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Citizenship, securitization and suspicion in UK ESOL policy

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Citizenship, securitization and suspicion in UK ESOL policy

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Abstract

This paper looks at the increasingly strong links between security and English language policy in the UK, and it seeks to open a dialogue between sociolinguistics and security studies. It outlines concepts related to securitization, focusing on the processes involved in turning a political issue into a matter of security, and it re-examines English language policy developments from 2001 to 2014. Marking the beginning of a period of increased concern with security, the initial introduction of language tests for citizenship can be characterised as 'exceptional securitization'. But this commitment to exceptional measures has gradually permeated to other entry and settlement requirements for migrants, and has affected other areas of English language education as well. This subsequent process can be described as 'assembling suspicion', and it has been accompanied by increased surveillance through the development of a 'ban-optican'.

Introduction

> **2001:** A few weeks prior to the 9/11 New York bombings, the national headlines are dominated by riots in the north of England between British-Asian youths and far-right National Front supporters, also involving riot police. In the aftermath, the Cantle report (Cantle 2002) concludes that racially segregated 'parallel lives' dividing white British and British Asian communities are due in part to supposedly low English language proficiency among the British Asians. This is supported by three other reports on the same region (Ouseley 2001; Ritchie 2001; Denham 2002), and this leads to a dominant discourse which projects a lack of English as a cause for community tension (Blackledge 2005; 2006). Immigrants' acquisition of citizenship moves into focus, and in 2005, the LUK (Life in the UK) citizenship test is introduced, requiring immigrants to demonstrate that they possess 'sufficient knowledge about life in the UK' and 'sufficient knowledge' of English language in order to become British citizens (Home Office 2002a).
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> **2011:** The British Prime Minister David Cameron gives a speech in April which declares that multiculturalism as a form of integration has failed: "I believe it's time to turn the page on the failed policies of the past" (Cameron 2011a). The setting for this declaration is the Munich Security Conference. The Prime Minister highlights a 'hierarchy of threats' which are framed together (Bigo 2008), ranging from terrorism to migrant language proficiency. Cameron's speech alludes to NATO, defence spending, overseas military efforts, Islamic extremism, terrorism and violence in the Middle East, and it also deals with English language proficiency which it identifies as a causal factor in potential terrorism. A failure to learn English is viewed as a failure to integrate and a weakness of identity, potentially leading to a predisposition towards terrorist acts against the state.

In 2001 and 2011 in the UK, it was claimed that migrants' lack of proficiency in the English language constituted a threat to the stability of local communities and the nation, leading to violent social unrest or even to terrorism. To understand how this view of the significance of not knowing much English has developed, this paper draws on the academic field of security studies, and it describes the way in which a security agenda has come to dominate legislation and political discourse about citizenship and the testing and teaching of English for speakers of other languages (ESOL). The paper acknowledges Piersen's comment that "[c]ontemporary social scientists typically take a 'snapshot' view of political life, but there is often a strong case to be made for shifting from snapshots to moving pictures" (2004 :1), and it describes a period of over ten years. It traces a shift in the way in which English for migrants has been treated as a security issue, starting

in 2001 as a matter of exceptional urgency and then developing into a set of more routine practices, interventions and discourses governed by suspicion.

In recent years, linguists have produced a good deal of critical analysis of the ways in which language proficiency has become a key part of citizenship (Blackledge 2005; Shohamy 2006; McNamara & Roever 2006; Extra et al 2009), and there have also been references to the links between language and security (e.g. Blackledge & Creese 2010: 258; Cooke & Simpson 2012: 123; Lu & Corbett 2012: 325). But so far, applied and sociolinguists have not engaged very much with security studies, even though this has itself experienced its own 'linguistic turn' (Huysmans 2006: 13; Bigo 2012: 279). So this paper explores the value of a commensurate 'security turn' in sociolinguistics, and it begins by sketching some of the fundamental assumptions in security studies, drawing on the work of the 'Copenhagen School' and scholars such as Bigo and Huysmans. It then applies these ideas to the UK in two stages. In the first, it describes how exceptional measures for testing and teaching migrants English were introduced after 2001, drawing on political speeches and reports that followed the riots in the north of England. In the second, it outlines the ways in which a climate of suspicion has become normal, gradually intensifying English testing requirements, spreading into education more generally, and finding expression in the development of ever increasing surveillance. After that, the paper offers some concluding comments on the potential links between security and sociolinguistics.

