The Digital Literacy Practices of Newly Arrived Syrian Refugees: a Spatio-Visual Linguistic Ethnography

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Acknowledgments

Abstract

This doctoral research project is a visual linguistic ethnography that provides thick descriptions of newly arrived Syrian refugees' smartphone-mediated digital literacy practices. The study investigates how three male newcomers to Leeds, Rojan, Aban and Mamoud, utilize mobile technologies and online resources, such as multilingual Facebook groups and smartphone applications, to instigate and support processes of settlement and belonging. To trace and interpret these quotidian mobile practices, prolonged and consistent engagement with my participants and their lifeworlds was required.

Thus, data collection concerning this ethnography took place over an in-depth ten-month period at various data collection sites. The multimodal and spatio-visual literacy practices that my key participants engaged with on their mobile devices were inherently diverse and complex to interpret. Here, the analytical lenses of capital and space have informed conceptualizations of how my participants' digital literacy repertoires within distinct mobile contexts relate to and interplay with settlement processes, such as obtaining a UK driving license or finding paid work in the formal and informal economy.

The dataset of this research project provides in-depth descriptions of how newly arrived refugees integrate smartphones into their everyday lives. Here, the findings of this study offer crucial insights into the interconnections between mobile technologies and settlement processes within this context of forced migration; the data analyses show how smartphones become key *spatial instruments,* which have the potential to impact and capitalize on the immediate physical spaces that my participants find themselves in and traverse through during their settlement trajectory, either by creating and joining translocal hybrid spaces, or by penetrating and transforming existing spaces.

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Figures, Graphs and Tables

Transcript Symbols

Symbol	Name	Use
[text]	Brackets	Indicates the start and end points of overlapping speech.
=	Equal Sign	Indicates the break and subsequent continuation of a single interrupted utterance.
(# of seconds)	Timed Pause	A number in parentheses indicates the time, in seconds, of a pause in speech.
(.)	Micropause	A brief pause, usually less than 0.2 seconds.
-	Hyphen	Indicates an abrupt halt or interruption in utterance.
ALL CAPS	Capitalized text	Indicates shouted or increased volume speech.
underline	Underlined text	Indicates the speaker is emphasizing or stressing the speech.
(text)	Parentheses	Speech which is unclear or in doubt in the transcript.
{ text }	Braces	English translation
<< text >>	Smaller than Greater than	Transcriber's commentary

Adapted from Jefferson (1984)

List of Abbreviations

BYOD   Bring Your Own Device

CMC   Computer-Mediated Communication

DWP   Department for Work and Pensions

ESOL   English for Speakers of Other Languages

EX   Exchange (Lemke, 2000)

FB   Facebook

GM   Google Maps

GT   Google Translate

ICTs   Information and Communications Technologies

LCC   Leeds City Council

LE   Linguistic Ethnography

NGO   Non-Governmental Organization

NLG   New London Group

PEGIDA   Patriotische Europäer gegen die Islamisierung des
            Abendlandes

RETAS   Refugee Education Training Advice Service

SC   Syrian Café

SCOLFBG   Syrian Community of Leeds Facebook Group

SK   Syrian Kitchen

VPRS   Vulnerable People Resettlement Scheme

WA   WhatsApp

WSA   World-Systems Analysis

WE, THE EXILED ONES…

We, the exiled ones,
who live on anti-depressants,
Facebook has become our homeland,
it opens the sky
they close in our faces
at the frontiers.

We, the exiled ones,
we sleep clutching to ourselves
our mobile phones.
In the light
of our computer screens
we doze off full of sorrow,
we wake full of hope.

We, the exiled ones,
we circle our distant houses
as lovers circle prisons,
hoping to see the shadows
of their loved ones.

We, the exiled, we are sick
with an incurable sickness.

To love a homeland
is a death sentence.

(Maram al-Masri, 2017:35)

Chapter 1: Introduction

Maram al-Masri's poem (2017), *WE THE EXILED ONES...,* brings the precarious realities of contemporary forced migration to light. Her words, which are words of loss and sorrow, give voice to those who had to leave their homes and loved ones behind. The poem articulates sadness and pain, but at the same time communicates a sense of hope and comfort that is harnessed and navigated through mobile technologies; as Facebook becomes a new home, or a "home away from home" (Oldenburg, 1996/7), and smartphone screens finally light up as they show long awaited messages from loved ones, we start to grasp the deep-seated integration and interconnection of mobile technologies into forced migrants' everyday lives.

Moreover, al-Masri touches upon the emerging complexities of today's communicative practices; mobile technologies are able to afford transnational, multimodal and synchronous interactions, regardless of interlocutors' geographical locations and physical movements. This potential to connect with individuals and groups, at any place and at any time, has considerably affected previously established notions of human interaction, such as intimacy, proximity and temporality.

The thesis chapters that follow show that the experiences of forced migrants described in al-Masri's poem resonate with those of *Rojan*, *Aban* and *Mamoud*, the three key participants of this research project; similar to the poem's protagonists, my participants had to give up their lives in their home country Syria, to seek shelter and safety elsewhere for them and their families. It is here, whilst starting over again in a new and foreign environment that mobile technologies and smartphones in particular become central in facilitating key processes of arrival and settlement, such as finding housing and work.

Hence, the underlying empirical focus of this research project is concerned with how mobile technologies are drawn on by refugees within their initial stages of arrival. In other words, the study brings to light how mobile technologies become crucial for my participants, for instance as they seek out

and acquire information, connect with others in their new city of residence, Leeds, but also as they maintain social ties with those left behind.

To accomplish this, this study follows the initial settlement trajectories of Aban, Mamoud and Rojan and scrutinizes a range of interactional and visual data, such as audio recordings of informal conversations, social media posts and screen recordings of smartphones, which yield insights into my participants' multilingual digital literacy repertoires (Tagg and Asprey, 2017). The chapters that follow explore this interconnection between mobile technologies and migration through an ethnographic lens (c.f. Chapter 3.2) and from different analytical angles and focal points, in order to answer this project's research question of how newly arrived Syrian refugees' digital literacy practices support processes of settlement (c.f. Chapter 3.7).

In what follows (Section 1.1), I outline central themes of this study in more detail, comment on my professional and personal motivation to conduct this research project (Section 1.2) and lastly provide an overview of each thesis chapter (Section 1.3).

1.1 Thesis Themes

The title of this thesis, 'The Digital Literacy Practices of Newly Arrived Syrian Refugees: a Spatio-Visual Linguistic Ethnography', hints towards underlying themes that this project draws on. Given this study's concern for migrant mobile literacy practices, certain themes are interwoven periodically, whereas others are more foregrounded throughout the analyses and subsequent discussions of data that follow. Here, at this initial stage, I aim to preliminarily outline and introduce four of these key themes, to illustrate how they are central to this research project and how they relate to each other and interconnect. More than that, I point towards more substantial discussions of these themes, which take place at later stages of this thesis.

