autres personnes qui parlent anglais autour de nous on estime qu'on doit parler anglais aussi quoi mais après si je suis seule avec elle je pense que bah ma collègue française on parle français comme ça et l'autre dame apprécie qu'on parle français pour pratiquer aussi dans mon milieu du travail je parle assez français.

148 : Je vais peut-être prendre la suite, malheureusement je ne parle quasiment que français moi j'aimerais bien avoir des opportunités de parler anglais, donc je travaille depuis chez moi avant le confinement je m'obligeais à sortir et j'allais dans un coworking au moins une demi-journée par semaine et puis j'ai arrêté avec le confinement mon conjoint est ici donc c'est plus pratique y a pas l'effet solitude de travailler seul chez soi et de voir personne du coup je suis restée ici et puis moi je travaille avec la France donc du coup voilà je travaille que en français. Euh voilà. J'essaye de regarder la télé anglaise et puis bah quand on pouvait sortir bah on avait quelques activités qui nous permettaient quand même de voir des non francophones et de parler un peu anglais, moi en tout cas, mon conjoint le parle pour le travail.

493 : Pour moi je pense que j'ai un bon mix au travail je travaille pour le marché français pour une boîte française donc la hiérarchie est plutôt française mes collègues je suis dans une équipe française enfin non on est mix mais y a quand même 5 français dans mon équipe euh donc ouais je travaille en français je parle français avec mes collègues mais mon travail est aussi à moitié en anglais donc j'ai aussi des collègues allemands enfin internationaux donc je parle en anglais avec eux mon management direct est anglais et à la maison j'ai une partenaire qui est pas française donc je parle aussi en anglais avec elle donc ça va j'ai un bon mix je trouve je parle assez français au travail je suis tout le temps en français ouais donc j'aime bien.

Quand parlez-vous anglais avec un francophone ?

148 : Moi je vais peut-être répondre ça nous arrive régulièrement de mettre des mots anglais dans nos échanges mais un tout petit peu quoi. Oui des anglicismes ou des mots parce qu'ils nous viennent à l'esprit ou parce qu'ils sont un peu fun donc oui régulièrement.

310 : Moi j'aurais tendance à parler anglais avec une personne française si l'environnement autour de nous est anglais c'est-à-dire que les gens ne parlent pas forcément avec nous mais pour donner l'opportunité de parler si jamais ils veulent intervenir ou quoi même s'ils ne le font pas à la base.

493: Ouais moi pareil j'étais justement avec une Suisse francophone dehors et on parlait en anglais et y a même des gens qui étaient avec nous mais qui étaient pas dans la conversation qui nous ont demandé mais pourquoi vous parlez pas en français et c'était juste plus naturel de, vu qu'il y avait des gens qui parlaient anglais autour de parler anglais, et sinon au travail ça peut m'arriver avec des collègues euh quand on avait déjà commencé une conversation avec des anglais qui partent on continue en anglais en fait on oublie de switcher en français.

310 : Ah oui c'est possible j'avais une amie qui était Suisse et qui avait un mari anglais et ses enfants anglais qui parlaient anglais tout le temps et du coup avec moi d'office elle parlait anglais parce que c'était sa langue avec laquelle elle était le plus à l'aise actuellement en fait même si on pouvait parler français.

Avez-vous subi des discriminations depuis le Brexit ?

148 : Moi ça m'est jamais arrivé, moi ça m'est jamais arrivé et je pense pas que le Brexit ait un impact particulier ce qui pourrait avoir un impact particulier ce qui me ferait parler plus doucement ou peut être moins parler français en public c'est non fin je sais pas si vous êtes comme moi j'ai reçu plusieurs mails suite aux différents attentats et au niveau d'alerte qui est renforcé en terme de sécurité aussi bien en France qu'au qu'en UK, donc c'est peut être ça qui me fait réfléchir quand je suis dans la rue en me disant bon peut-être être un peu plus discrète en français mais c'est pas le Brexit.