Dissolving borders and a continuum of threats: Security studies and securitisation

Borders can no longer be conceived in strictly territorial terms of state sovereignty (Vaughan-Williams 2009). According to Balibar (1998: 220), borders are "multiplied and reduced in their localization…thinned out and doubled…no longer the shores of politics but…the space of the political itself." Borders are reimagined, reconstructed, contorted and shaped in many diffuse and sometimes political ways, and the management of these borders requires changes in the 'security apparatuses' (Huysmans 2006):

> "In very simple terms, we can no longer distinguish between an internal order reigning, thanks to the police, by holding the monopoly on legitimate violence, and an anarchic international order which is maintained by an equilibrium of national powers vis-à-vis the armies and diplomatic alliances… When we break down the dichotomy between knowledge of the inside and the outside, the border between the police world and the military world appears to be more permeable. We can thus take account of all the intermediary agencies such as polices with military status, border guards, customs agents, or immigration agents, to better understand the links [that] these agents establish among themselves and how the effects of their positions have implications on their respective narratives." (Bigo 2008:14, 16)

With the dissolution of a dichotomized inside/outside frontier, there is a diffusion of security and border work from 'classic' areas such as border guards and military to 'neo modern' areas like intelligence and antiterrorism (Bigo 2012). The professionals who do 'border work' converge as different professions and fields of knowledge seek to share information and roles, although the 'field of (in)security' that emerges is far from unified:

> "[w]hile it is certainly true that all these agencies have an interest in maintaining the terms that political actors use to label and frame the issues, they overlay and invest these definitions with their own significances and practices. In this respect, the ongoing conflicts between agencies work in conjunction with the struggle that each agency undertakes to be recognised by politicians who still retain the power to abolish or reform them…. This struggle also occurs in conjunction with the struggle to exclude other actors (churches, human rights organisations, Red

Cross, alternative media) by disqualifying their points of view on the definition of threats and on the public policies to prevent the threats" (Bigo 2008: 27)

Even so, they play a major part in what Rose calls 'governing the margins', managing a 'new territory of exclusion' (1996: 347) through a range of political, economic, bureaucratic and technological means.

With this dissolution of inside/outside borders, "a semantic continuum is constructed, with the struggle against terrorism at one end and the reception of refugees at the other" (Bigo 2008: 16). This is linked to a continuum of threats (Bigo 2002), which range from terrorism to the 'cultural stranger' whose way of life calls for measures to ensure 'integration', including citizenship requirements in which he/she must demonstrate her/his willingness to comply and ability to integrate (Schinkel 2010; Nyers 2013). As inside and outside intertwine and international security extends through the 'societal' sector, they converge "toward the same figure of risk and unease management, the immigrant" (Bigo 2002: 77).

These developments have been matched by shifts in the academic field of security studies. Traditionally and for many years, security studies tended to be state-centric, focusing on national and military threats (Roe 2008; Williams 2010), such as the threat of warfare due to the military capabilities of the old Soviet Union and United States of America during the Cold War (Huysmans 1998; Buzan & Hansen 2009). But as post-Cold War political and ideological orders have taken new forms, security studies has reconceptualised what constitutes a 'threat' and what it means to 'survive' (Waever et al 1993: Buzan et al 1998; Buzan & Hansen 2009), so that research now "explor[es] the social and political processes that render issues into security questions, and the governmental rationales that security practices inscribe in phenomena" (Guillaume & Huysmans 2013: 1). Led by Barry Buzan, Ole Waever and Jaap de Wilde, the Copenhagen School has been at the forefront of this reconfiguration, and it has expanded the notion of threat so that this no longer only covers real threats to the state entailing national defence and military capabilities, but also extends to potentially 'existential' threats to society itself (Waever et al 1993; Buzan et al 1998; Collins 2007; Williams 2010). In this way, the Copenhagen School has deepened and widened the field of security from being military and state-centred towards the protection of human collectivities more generally.