Loss

Although migration trajectories differ greatly from individual to individual and cannot be generalized or subsumed (Gillespie et al., 2018), the notion of loss, particularly amongst forced migrants, frequently resonates among today's migratory experiences. Coping with various forms of loss, as well as trying to reinstate what has been lost become central in the lives of many newly arrived people. Blommaert (2005) conceptualizes loss through a lens of capital (Bourdieu, 1986), where capital refers to more than just financial means; Bourdieu (1986) distinguishes between different types or forms of capital, for instance social or cultural capital, a point I revisit in greater detail in Chapter 2.6.

Newly arrived migrants such as Rojan, Mamoud and Aban often experience considerable loss of multiple capital, for instance of economic capital, as their work qualifications might not be recognized in their new host country (Parker, 2009) and thus have to change their career paths (c.f. Chapter 7). Likewise, newcomers' social capital tends to decrease through migration, as vulnerable migrants in particular, such as refugees, have little agency in their relocation process and thus frequently find themselves isolated and in unfamiliar areas (c.f. Chapter 5.2.3).

In this study, the theme of loss informs the data analyses, as they explore how mobile technologies and smartphones in particular are being drawn on in settings of considerable loss of capital.

Language and Literacy

Rojan, Aban and Mamoud find themselves in new housing arrangements in an unfamiliar city within a foreign country, where they are no longer expert speakers of the dominant language. The analytical chapters that follow bring to light that this loss of linguistic capital profoundly affects my participants' trajectories to engage with processes of settlement, such as finding work in the formal economy. As the study itself is partly situated within formal and informal spaces of adult migrant language learning, for instance in ESOL classrooms (c.f. Chapter 3), my participants' development of English language and literacy proficiency is often foregrounded in the analyses that follow in Chapters 5-7.

For instance, as Syrian driving licenses are not valid in the UK, Chapter 6 is concerned with my participants' efforts in passing the theoretical part of the UK driving test, in English. Here, the ability to manoeuvre a particular English language register, i.e. the register of the UK driving test, directly exerts influence on one's chances to obtain the license and to ultimately drive in the UK. This again exemplifies how loss of capital (i.e. the right to drive) and lack of particular registers of language and literacy can mitigate notions of mobility and negatively affect chances of employment and independence.

As this research project is concerned with the digital and mobile literacy practices of newly arrived refugees, the study primarily scrutinizes literacy practices that occur online, for instance on social media platforms or within particular mobile applications. The data extracts that comprise the analytical chapters show, from multiple analytical viewpoints, how online platforms, such as public Facebook groups, become crucial multilingual spaces. Here, for instance on the Syrian Community of Leeds Facebook Group (SCOLFBG, c.f. Chapter 4.6), my participants not only consume and disseminate relevant information concerning their immediate wants and needs, but can also explore

and develop their English language and literacy proficiency within an informal and accessible space (c.f. Chapter 6.4, Chapter 7.4).

Space

As the previous section suggests, a study of refugees' smartphone-mediated mobile literacy practices is inherently a spatial study; throughout the analyses, there are various spatial threads which emerge and become central to the analyses that follow. The ethnographic nature of this research project, where data was collected over months at different physical and online research sites, informs and supports these spatial foci.

The study follows a plural (Lefebvre, 1991) and fluid (Blommaert et al., 2005) conceptualization of space, where space and time together provide distinct mobile contexts (Blommaert, 2017) for smartphone-mediated literacy practices to take place (c.f. Chapter 2.5, Chapter 8.4). The analytical chapters provide deepened understandings of how mobile technologies are intertwined with the various spaces my participants occupy, traverse through or try to access, be those physical or digital, or hybrid. More than that, the project's spatial lenses help to draw attention to how newcomers navigate and maintain both transnational ties, as well as develop social and professional networks within their new place of residence, Leeds.

Belonging

Last, the theme of belonging, which foregrounds the notion of feeling at home (Yuval-Davis, 2006) has first and foremost emerged through the data analyses and the subsequent data discussion; as newcomers restart their lives in unfamiliar environments, they draw on the resources available to them and capitalize on networks, online and offline, to find people in relatable situations and to feel more at home. Yet, within this study's context of forced migration, the notion of the home is problematic; here, the analyses suggest that smartphones can instigate and facilitate spaces of belonging, for instance via the aforementioned SCOLFBG (c.f. Chapter 8.3). Thus, smartphones yield the potential to enable practices of belonging, regardless of the physical spaces their users occupy.

1.2 Thesis Motivation

In October 2014, I prepared my application for WRDTP (White Rose Social Sciences Doctoral Training Partnership) funding, aiming to conduct doctoral research within the fields of adult literacy learning and Information and Communications Technologies (ICTs), two areas of scholarship which I had become interested in throughout my M.A. studies. As I outlined my initial proposal, I envisioned to research the effectiveness of mobile language and literacy learning resources on adult ESOL students within formal classroom settings.

However, in 2014, following the Arab Spring protests in several countries in the previous years, growing tensions and armed conflicts in the Middle East arose (Phillips, 2016). One year later, whilst I was about to commence my doctoral research in September 2015, the ongoing civil war in Syria had precipitated into the worst humanitarian crisis of the 21st century (Syrian Refugees, 2016), forcing millions of innocent civilians to flee their homes, in order to seek safety and shelter in neighbouring countries and beyond.

The despair of those fleeing the war was epitomized, when a photo of Alan Kurdi, a three-year old Syrian boy, went viral. Alan tragically drowned in the Mediterranean, within reach of Greek shores, whilst hoping to reach Europe alongside his family. I first saw the photo in September 2015. Like many others, I was horrified and deeply saddened by the photograph.

When I first arrived in Leeds, I spent time volunteering and observing ESOL classes. Although there was much fluctuation vis-à-vis the composition and attendance of students (c.f. Chapter 3.6, Chapter 4.2), many of the new students who signed up to classes and continued to come each week, were newly arrived refugees from Syria (c.f. Table 1, Chapter 3.3.2). At times, the stories they told were hard to bear and, as the fieldnotes below bring to light, the students and their families themselves had often experienced the horrors of war first-hand.

Fieldnotes: November 2016, The Syrian Café
About 45min into the lesson, one of Aban's friends comes in with his young son. The dad has been to my ESOL class a few times in March /April [2016]. His son must be no older than six years old. He is in a wheelchair. I look at his little face, it has been severely burnt.

It was throughout these first weeks of volunteering that I decided to focus this research project on the digital literacy practices of newly arrived Syrian refugees, whose presence seemed to be increasing in Leeds and whose stories I wanted to hear. I intentionally chose to conduct a study of forced migrants, as they had often not been the focus of academic attention. More than that, I also hoped that my efforts might inform ESOL practitioners, policy makers and others working with newly arrived people. Here, it was my aim that my research endeavours would have positive impacts on refugee language and literacy learners.