310 : Ouais je suis d'accord avec F. pour le coup c'est vrai que j'y pensais aussi récemment en me disant mince si ça se trouve y a des gens qui vont me détester juste parce que je parle français et pareil par rapport aux attentats pas au Brexit. Euh sinon ça m'est arrivé quand j'ai fait un test de langues l'année dernière et c'était le gars qui faisait passer les résultats qui m'a dit ah oui très bien réussi mais je pense qu'il y a d'autres gens qui ne seraient pas contents que tu sois là parce que tu n'es pas anglaise, voilà, il m'a dit « c'est pas mon cas mais je te dis ça » j'étais là ah d'accord ok j'ai pas su quoi répondre mais voilà.

493 : Moi non, avant ou après le Brexit non j'ai jamais eu de commentaire pour le français le seul truc c'est quand j'étais à Londres et que je parlais français dans les transports t'entendais souvent une autre personne qui était française en fait y a des français partout à Londres donc… Mais à part ça sinon non pas de aucun problème après le Brexit.

Qu'en est-il de votre identité et langue française ? Quitter le UK plutôt que d'abandonner identité française ?

493 : J'y vais, ouais moi je suis super attaché à la langue française je suis vraiment très content de pouvoir parler français au travail ça m'avait manqué parce que j'ai pas toujours travaillé dans des sur le marché français et euh pareil pour le Brexit le passeport tout ça je peux demander le passeport britannique ça fait plus de 5 ans que je suis ici euh mais ça m'intéresse pas je garde le passeport français. Je sais que je peux avoir les deux mais ouais non j'ai peut-être un attachement à la France et si je demande si jamais j'essaye de faire des papiers pour un autre pays ce serait pour l'Inde vu que je suis né en Inde j'ai plus un attachement pour ce pays mais le passeport britannique non et si y a un problème et qu'on doit partir ouais je partirai en France.

310 : Moi c'est plus dans le contexte de l'humour notamment par exemple y a des jeux de mots en français ou des petites références des films ou quoi que je peux pas traduire en anglais parce que juste ils comprendront pas donc pour ça j'y suis assez attachée aussi genre je suis contente quand je peux parler avec mes amis de blague entre nous juste, oui pareil que M. j'imagine que si je me sens pas accueillie dans un pays quel que soit le pays j'ai pas de problème à partir parce que c'est important de me sentir bien là où je suis.

148: Je me suis jamais vraiment posé la question de l'attachement à la langue française donc je suis un peu perplexe par rapport à la question, nous on, le Brexit n'a pas d'impact parce qu'on est venus du fait du Brexit donc on est venus en connaissance de cause voilà et à la limite on était super contents de cette opportunité, euh, moi j'ai un attachement à la langue française dans ce sens que

c'est une langue qui quand même rayonne même si elle est en perte de vitesse depuis des années, mais quand on voit le nombre de mots utilisés en français dans différentes langues même je vois le vocabulaire de danse par exemple tous les mots techniques sont en français et je suppose qu'il y a plein plein d'autres domaines où c'est en français donc c'est plutôt une reconnaissance pour moi du rayonnement de la langue française plus qu'un attachement quoi. Voilà donc moi je suis venue pour l'expérience j'ai poussé poussé pour avoir cette expérience et puis d'autres que ce soit ici ou ailleurs, nous on n'est là que pour quelques années on le sait on profite un max.

Autre chose ?

493 : Juste un petit commentaire sur les autres nationalités, c'est vrai que moi par exemple je travaille avec des Allemands ils ont plus facilement tendance à parler anglais quand y a d'autres gens que entre les Français on a une tendance à parler français entre nous assez facilement.

148 : La seule chose que je peux rajouter c'est que moi je me suis aperçue que j'ai plein de gens en France quand ils m'appellent commencent par quelques mots en anglais ou dans les mails comme ils savent que j'habite ici hop ils m'envoient des petits mots en anglais voilà c'est eux qui passent à l'anglais des petits mots comme ça et ils sont tout contents.

310 : Juste pour rebondir là-dessus c'est juste que parfois j'ai honte parce que j'ai des amis français qui sortent avec moi et d'autres gens qui parlent une autre langue, et tout de suite y a une tendance à parler français juste entre eux du coup je dis bon les gars va falloir parler anglais du coup c'est vrai que c'est important ça dès que les Français se reconnaissent entre eux ils parlent français.

493 : C'est une belle langue.