One of its most valuable contributions has been the notion of 'securitization'. Securitization moves an issue from ordinary politics into security (Buzan et al 1998; McDonald 2008), and it entails

"the positioning through speech acts (usually by a political leader) of a particular issue as a threat to survival, which in turn (with the consent of the relevant constituency) enables emergency measures and the suspension of normal politics based on this issue" (McDonald 2008: 567).

During securitization, a 'referent object' is said to need protection, and the 'securitizing actor' performs speech acts in the name of the collectivity which move the issue from politics to security. There is said to be a 'grammar of security' within these speech acts, involving (a) the existential threat, (b) a point of no return, and (c) proposals for a way out (Buzan et al 1998). In addition, at least two conditions must be met for successful securitization to occur. First, there have to be facilitating circumstances, and second, there is an extended process of 'managing unease' (Bigo 2002) that lasts much longer than any single speech act itself.

There are more elaborate definitions of securitization available (e.g. Balzacq 2011),[1] and from a sociolinguistic point of view, the 'speech act' focus constitutes a rather rudimentary theory of

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[1] Balzacq's definition includes multimodal and affective aspects. According to Balzacq, securitization is: "An articulated assemblage of practices whereby heuristic artefacts (metaphors, policy tools, image repertoires, analogies,

communication (a point developed within security studies by Stritzel 2007). Nevertheless, the essential elements in the Copenhagen model provide a valuable heuristic for investigating specific empirical cases, and it is worth now turning back to citizenship and ESOL in the UK, to explore the illumination that this theory of securitisation can offer to an account of the linguistic ideologies and racialized discourses that have mobilised a major shift in policy.

Securitizing English in the UK

The initial *conditions facilitating* the securitization of English in the UK have already been sketched in the box at the start of this paper. In the north of England, rising levels of poverty and high levels of unemployment came together with increasing racial tension between the Asian and White communities to create a combustible climate which was heightened by the burgeoning popularity of far-right groups such as the British National Party (Kundnani 2007; Pilkington 2009; Dancygier 2010). In the summer of 2001, riots involving conflict between Asians (mainly second generation Pakistanis and Bangladeshis) and white youth occurred in three towns: in Oldham on 26th and 27th May, in Burnley on 23rd and 24th June, and in Bradford on 7th and 8th July (Denham 2002). On its television screens, the British public witnessed visceral scenes of violence and devastation, as well as anti-rioting police being attacked by Asian youths, and this led to questions about integration and race relations.

One of the first *securitizing actors* was Ann Cryer, the Labour MP for Keighley, a constituency in Bradford. On 10th July 2001, two days after the Bradford riots, the Home Secretary David Blunkett started a House of Commons debate on the disturbances, and Ann Cryer began:

> "The reason why young Asian men were on the streets of Bradford last Saturday could just be that they feel disaffected. They cannot appreciate why the good jobs, the expensive cars and the nice homes should all go the whites. Perhaps we, too, should be asking why...May I suggest that the remedies will not be found in new and better community centres?...In Canada, which has otherwise very similar immigration laws to ours" (Hansard 2001a).

At that point, Cryer was interrupted for not asking a question, but Blunkett picked up on her reference to Canada. He identified this with the Canadian induction programme, involving the acquisition of language and culture, and he went on to state that the Government was in the process of creating a more comprehensive British citizenship.

A week later, on 17th July 2001, Ann Cryer returned to her comments. She established her social capital through her local reputation as well as her political authority by saying that as an MP for one fifth of the Bradford area, she had "30 years of work and friendship with the Asian community in Keighley", and that "the riots on 7 July in Bradford… took place within a few miles of my home" (Hansard 2001b). Then she moved to *the point of no return,* evoking 'unease' with her use of words like 'anxieties' and 'fear':

> "Since I was elected in 1997, I have had many anxieties about the under-achievement of the Bangladeshi and Pakistani communities in my constituency. Last year, Warwick University published a report confirming my worst fear: the Sikh and Hindu communities are doing extremely well...and the Bangladeshi and Pakistani communities are massively underachieving, both academically and economically. The time has come to ask why."

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stereotypes, emotions etc.) are contextually mobilized by a securitizing actor, who works to prompt an audience to build a coherent network of implications (feelings, sensations thoughts and intuitions) about the critical vulnerability of a referent object is what is to be secured, that concurs with the securitizing actor's reasons for choices and actions, by investing the referent subject [the threat] which such an aura of unprecedented threatening complexion that a customized policy must be undertaken immediately to block its development" (Balzacq 2011: 3).