As I observed and spoke to students before, during and after class, I started to realize, just how central smartphones were in the lives of most newcomers, both in regard to their English language and literacy development, for instance through the use of mobile translation features (Vollmer, forthcoming), but also vis-à-vis networking and social integration. This again led me to shift my analytical focus; rather than developing mobile learning resources for a particular group of language learners, I started to see a real need for thorough descriptive work on the informal mobile practices that newly arrived migrants engage with on a daily basis. I revisit this discussion on selecting a research population in more detail in Chapter 3.3.2.

1.3 Thesis Organization

This PhD thesis is organized in nine thesis chapters which I outline in the following; Chapter 1 contains an initial overview of this doctoral thesis and provides a synopsis of this research project and its key themes. Furher, this chapter yields insights into my professional and personal motivation in pursuing this research endeavour.

Chapter 2, the literature review of this study, is organized in six sections and initiates the theoretical discussions concerning this research project. The chapter examines and reviews relevant literature and provides a theoretical backdrop for this inherently multidisciplinary study that is located within the nexus of several research disciplines, including Literacy Studies, Migration Studies and Sociolinguistics, *inter alia*.

Chapter 3 outlines the breadth and width of this research project. This chapter is organized in eight sections, which collectively address and discuss relevant metaphysical, ethical, analytical, but also organizational issues. Here, I attend to methodological, ontological and epistemological concerns that have characterized and shaped the research design of this PhD project.

Chapter 4 on the other hand is concerned with the wider mechanics of this linguistic ethnography and is located in between the 'Methodology Chapter' and the succeeding analytical chapters. This chapter is substantially informed by my fieldwork and provides necessary contextual information concerning this ethnographic inquiry. Chapter 4 introduces the key data collection sites and the actors who are affiliated to them. This chapter brings forward focused vignettes of people and places relevant to this study, which resurface and are to be investigated in the analytical chapters that follow.

Chapter 5 (*Journeys*), the first analytical chapter of this thesis, explores how my participants draw on mobile technologies within their reach to support local and transnational spatiotemporal movements. The data discussed in Chapter 5 investigates how Aban, Rojan and Mamoud utilize their mobile devices to penetrate, navigate and access novel physical and virtual spaces. Moreover,

Chapter 5 investigates how smartphone-mediated spatial and communicative practices occur within urban flows of mobility.

Chapter 6 (*Driving*), the second analytical chapter, is concerned with processes of settlement as it investigates my participants' efforts to reinstate their right to drive in the UK. Chapter 6 explores how Syrian newcomers develop and perform strategies to prepare for the theoretical part of the UK driving test and the roles that mobile technologies and smartphones play for obtaining a UK driving license.

Chapter 7 (*Making Money*), the third analytical chapter, investigates how Rojan, Mamoud and Aban search for and find employment opportunities within the formal and informal economy. The data extracts of Chapter 7 show that mobile technologies and especially social media platforms, such as Facebook, hold central positions in newcomers' chances of finding paid work.

Following the analytical chapters, Chapter 8 (*Discussion*) explores two particular focal points; first, this chapter answers the research questions posed in Chapter 3. Secondly, Chapter 8 identifies and foregrounds the original contributions to knowledge made in this PhD thesis. This chapter thus critically reflects on the findings of the previous analytical chapters. Here, I discuss the notion of belonging in detail, as well as explore how smartphones affect space.

Last, Chapter 9 (*Conclusion*) widens its focal point further; this chapter points towards the policy and practitioner-oriented implications that this research project offers. Here, I highlight the original contributions made in this doctoral thesis and comment on the limitations of this doctoral research project.

Chapter 2: Mobile Literacies for Newly Arrived Refugees

2.1 Chapter Overview

This thesis chapter is an effort to provide a theoretical backdrop for this exploratory and inherently multidisciplinary research project, which is located within the nexus of several research disciplines; in the following, I draw on and synthesize ideas about forced migration and its intersection with literacy and digital technology from literacy studies, applied linguistics and sociolinguistics, semiotics, spatial studies, migration and mobility research, sociology, social anthropology, and ICT studies.

As the chapter title indicates, I situate my research project within the realm of three key subject areas: *literacy*, *mobile technologies* and *migration*. With this multi-disciplinary modus operandi in mind, this chapter then becomes a balancing act, where interdisciplinary breadth and intradisciplinary depth need to be carefully balanced against the spatial constraints of this thesis chapter; on the one hand, the central themes outlined above are in need of detailed investigation and contextualization. On the other hand, the synthesis and interweaving of thinking from a spectrum of disciplines is a considerable asset, as it affords my study an open and multidisciplinary character, which, so I will argue throughout this chapter and beyond, is necessary to fully explore the inherently diverse mobile digital literacy practices of newly arrived forced migrants observed in this study. The result of this approach are five condensed sections, which are equally driven by the desire to attain a deepened understanding of how newly arrived refugees to the UK draw on mobile technologies in their everyday lives.

Whereas Sections 2.1-3 respectively investigate sociocultural, multimodal and mobile theories of literacy in more general terms, Sections 2.4 and 2.5 position themselves within the migration, spatiality and literacies context of this research project. 2.1 revisits aspects of the seminal discussion around the 'Literacy Thesis' and scrutinizes ethnographically-informed approaches to literacy. Section 2.2 explores multimodal conceptualizations of literacy. Here,

I draw on Social Semiotics (Kress, 2010) to widen the scope of contemporary literacy practices, particularly those occurring online. Section 2.3 on the other hand explores mobile technologies and particularly smartphones in more detail and investigates, how 'the mobile' has had impact on our daily occurring literacy practices. Section 2.4 is concerned with spatial theories of literacy; I briefly revisit the notion of 'third space', introduced by Bhabha (2004) and interpreted by Lefebvre (1991) and Soja (1996). Further, I draw on the concept of scale (Blommaert, 2007, 2018b), as well as Kell's (2009) interpretation of it.

Last, Section 2.5 synthesises ideas and thinking discussed in Sections 2.1-2.4 so far and draws on research that have investigated how newly arrived refugees utilize mobile technologies in their daily lives, the focus of my project. Here, I focus in particular on how capital is gained (Bourdieu, 1986, 1992) and lost (Blommaert, 2005) and how mobile technologies may support various notions and processes of settlement and belonging.

2.2 Literacy

What matters is what people do with literacy, not what literacy does to people.

Olson (1985:15)

Language and particularly written language have often been regarded as one of the most significant human traits, distinctively demarcating and elevating humans from animals. However, as Scribner and Cole (1981:3) have pointed out over nearly 40 years ago, "[u]nlike spoken language, writing is of fairly recent invention (systematic writing systems did not appear until 4,000 to 3,000 B.C.) and it has yet to become a universal feature of all human societies." According to UNESCO figures (2017:1), today's literacy 'rates' "continue to rise from one generation to the next." Yet, an estimated "750 million adults – two-third of whom are women – still lack basic reading and writing skills […]." This continuous rift between 'literate' and 'nonliterate' has instigated and precipitated far-reaching debates based on particular understandings and definitions of literacy; a plethora of ideas and theories concerning the boundaries, denotations and wider implications of literacy have been disseminated, debated and contested over the last 50 years or so (Lankshear, 1999).

Yet, this section is not a mere chronology or 'run-through' of various conceptualizations of literacy. As Olson's quote at the beginning of this section points towards, the focus is not on the cognitive dimensions of literacy acquisition. Rather, this section should be read as a brief but necessary excursion in which I examine influential thinking on literacy that are pertinent to this study of newly arrived people and their digital literacy practices. In this way, I situate, legitimize and consequently align my research project within `the wider realm of contemporary literacy studies. Following this approach, I first revisit a seminal discussion on the 'consequences of literacy' (Goody and Watt, 1963), later to be known as the 'The Literacy Thesis' (Collins and Blot, 2003); here, I outline 'the thesis' briefly and discuss its theoretical implications and reactions, which have substantially shaped understandings of

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contemporary literacy theorizations. Following this, I introduce two influential concepts, which emerged out of this debate, the 'literacy event' (Brice Heath, 1983) and Street's (1984) notion of 'literacy practice'. Concluding this section, I explore sociocultural or 'ideological' (Street, 1995) conceptualizations of literacy and the notion of 'multiliteracies' (NLG, 1996).

'The Literacy Thesis'

In what follows, I draw attention to the 'Literacy Thesis' and responses to it, as it marks a conceptual shift within literacy studies, namely that from a quantitative and measurement dominated understanding (the ontological home of the 'Literacy Thesis'), to an ethnographically informed and situated take on literacy. Revisiting this paradigm shift provides us with a deepened understanding of past and present literacy research and conceptualizations and more importantly, offers a historically embedded rationale for the situated, inductive and ethnographic study of literacy, the appropriate theoretical home of this doctoral study.

As previously indicated, social science research has long been interested in the study of various aspects of literacy; here, literacy and its instruction has increasingly been interpreted as an independent variable in studies affiliated with social, cultural and economic developments and conflicts (Graff, 1986).

This growing understanding of literacy as a key driver of social, cultural and economic change instigated and fuelled an inter-generational and interdisciplinary discussion on the nature, effects and 'consequences' of literacy; at the forefront of this discussion, Goody and Watt (1963:321), who examined the effects of reading and writing throughout human history, argued that the spread of literacy brought about momentous cultural, societal and cognitive changes and proposed that "[…] although we must reject any dichotomy based upon the assumption of radical differences between the mental attributes of literate and non-literate peoples, and accept the view that previous formulations of the distinction were based on faulty premises and inadequate evidence, there may still exist general differences between literate and non-literate societies […] ."

Goody (1986) later developed and refined his understanding of literacy towards a less deterministic conceptualization (Collin, 2013:29). Yet, his initial technologically deterministic reasoning, in which literacy 'itself' brings about societal, cultural but also cognitive change, gained both support and criticism; over time, followers (Olson, 1977; Havelock, 1982; Ong, 2002) of what came to be known 'the Literacy Thesis' developed an oeuvre of arguments in support of the transformational powers of literacy. As Ong (2002:29) summarizes, "Jack Goody (1977) has convincingly shown how shifts hitherto labeled as shifts from magic to science, or from the so-called 'prelogical' to the more and more 'rational' state of consciousness, or from Lévi-Strauss's 'savage' mind to domesticated thought, can be more economically and cogently explained as shifts from orality to various stages of literacy."

This in mind, Olson (1977), Havelock (1982), Ong (2002) and others predominantly compared and juxtaposed 'literate' and 'nonliterate' individuals and peoples, from both the past and present, in support of their claims. Though literacy and its effects on cognitive abilities and society in larger terms have been thoroughly debated for centuries, for instance by Socrates, arguing that literacy would have negative effects on one's memory (c.f. Jowett, 2006), discussions concerning 'the thesis' were mostly fuelled by the 'great divide' dichotomy between 'literate' and 'nonliterate'.

One of the best-known examples in support of the 'great divide' argument is a study conducted by Luria and Vygotsky, who researched the cognitive effects of literacy in rural Uzbekistan in the early 1930s. The research team conducted "specially developed tests that the subjects found meaningful […] and introduced learning tasks" (Luria, 1976:17) on groups of rural Uzbekistanis, who had ranging experiences with formal schooling. Luria (1976) argues that even very limited literacy tremendously changes and influences cognitive abilities; Luria tested abstract thinking of 'nonliterate', 'semiliterate' and 'literate' subjects through syllogisms. His results claim that nonliterates stuck to situational and categorical thinking, whereas literate participants gave more abstract and more critical replies. I later return to this

example, when I introduce counter arguments put forward by Scribner and Cole (1981) and others.

Responses to 'the Thesis'

As indicated earlier, 'The Literacy Thesis' was also met with criticism; Collins and Blot (2003:34) give account of this, as they point out that:

> [d]uring the same period – from the mid-1960s into the 1970s – a number of anthropologists were engaged in ground-breaking research based on extensive fieldwork in areas as diverse as the southern US, Iran, and West Africa. The results of this research, the strongest ethnographic challenges yet to the Goody–Watt thesis, were to appear in publications in the early 1980s.

As Collins and Blot (2003) point out, in contrast to previous thinking, these early ethnographically informed studies, for instance by Scribner and Cole (1981), Brice Heath (1983), Street (1984) and Finnegan (1988) started to research reading and writing in various formal and informal contexts through extensive fieldwork. This is crucial, as Brice Heath (1983), Street (1984) and Finnegan (1988) derive and conclude their understandings of literacy *inductively*. This again has considerable ontological implications, as literacy is no longer perceived as pre-defined or universal but is rather renegotiated and redefined from context to context, from individual to individual, even from situation to situation. Much of the 'thesis' critique that followed stems from this ontological distinction. Brian Street (1995, 2001) for instance refers to these universal understandings as 'autonomous' models of literacy, as they argue that literacy *autonomously* and in a causal manner effects social and cognitive processes. Street (1995) critiques these autonomous models, as they demean and discredit nonliterate individuals and societies and further mislead that the acquisition of literacy will automatically lead to major social and cognitive developments.

Furthermore, the ethnographic study of literacy allowed for a more contextualized and in-depth investigation of the much debated 'causal effects' of literacy. In their landmark study, *The Psychology of Literacy,* Sylvia Scribner and Michael Cole (1981) contest the theory that literacy alone can account for

broad-based social and psychological changes; they studied the Vai people, a small West African population in Liberia, who developed their own system of writing. Scribner and Cole (1981:13) bring to attention that measuring literacy within formal schooling is difficult, as the process of "literacization" is often entangled with schooling and "major changes in life experience" (Scribner and Cole, 1981:10) and thus hard to isolate and measure. This again is an issue that they (1981:10) identify with Luria's study on the cognitive effects of literacy, mentioned earlier in this chapter: "[w]hile the groups [in Luria's study] could be designated by the amounts of literacy or schooling they had attained, they also differed in age and exposure to other novel activities such as collective management and planning of agricultural operations. Thus, differences in performance could not be attributed to literacy or schooling experience per se."