With the riots in the background, she placed community breakdown at the centre of debate:

> "We need to examine why those young Asian men were so keen to join in the criminal activity...Let us consider the causes. There is little point in blaming the situation simply on racism and Islamophobia. We must consider in detail what causes the under-achievement that I have mentioned. The main cause is the lack of a good level of English, which stems directly from the established tradition of bringing wives and husbands from the sub-continent who have often had no education and have no English. As a result, the vast majority of Keighley households have only one parent with any English and children go to school speaking only Punjabi or Bangla. That frequently gets children off to a slow start, which can damage their progress and mean that they leave school with few, if any, qualifications. Many cannot get paid work or find only poor paid jobs" (Hansard 2001b).

If the wives and husbands cannot speak English, she reasoned, their children will not speak the language, or not very well. They will grow up with bleak prospects and few if any qualifications. In the worst case scenario, socialization like this creates disaffected youths inclined to fight with the police in riots, as evidenced just a few days earlier. There is a threat to the collectivity – the alien influence of Asian sub-continental non-English speakers is not only responsible for the 'importation of poverty' but also threatens society's ability to reproduce itself, both as a speech community and as country of prosperity (Buzan et al 1998).

Cryer then *proposes the way out* (Buzan et al 1998), or in her own words, 'remedies.' One remedy is for English to be spoken in the home. Another solution us for English classes to be available. However, it is Cryer's third 'remedy' which is most decisive:

> "The Government should consider an element of English as an entry clearance requirement for husbands and wives who seek permanent settlement. There should be a further requirement for them to take a full-time English course to reach a reasonable level...My proposals are in line with immigration requirements in many countries, including the United States of America, Canada and the Netherlands."

With the remedies in place, Cryer then predicts what will happen if the requisite action is taken, as well as what the consequences of inaction would be:

> "[integration of the Asian community] will be easier to achieve when all members of the Asian community have some grasp of English and when whites and Asians recognize that there can be gain from all sides living together in peace and understanding."

Integration, peace and understanding will be possible if the Asian (particularly Pakistani and Bangladeshi) community improve their level of English (which places the blame for the riots on the migrant communities). Alternatively, if action is not taken, the result will be "a Belfast-like situation in which we will all be losers including whites". Northern Ireland has been a site of civil unrest and violence with a British military presence for many years, and this provocative reference adds a harder and potentially violent edge to the threat.

Cryer's 'speech act' didn't operate alone. It cited the Ouseley Report (2001), compiled before the riots, and it fed the wider currency of 'community cohesion' as an antidote to the problem of community fragmentation (Kostakapoulou 2006) – prior to the 2001 riots, the term 'community cohesion' had been barely used in public policy and urban planning discourse (Robinson 2008). Self-segregation and a lack of community cohesion was also linked to the English language in three post-riot reports. Denham (2002: 12) declared that

"there are a number of reasons why people choose to be close to others like themselves...For ethnic minorities, such as the Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities in Bradford, Burnley and Oldham, language may also an important factor if they do not speak English."

In an account that was subsequently taken as testimony to the failure of multiculturalism (Turner 2006), Cantle (2002: 4) spoke of

"communities leading parallel lives delineated by high levels of segregation in housing and schools, reinforced by differences in language, culture and religion."

And the Oldham Independent Review (Ritchie 2001: 82) claimed that:

"there is resentment that many Asians have only a poor understanding of English. This results in a lack of interaction between the white and Asian communities. This lack of interaction leads to suspicion and fear."

In each case, there is a profound sense of unease (Bigo 2002), and the burden of blame is firmly attributed to the Asian community and its lack of English proficiency.