As the Vai script is taught at home and not at school, Scribner and Cole (1981:15) were able to "separate schooling from literacy." Over a period of four years, the researchers engaged with more than 1000 subjects and concluded that the introduction of a script into a traditional society did not produce general cognitive effects, such as the ability to memorize, to classify, or to draw logical inferences.

More than that, Brice Heath's (1983) ethnography has further refuted prevailing 'great divide' dichotomies, by showing that literacy can take many forms and is multiple; Brice Heath conducted an ethnographic study from 1969-1978 in two small North American communities, Trackton and Roadville, situated in the Piedmont Plateau in the Carolinas. She actively engaged her participants in the research process, by recruiting them as 'co-researchers' and encouraging them to record and respond to data, which they often collected themselves. By doing so, Brice Heath was able to gain a more participant driven and emic perspective of reading and writing in context. Though Trackton and Roadville are located in close proximity to one another, Brice Heath gives detailed accounts of very diverse and multiple literacy *practices*, embedded within a rich ethnographic narrative (I discuss the notions of 'event' and 'practice' later in this section).

Moreover, Brice Heath draws on societal and cultural factors, e.g. by contrasting different literacy expectations of inhabitants from both communities; whereas in Roadville hardly anyone writes, yet reading is actively encouraged and praised, in Trackton, reading and writing are not emphasised at all and reading only takes place in 'read aloud' practices. Thus, she is able to show that there are different 'kinds' of literacy and that these are deeply culturally and socially embedded.

Brice Heath's study is further relevant to my research endeavours, as she makes "invisible" literacies, particularly those of the home, "visible" (Baynham, 2004:286). In this sense, her work is an important contribution, showing that the study of day-to-day literacy practices, particularly outside formal educational contexts, is worthwhile and meaningful. Here, Baynham (2004:285) identifies a shift in literacy studies, as the focus has moved away "from questions of instruction that had hitherto characterised literacy research towards a focus on literacy use in contexts beyond the classroom."

Events and Practices

With ethnographers studying the everyday reading and writing practices of individuals and groups in unprecedented detail, new terminology and thinking was needed to appropriately describe and analyse data from the field. Here, two seminal concepts in particular are worth exploring further; Brice Heath's notion of the 'literacy event' and the concept of 'literacy practice' (Street, 1995; NLG, 1996).

In *Ways with Words*, Brice Heath (1983) introduces the 'literacy event', an observable unit of analysis, based on Hymes' (1972) notion of the 'speech event'. Kell (2011:607) argues that the idea of "the literacy event is pivotal to the NLS [New Literacy Studies]: it is the unit of analysis that places literacy firmly in the realm of everyday, observable moments, tied to the life world and study-able through ethnography. Starting off with the disciplined description of events ensures that the researcher cannot be making normative, *a priori* claims about literacy and its consequences." Heath (1982:93) defines the term as "[a]ny occasion in which a piece of writing is integral to the nature of participants' interactions and their interpretive processes." Barton and

Hamilton (2000:8) propose that literacy events are "activities where literacy has a role. Usually there is a written text, or texts, central to the activity and there may be talk around the text. Events are observable episodes which arise from practices and are shaped by them. The notion of events stresses the situated nature of literacy, that it always exists in a social context"

'Literacy practices' on the other hand are more abstract than 'events' and "not observable units of behaviour since they also involve values, attitudes, feelings and social relationships" (Barton and Hamilton, 2000:7). Moreover, they conceptualize "the link between the activities of reading and writing and the social structures in which they are embedded and which they help shape" (Barton and Hamilton, 2000:7). Contrary to decontextualized notions of literacy 'skills' being universally applicable, literacy 'practices' are deeply located within the social context they occur. Scribner and Cole (1981:236) summarizes this as follows.

> This notion of practice guides the way we seek to understand literacy. Instead of focusing exclusively on the technology of a writing system and its reputed consequences ("alphabetic literacy fosters abstraction," for example). We approach literacy as a set of socially organized practices which make use of a symbol system and a technology for producing and disseminating it. Literacy is not simply knowing how to read and write a particular script but applying this knowledge for specific purposes in specific contexts of use.

Both literacy 'events' and literacy 'practices' have become established concepts in contemporary literacy studies; particularly so called 'sociocultural' and 'ideological' (Street, 1995) models of literacy describe and interpret how people in particular social contexts draw on literacy in their daily lives through 'events' and 'practices'. However, Kell (2011:607) also stresses that the definitions of literacy events, taking place in the "same time-space coordinates", are becoming more and more problematic, as "digital technologies enable literate communication to stretch between people, across contexts and over time." This again has considerable implications for my research project, which has its focal point on the day-to-day mobile literacy practices of new arrivals.

Baynham (2004) refers to Heath's and Street's research as "first generation" ethnographic studies of literacy. Kell (2011:607) argues that these two terms were central to shaping the "second generation" of studies in the NLS tradition, which "enabled researchers to generate a wide range of rigorous descriptions of the uses and meanings of literacy in particular places and times", which led to the notion of 'multiple literacies'.

Literacies: Social, Cultural and Ideological Perspectives

As a response to the contested 'autonomous' models of literacy, Street (1995) offers an alternative 'ideological' conceptualization, which understands literacy as a social practice, while subsuming skill-based and universal perspectives of literacy. Through ethnographic depth, Street's ideological model pays much attention to its environment and concentrates on specific social practices of reading and writing, while fully recognizing the *ideologically* and culturally embedded nature of these practices. Furthermore, Street's ideological model clearly rejects a skill-based, monolithic and universal paradigm and instead embraces a plurality of literacies, with the notions of literacy 'events' and literacy 'practices' being central units of description and analysis. Mills (2016:19) summarizes this theoretical repositioning as follows: "The conscious pluralising of the term 'literacy' encapsulates a response to increased cultural and linguistic diversity as a consequence of migration and globally networked economies." This socio-cultural paradigm came known as the 'New Literacy Studies' (Gee, 1999; Mills, 2016) and is closely tied to the New London Group (NLG, 1996), a collective of literacy scholars. In a seminal paper, the NLG introduces the theory of *multiliteracies*:

> We decided that the outcomes of our discussions could be encapsulated in one word – multiliteracies – a word we chose to describe two important arguments we might have with the emerging cultural, institutional, and global order: the multiplicity of communications channels and media, and the increasing saliency of cultural and linguistic diversity (NLG, 1996:63).

Noteworthy is that the NLG not only acknowledges a plurality of literacies, but also transfers the 'multiplicity' lens on wider communicative practices per se;

consecutively, the NLG promotes a 'pedagogy of multiliteracies', which focuses on modes of representation much broader than language alone. The authors argue that these modes differ according to culture and context, and have specific cognitive, cultural, and social effects.

Kalantzis and Cope (2012), fellow members of the NLG, further elaborate on this multimodal aspect of the multiliteracies theory. They (2012:182f) explain that the multiliteracies theory expands on more static frameworks for understanding representation and communication such as 'traditional grammar' and 'the literacy canon', suggesting a more dynamic conception of meaning-making as a process of *design*. On the one hand, Kalantzis and Cope (2012:182f) explain that design exists in all things in the world; patterns and structures that exist in natural and human-made things – the design of a wind-up clock, or the design of the leaf of a plant. Further, they argue that intangible things (e.g. abstract things like 'knowledge') also have design. On the other hand, Kalantzis and Cope (2012) point out that design is also a sequence of actions, a process motivated by our purposes, the kind of design that drives representation as an act of meaning and message-making as an act of communication.

More importantly, Kalantzis and Cope (2012:192) acknowledge the fast-changing contemporary communications environments, which are full of developments such as speaking devices that are also writing and image-making devices (e.g. smartphones) or media devices that represent and prompt interactive gestures (e.g. game consoles). Kalantzis and Cope (2012:192) conclude that of all the changes in the environment of meaning-design since the twentieth century, one of the most significant challenges to the traditional literacy teaching is the increasing multimodality of our media for the representation and communication of meanings. Kalantzis and Cope conclude that literacy teaching has confined itself to the forms of written language. The new media, according to the authors, mix modes more powerfully than was culturally the norm before, or even technically possible, in the earlier modernity dominated by the book and the printed page. To this, Kern (2000:36) adds the following:

> People do not read and write to engage in abstract processes; rather, they read and write particular texts of particular types, in particular ways, because they hold particular values. Literacy is therefore not monolithic but multiple in nature; it is not just about language or reading and writing *per se,* but about social practice.

In this first subsection of Chapter 2, I have revisited the discussion around the 'Literacy Thesis' and the ethnographic and inductive scholarship that emerged from it. I have drawn attention to an essential shift in perception: a shift from a universal and skill-based understanding to a plural and locally embedded conceptualization of literacy. Moreover, I have introduced Street's ideological model of literacy, the concepts of 'event' and 'practice' and have discussed the theory of multiliteracies and plurality of wider communicative practices.

My research project seeks to understand day-to-day digital literacy practices of newly arrived Syrian refugees that are embedded within a complex multilingual, multimodal and technology-rich communicative environment. As 'autonomous' models tend to reduce literacy to a technological deterministic, universally applicable skill that overly dichotomizes while neglecting local cultural and societal factors, these models fail to provide a suitable theoretical framework for my research project. Therefore, I align my project with sociocultural conceptualizations of literacy that acknowledge a plurality of literacies, which occur in fast changing communication environments (e.g. on smartphones) and pay close attention to its local environment through ethnographic detail.

2.3 Multimodal Literacies

With the growing number of digital texts that combine words, images, audio and other modes to communicate meaning, we can no longer ignore the non-linguistic elements of textual design in literacy practices, but interpret words in relation to the complex set of modal meaning that function in concert and in hybridised forms across a range of media.

Kathy Mills (2016:81)

We increasingly engage with and are exposed to language on different screens, on an array of constantly evolving platforms and devices, such as tablets and smartphones, but also electronic bus timetables and self-check-out machines at supermarkets. Moreover, the literacy practices that we engage with on these platforms and devices, for example when we are looking up a recipe online, are increasingly multimodal; online platforms such as YouTube, Facebook, or Twitter, are powerful examples of how we, daily, make use of and mix different modes (such as spoken and written language, moving and still images, touch, and sound) to consume, produce, and disseminate content. These platforms, which deploy and integrate multimodal features (e.g. the use of audio/pictures/videos in chat messaging services), in an accessible and utilitarian way, have become central and deeply embedded in our daily lives and respective communicative practices. Moreover, as the chapters that follow will show in detail, the mobile literacy practices of new arrivals that this project is concerned with are inherently multimodal.

Therefore, to acknowledge and do justice to today's diverse realities of communicative practices, a discussion of multimodality within a study of contemporary digital literacy practices is needed. As Mills' quote argues above, digital literacy practices are inherently multimodal. In the following, I further explore the earlier indicated "multiplicity of communications channels and media", first brought forward by the NLG (1996:63). Then, I provide a condensed overview of Social Semiotics (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006) and further build on the theoretical fundament of my research, by contextualizing multimodal thinking within a study of newly arrived refugees.

Multimodality

Multimodal research approaches have been developed in response to the recognition that all actions are multimodal (Norris, 2004) and that all modes have the potential to contribute equally to meaning (Jewitt, 2009b). Warschauer (2009) puts forward the argument that as the architecture of the internet has changed, interaction through blogs, wikis, social network sites, and multiplayer online games, has become more accessible and more frequent. This again, Warschauer (2009:127f) proposes, has had impact on literacy studies:

> First, Literacy Studies closely attend to meaning-making, rather than just text-decoding. This orientation helps Literacy Studies scholars to interpret new forms of meaning-making with diverse semiotic resources. Second, the understanding of literacy as a social process aids Literacy Studies scholars in uncovering the kinds of literacy practices that take place through complex new forms of networked communication. Third, Literacy Studies focuses on the kinds of underrecognized literacy practices that occur in the home, community, and other non-school settings; this perspective enables Literacy Studies scholars to both value and understand literacy practices that are often ignored or derided in society at large, such as those carried out while playing online games.

Warschauer stresses the social and communicative element of literacy, arguing that literacy needs to be concerned with meaning-making. On the other hand, he not only acknowledges new means of online communication and interactions, but also recognizes and values non-formal, non-traditional, and non-hierarchical literacy practices. By doing so, Warschauer forefronts these 'non-standard' literacy practices (e.g. online gaming) through his analyses and puts the focus on the individuals, who engage in these (digital) literacy practices.

Warschauer's observations are pertinent for my research context; blogs, social media sites, multiplayer online games and WhatsApp texts have become important loci for translocal and transnational interaction. Research by Lloyd et al. (2013), Cuban (2014), Gilhooly and Lee (2014) and Omerbašić (2015)

give evidence that migrants and refugees increasingly utilize these platforms to interact with others. Yet, more importantly; when individuals interact through these or similar platforms, it is very likely that they will utilize a plurality of modes; research by Gilhooly and Lee (2014) for instance investigated the digital literacy practices of newly arrived refugees. Here, the participants regularly created online content, mixing text, music, videos, and pictures together, producing original multimodal videos. This example clearly indicates that a theory of literacy, vis-à-vis the study of mobile communication amongst adult migrants, must acknowledge and bring attention to the non-linguistic and multimodal affordances of online discourse; Jewitt (2009a:3) argues that "[m]ultimodality is gaining pace as a research approach, as speech and writing no longer appear adequate in understanding representation and communication in a variety of fields, and the need to understand the complex ways in which speech and writing interact with 'non-verbal' modes can no longer be avoided."