The 'panacea' (Sasse 2005: 678) to such ills, caused by a lack of English and integration, would lie in new requirements for language and citizenship. Published in 2002, the Home Office White Paper *Safe Border, Safe Haven: Integration with Diversity in Modern Britain* (Home Office 2002b) outlined a set of new citizenship proposals. The legislative response to the riots arrived in the form of NIAA 2002 which demanded that immigrants and would-be citizens would require 'sufficient knowledge' of English (Home Office 2002a). This would be secured through ESOL with Citizenship classes or a new test called the LUK test (Life in the UK), focusing on the English language and British culture. Language requirements were now framed within the same legislation that dealt with illegal immigration, asylum and citizenship (Greenwood & Robins 2002; Walters 2004), and the new links between these discourses and technologies reified immigrants, irrevocably connecting them to societal instability (Huysmans 2000). Admittedly, a language requirement for national citizenship had come into existence with the British Nationality Act 1981 (Home Office 1981), but this was rarely enforced and was instead described as "often perfunctory and sometimes uselessly minimal" by the Crick Commission Report in 2003 (p.4). But post-2001, the migrant assumed a new burden of demonstrating that s/he possessed a 'sufficient' level of English. This represented a form of 'suspicion' until proven otherwise (Huysmans 2014), and this increase in the visibility of language proficiency marks the movement from a reactive post-event form of risk management to a proactive one, aimed at preventative measures to deal with a 'problem' before it emerges (de Goede 2011; Mythen et al 2012).

According to Home Secretary Blunkett,

"citizenship should be about shared participation, from the neighbourhood to national elections. That is why we must strive to connect people from different segregations, and overcome hostility and ignorance. Of course, one factor is the ability of new migrants to speak English" (Blunkett 2002:76).

The solutions would lie with the acquisition of both language and culture, in the practical aspects of learning and the symbolic dimension of demonstrating a willingness to undertake such trials. Bigo (2002: 79) places these requirements in a wider context of securitization:

"The securitization program integrates the social construction of threats and various misgivings under the designation of problems concerning state, borders, cities, democracy, and citizenship as if they were the consequences of immigration."

These processes were also merged with global events (Bigo 2008; Diez & Squire 2008). Just a matter of weeks after the 2001 riots, the 9/11 bombings took place in New York, and in his *Building Cohesive Communities* report, John Denham stated that

> "the importance of our work has been underlined by the terrorist attacks on New York and Washington DC on 11 September and the consequent rise in racist attacks and community tensions" (Denham 2002: 3).

Local community occurrences were now part of the global, and according to Robinson (2008: 15), the link between the riots and bombings now meant that "the [previously] empty concept that was community cohesion was imbued with meaning". Pilkington (2009: 3.5) suggests that both the riots and 9/11 "helped to consolidate an emerging discourse that sees institutional racism as less significant than the threat of Muslim disorder/terrorism and identifies the central issue as that of cultural integration."

In successful securitization, governments are able to adopt policies that would not ordinarily have been possible (Bright 2010). As we have seen, language requirements for citizenship were introduced in extra-ordinary circumstances as the 'resolution' to a specific 'problem' and as such, they can be regarded as 'exceptional'. But as Huysmans 2014 notes, in the years that ensue and the modifications that follow, there can be a move from exceptionalism to normality, in a prevalent and pervasive climate of risk and suspicion. In the UK post-2001, exceptionalist politics have become routinized, suffusing everyday life. The initially 'exceptional' move of introducing tests in response to social disturbance has paved the way for further language policy adaptations, and, firmly embedded within entrance and settlement requirements for migrants, these have now become much more ordinary. It is this process that is considered in the next section.

From 'exceptionalised securitization' to 'assembling suspicion'

The imposition of a language proficiency and testing regime in 2001 was unprecedented in the UK, and qualifies as a process that Huysmans calls 'exceptionalised securitization' (2014). But Huysmans goes on to describe less exceptional measures which can drift towards more diffuse practices, and he characterises this as 'assembling suspicion':

> "Assembling suspicion is a continuously developing process by relatively small changes and adaptations. It thus depends less on existential crisis points and is strongly embedded in – and, driven by – non-exceptionalised activities. It also moves easily across and between security and non-security practice." (2014:118)

Within this process, the securitization of language can provide a nodal point for several policy interstices, and in the UK, language, immigration, security, integration, citizenship, adult education and community politics have all become enmeshed in 'associative securitising' (Husymans & Guillaume 2013; Huysmans 2014).