Social Semiotics

Gunther Kress (2010:1), another member of the New London Group, gives a detailed introduction into multimodality. He explains that multimodality is representation in many modes, each chosen from rhetorical aspects for its communicational potentials. According to Kress (2010:1), writing, image, and colour all "lend themselves to doing different kinds of semiotic work", whereas each has its distinct potentials for meaning. He therefore argues that not only language can convey meaning, but different 'modes' and 'signs' – language being one of those – carry meaning and are the basis of all communication. In his understanding (2010:36), (1) communication happens as a response to a prompt, (2) communication has happened when there has been an interpretation, and (3) communication is always multimodal.

Furthermore, Kress (2010:9) stresses that there are general semiotic principles, which apply to all human communication. These principles are present and to be found in all human societies and their cultures; Kress argues that the most important of these principles is that all humans make signs, in which form and meaning stand in a 'motivated', i.e. meaningful relation. In his

opinion (2010:10), signs are made with very different means, in very different modes. Kress further argues that they are the expressions of the interest of socially formed individuals who, with these signs, express their meanings. They do so by using culturally available semiotic resources, which have been shaped by the practices of members of social groups and their cultures.

Kress (2010:28) claims that in communication, several modes are always together, in so called modal ensembles, designed so that each mode has a specific task and function. He further argues that these ensembles are based on designs, which are again based on arrangements of resources for making a specific message about a particular issue for a particular audience. Kress states that "*[d]esign* is the process whereby the meanings of a designer (a teacher, a public speaker, but also, much more humbly and in a sense more significantly, participants in everyday interactions) become *messages*" (Kress, 2010:28).

However, this notion of 'design' has been critiqued by Bazalgette and Buckingham (2013:98), when being applied to a language and literacy learning context; the authors argue that multimodality theorists barely address the actual content of English teaching and the social and political contexts in which teaching and learning take place. Moreover, the concept of 'design', appears to imply a view of communication as a wholly rational and controlled process. According to Bazalgette and Buckingham, multimodality theory argues that individuals are 'sign-makers', who choose from a repertoire (multimodal mixing desk). However, Bazalgette and Buckingham (2013) argue that these 'systematic mode choices', particularly these of literacy learners, are dictated by economics, power, and convenience, as much as by the suitability of mode to content. Hence, they (2013:98) conclude that "[t]he theory appears to ignore the haphazard and improvised nature of much human communication, as well as its emotional dimensions".

As the critique by Bazalgette and Buckingham indicates, Kress' theory of Social Semiotics might seem static at times and difficult to apply to everyday language and literacy practices.

Still, the concepts of *mode* and *design* are steppingstones in providing more accurate descriptions and analyses of contemporary communicative practices. More recent thinking, for instance Pennycook's (2017:279) notion of 'semiotic assemblages', which derives from Deleuze's and Guattari's (1980) 'assemblage', goes beyond multimodal conceptualizations and tries to capture and integrate the "multisensorial nature of our worlds". Here, semiotic assemblages pay analytical attention for instance on "the vibrancy of objects and the ways these come together in particular and momentary constellations" as well as "how spaces are sensorially organized" (Pennycook, 2017:279). I return to these spatial conceptualizations in Section 2.5.

In Section 2.3, it was my intention to integrate a multimodal concern within a theoretical model of literacy as plural situated practices. It was my aim to develop a conceptualization of literacy, which acknowledges types of meaning-making beyond the textual, to do justice to the complex reality of contemporary online and mobile communication. Here, I have pointed out that the position of non-textual communication in a study regarding the digital literacy practices of adult migrants needs to be addressed in an empirical manner.

In this sense, 2.3 widens the analytical scope of literacy beyond the textual; given the often-foregrounded role of visual, non-textual modes (e.g. moving image) in contemporary mobile technology usage, questions of how multimodal literacy practices can be researched in quotidian and informal situations arise. As the meaning-making process is relevant to gain deepened understandings of multimodal literacy practices, not only the products or artefacts of smartphone action, for instance photos and videos posted on social media platforms need to be scrutinized, but also the actual process of creating and designing content needs to be scrutinized. This is a point that I return to in the Methodology Chapter (3.6) that follows.

2.4 Mobile Literacies

We no longer enter the Internet – we carry it with us.
De Souza e Silva and Sheller (2015:4)

In Section 2.4, I explore mobile technologies (i.e. smartphones) and the affordances they bring in more detail and investigate how 'the mobile' affects day-to-day literacy practices. First, I draw attention to smartphones and their affordances. Following this, I discuss the implications of mobile technologies on our wider communitive and digital literacy practices. At a later point (2.5), I pick up this discussion again and embed it within a forced migration context.

The Smartphone

The diffusion of powerful mobile ICTs, such as smartphones and tablets, and the expansion of the internet infrastructure, for instance through free Wi-Fi hotspots and affordable mobile data plans, have drastically changed access to and use of the internet. The 2017 Global Mobile Consumer Survey carried out by Deloitte (2017:3) in the UK argues that "[e]very day, 91 per cent of the 41 million 16-75-year olds who have a smartphone in the UK use their device. It is by far the most used device." These numbers confirm what most of us witness on a daily basis; the overwhelming majority of people around us own a smartphone and use it. Giurea and Lormier (2015) point out that tablets and particularly smartphones are now being used by large parts of the general public, as they are compatible with a range of financial means. For some, smartphones have even become the sole means of access to the internet; research conducted in the US by Mossberger et al. (2016:2) indicates that 10% of the US population are so called 'smartphone dependent users' i.e. individuals who exclusively access the internet on their mobile devices because they do not have broadband access.

Yet, it is not the smartphone penetration rate across the world that surprises, but it is *when* and *how* smartphones are being used in daily contexts. Again, the Deloitte survey (2017:4) yields insights; more than a third of their adult respondents look at their handhelds within five minutes of waking up.

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Moreover, 34% of the 16-75-year olds questioned, "almost always", "very often" or "sometimes" use their mobile devices when eating with family and friends.

Thus, not only have smartphones earned permanent spots in trouser pockets, but more significantly, smartphone users engage with their mobile devices around the clock and at a high frequency and intensity, immersed within social settings that range from the formal, to the informal, to the very intimate.

Implications of 'the Mobile'

With over one billion smartphones being sold a year (Miller, 2014), their significance has been widely acknowledged: the deep-seated integration of mobile technologies into our quotidian lives has considerable implications on how we learn (Kukulska-Hulme and Pegrum, 2018), on how we interact with others locally and translocally (Witteborn, 2015), search for and disseminate information (Alam and Imran, 2015) and find work (Giurea and Lormier, 2015; Vollmer, 2019). More than that, this far-reaching access, availability and mobility of mobile technologies, and particularly of smartphones has made an unprecedented blending and intermixing between 'the online' and 'the offline' possible, a point I revisit in Section 2.4; Pegrum (2014:8) argues that "we live in local real-world contexts and at the same time in online networks, which provide a permanent, pervasive, global context for our thoughts and actions." This then lets us to conclude that mobile technologies and the affordances they bring have impact on the dynamics of mobility, space, and time, adding more potential, but also more complexity, to contemporary language and literacy use. In the following, I want to discuss the affordances of smartphones further, particularly vis-à-vis their effects on digital literacy practices.