The UK language tests now have become a *shibboleth*, serving both as a 'password' and 'transition' to inclusion into the community (Derrida 2005; McNamara 2012). The demands they make are not static but contain with them the capacity to be adjusted and further tightened according to the socio-political context. In 2007, the language regime was extended when the LUK test became a requisite for Indefinite Leave to Remain (Blackledge 2009), and following Prime Minister Cameron's expression of exasperation that history was not part of the LUK test itself (Cameron 2011b), by 2013 the test and test preparation material were changed to include history. (Few educational forms of assessment which can have been as directly affected by the comments of

a Prime Minister as the citizenship test.) With the introduction of the new handbook for the reformed test, Mark Harper, the Minister for Immigration, stated that "the new book rightly focuses on values and principles at the heart of being British. Instead of telling people how to claim benefits, it encourages participation in British life" (Home Office 2013). As well as the content and the values which the test represents (Messick 1989; McNamara & Roever 2006), there have been changes in the definition of 'sufficient knowledge' of English required by the NIAA 2002 (Home Office 2002a). In 2005, the LUK test required for citizenship involved multiple choice questions, but in 2013, a speaking and listening element was also added, demanding that test takers demonstrated level B1 proficiency on the CEFR. The *location* for testing was also modified when in 2010, the Government required non-European spouses or partners who were either entering or seeking to settle in the UK to show their English language proficiency *prior* to arrival. By pushing the language testing regime beyond territorial borders into areas of sovereignty of other countries, this constituted a form of 'pre-emptive mobility governance' allowing for the 'remote control' of borders (Broeders & Hampshire 2013).

The close connections between language and security have extended to education itself, and since 2009, over 500 putatively 'bogus' colleges have been closed, accused of allowing students to come to the UK as students for less than reputable courses and then to stay in the country. According to James Brokenshire, the Minister for Security and Immigration – and note how two hitherto separate portfolios had been merged by 2014 –

> "the student visa regime neither controlled immigration nor protected legitimate students from substandard sponsors. We have reformed the system and more than 700 education providers have been removed from the sponsor register since 2011. We now require students to prove that they have the means to support themselves, imposed rules on colleges to improve course quality and given border force officers the power to turn away people who claim they are coming to the UK to study but cannot speak English." (Brokenshire 2014)

Along with their power to deny entry, Brokenshire's speech attributed border force officers the ability to judge levels of English proficiency, and it reflected a merging of student and immigrant statuses, both under the category immigrant, conflating the neoliberal mobilities associated with EFL with the migrant mobilities indexed by ESOL.[2]

Adult ESOL classes and ESOL Citizenship classes have also been identified as an unregulated and porous area, operating with dubious entry requirements which can be exploited (Ofqual 2010). Infused with new political and security concerns (Cooke & Simpson 2008; 2012), ESOL for adults has come to be viewed more as a process of integration than education, and the suspicion of ESOL courses and colleges creates a sense of 'unease' not only about the students who attend them but also those who provide and teach them. ESOL professionals are quite often required to check the immigration statuses of their students, merging their roles with border patrol, and politicized like this within the citizenship agenda, ESOL classes are characterised by Han et al (2010: 64) as 'the front line of government security policy.' While the ESOL with citizenship classes are no longer a requisite for citizenship, the political and security dimension of ESOL is clear.

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[2] There was further evidence of this when the 2014 news programme 'Panorama' exposed fraud among international students coming to the UK. Some students were found to be paying more proficient speakers of English to sit examinations in their place, and the Home Secretary, Theresa May, responded as follows: "For too long many colleges, particularly private or further education colleges, have been selling visas and not education. It is time for them to face up to their responsibilities as purveyors of education and not abuse…This type of abuse is not acceptable and as criminals, bogus colleges and economic migrants seek new ways to exploit the system, we will continue to change our methods to clamp down on them" (Guardian 2014). In this response, May conflates adult education with immigration control, implicating EFL within a type of 'black market' around visas which is often synonymous with illegal immigration.

The new relationships between language, migration and security reach much further than entry and transition into the 'host' country. Changes in the language test and training requirements are often accompanied by new demands for residency documentation, and the information that a migrant gives for naturalisation or Indefinite Leave to Remain feeds into a system of administration which makes them visible both through the application process and, if successful, in the eventual acquisition and possession of the passport (Torpey 2000). To borrow from Foucault, the individual applying for citizenship engages with a "network of writing" that "engages them in a whole mass of documents that capture and fix them. The procedures of examination [are] accompanied at the same time by a system of intense registration and of documentary accumulation" (Foucault 1977: 189). In fact Bigo (2008; 2012) and Huysmans (2014) have extended Foucault's account of 'panoptic' surveillance with the idea of a 'ban-optican', an array of previously unrelated discourses, policies, bodies and agencies that focus on unwelcome or undesired minorities in particular. Huysmans explains:

> "The ban-optican is a technique of channelling mobilities and modulating the speed and mode of movement through a surveillant assemblage that spreads in various directions – that is, cut off at places and springing up elsewhere – … Unlike a fortress, the ban-optican does not stop movement – immigrants are rarely stopped – but rather stratifies by differentiating nature (business, tourism, refuge, trafficking and studying) and speed of mobility." (2014: 112)

The ban-optican operates in a wide array of areas of policy and everyday life, seeking to monitor both actual and potential immigrants and to influence their entry and settlement.

Conclusion

This paper has drawn on security studies to describe the emergence and development of 'regulatory instruments' (Balzacq 2011), modes of control and surveillance that now shape contemporary ESOL policy in the UK. It has described the securitizing moment of exceptionalism when these measures broke free from existing legislation and from antecedent approaches to language proficiency assessment, and it has shown how a state of exceptionalism has become ordinary in just over 10 years, spreading a sense of the risk associated with particular speakers and groups, developing the 'management of unease' across a range of sites, introducing modifications and requirements that are more and more demanding. There certainly are rivalries, conflicts, resistances, contradictions and inefficiencies within this process, making security a field of struggle rather than a unified or comprehensive formation. But the power and reach of securitisation extends far beyond ESOL, as we have witnessed most recently in the 'Trojan Horse' moral panic about Islamic influence in schools in Birmingham.[3]

In these processes, language has featured both as the object of regulative intervention and as a prominent medium for the political articulation of security concerns, and within security studies, there are strands of research that have departed from their traditional base in International Relations and now focus more closely on processes of communication. This opens a number of lines of potential connection with sociolinguistics. The securitizing moment of exceptionalism is filled with the kinds of public debate that Critical Discourse Analysis engages with, and there are already

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[3] 'Trojan Horse' refers to a letter sent to Birmingham City Council, warning of a coordinated Islamic campaign to infiltrate schools in majority Muslim schools. The letter is now believed to be a hoax, but the 'plot' was linked to radicalizing students and to extremism and terrorism. Following intense media debate and political pressure, and in spite of positive Ofsted school inspection reports which had made no mention of radicalization two years earlier, inspectors were sent back to the schools, this time with radicalization as a major concern. 'Trojan Horse' also led to a bitter spat between the Home Secretary, Theresa May, and the Secretary of State for Education, Michael Gove. Both ministers were accused of using the case for their own political gain, at the cost of the schools in question.

security studies which feature Fairclough, Wodak and Baker (e.g. Stritzel 2007; McDonald & Hunter 2013a; 2013b). But the ban-optican and the effects of assembling suspicion push surveillance and security concerns right down into the details of everyday practice, and this deserves critical attention in ethnographic studies of interaction (Karrebaek & Ghandchi 2014; Rampton (in prep)). Although it is discussed relatively seldom in the literature on language education and intercultural understanding (Charalambous & Rampton 2011), language teaching itself has profound links with security concerns,[4] and this also warrants much closer scrutiny, potentially covering the role of other language learning not only in heavily securitised states (e.g. Uhlmann 2010a; 2010b on Arabic in Israel), but also in processes of *de*-securitisation (Emmers 2013; see Charalambous et al 2014 on Greek Cypriots learning Turkish). 'Security' is in fact now a multi-faceted and omni-pervasive dynamic in contemporary life, meriting much more extensive critical attention than sociolinguists have so far given it, and this paper has attempted to open this up, drawing security studies into its analysis of the recent history of migration and language policy in the UK.

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[4] The very term 'applied linguistics' emerged in the conjunction of Bloomfield's structuralism with language training in the American army 1940 (Howatt 1984:265). See also e.g. Scollon & Scollon 2007)

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