Mobility

The increased reliability and autonomy of mobile devices on the one hand and the global expansion of the internet infrastructure on the other, has had a considerable impact on our daily lives; Pegrum (2014:10) argues that "[i]t's only when we shift away from fixed places and times that we begin to fully exploit the affordances of mobile devices. It's about using them on the move."

As technology-rich, physical settings become less relevant, mobile devices have afforded us with many of the features that were tied to the home or the workplace a few years ago. More than that, Traxler (2010:5) argues that "desktop technologies operate in their own little world while mobile technologies operate in *the* world." Analytical Chapters 5-7, as well as Chapter 8 (Discussion) show pertinent examples of just this. Although mobile devices, such as 35mm cameras, 'the Walkie Talkie', 'the Walkman', or 'the Gameboy' have been around for decades, contemporary smartphones provide us with unprecedented mobile workstations, entertainment centres, communication systems, tracking devices, etcetera.

Interaction

One of the major affordances of mobile technologies is the unprecedented potential to interact with individuals (e.g. via videocall), groups (via group chat), as well as semi-public and public audiences (via Twitter or Facebook Live) locally, translocally and transnationally. Pegrum (2014:10) points out that "[j]ust as fluid space allows conversations to flow unhindered across geographical settings, fluid time allows them to flow across temporal settings. Conversations are no longer restricted to isolated, if typically extended, blocks of time." This again has obvious implications for the earlier proposed analytical concept of 'the literacy event'. Kell (2011:607) argues that "digital technologies enable literate communication to stretch between people, across contexts and over time." This again results in the "event-ness" (Baynham and Prinsloo, 2009) of literacy practices which are stretched across time and space.

In a globalized and superdiverse (Vertovec, 2007; Androutsopoulos and Juffermans, 2014) world economy, synchronous and multimodal transnational interaction has become indispensable, a point I revisit in more detail in Section 2.5. Here, mobile technologies have further developed existing communication technologies (e.g. video call) and have through 'polymedia affordances' (Madianou and Miller, 2012; Dekker et al., 2018; Tagg et al., 2018) supplied novel and inherently multimodal ways of communicating and sharing content (e.g. Snapchat). Polymedia, a term coined by Madianou and Miller (2012), "conceptualises social media not in terms of distinct platforms or devices, but

as an integrated communicative environment which users navigate in order to manage relationships and carry out social activities" (Tagg et al., 2018:2). Witteborn (2015:357) describes how people seeking asylum in Germany draw on mobile technologies and the polymedia affordances they accommodate to communicate transnationally

> The act of logging into social networking platforms was the start of a communicative event, which was composed of multimodal acts such as looking at personal pictures by family and friends, watching videos of family gatherings, listening to music, reading the news from the home country, sending hyperlinks or switching between Facebook and other platforms like Google translator to facilitate chats.

Witteborn's account is a pertinent example of how multimodal and multilingual applications on mobile technologies afford meaningful transnational interaction. A wealth of studies (Androutsopoulos and Juffermans, 2014; Vertovec, 2004; Cuban, 2014; Gilhooly and Lee, 2014; Witteborn, 2015) have stressed the role of mobile technologies in assisting migrants with maintaining transnational relationships with their respective home countries, a point I revisit in Section 2.5.

Multilingualism and Translanguaging

Garcia (2017:17) explains that bilingual and multilingual speakers, when drawing on their communicative repertoire "[…] select different features according to the communicative situation at hand […] [and] translanguaging acknowledges the dialogic nature of the features, with none of them in a hierarchical position." To this initial explanation of translanguaging, Kukulska-Hulme and Pegrum (2018:526) add:

> Mobile devices support engagement with translanguaging in real-world contexts, on mobile social media platforms, and in the places where the two meet. These everyday contexts – the real, the virtual, and the AR [Augmented Reality] interfaces between them – are naturally superdiverse linguistic settings where, perhaps more than ever before, language use is intertwined with other, often widely varying, contextual elements.

Mobile technologies have accommodated multilinguals with new ways of drawing on their multilingual capital; I have described elsewhere (Vollmer, 2019) how Arabic and English-speaking Syrians in the UK draw on multilingual smartphone keyboards, to compose multilingual Facebook messages in multilingual Facebook groups. Moreover, I have discussed (Vollmer, 2018a; Vollmer, forthcoming) how Syrian newcomers draw on *Google Translate* on their smartphones to utilize 'English-only' monolingual applications, such as *iTheory*, an app for practicing for the theoretical part of the UK driving test (c.f. Chapter 6). In both these examples, translanguaging practices are accommodated by mobile technologies; as phone operating systems offer keyboards in different scripts (e.g. Arabic and English scripts) and apps (e.g. Google Translate) can operate concurrently, translanguaging practices happen fluidly and (almost) synchronously on mobile technologies.

In this section I have widened the scope of digital literacy practices and have discussed the role of mobile technologies, particularly smartphones, on our day-to-day communicative practices. Further, as the smartphone interactions of my participants are the focal point of this study, I have shifted attention from practices to particular devices.

2.5 Spatial Literacies

An approach to language that foregrounds spatial practices and analyzes them within their historical and political contexts is essential for understanding the ways that migrants and other dislocated/relocated people navigate their new environments.

Christina Higgins (2017:113)

Section 2.5 is concerned with spatial conceptualizations of literacy, at times referred to as 'the Spatial Turn' (Mills and Comber, 2013), following 'the Digital Turn' (Mills, 2010) within literacy studies. I first revisit Lefebvre's (1991) notion of *third space*. In this context, I also draw on Soja (1996) and Oldenburg (1996/7, 1999), who have respectively (Soja: *Thirdspace*, Oldenburg: *Third Place*) developed and interpreted Lefebvre's concept of third space. Moreover, I introduce the notions of *scales* (Kell, 2009, 2011; Blommaert and Leppänen, 2015; Blommaert 2018b), *chronotopes* (Bakhtin, 1981; Blommaert,2018b) and *meaning-making trajectories* (Kell, 2009). Whereas the previous sections of this chapter have looked at different aspects of literacies from a more general perspective, Sections 2.5 and 2.6 are located more obviously within a forced migration context.

'The Spatial Turn'

The increased mobility of goods and people within a globalized world economy on the one hand and the "new mobilities of literacy practices" (Mills, 2016:95) on the other, has brought about a proliferation of local, translocal and transnational multimodal communicative practices (Appadurai, 1996) Androutsopoulos and Juffermans, 2014). This development, particularly within a migration context, has opened up new questions vis-à-vis the conceptualization of literacy practices in a myriad of physical, digital and hybrid spaces; Mills (2016:91) argues that there has been a "growing recognition that the spatial dimension of literacy including flows, networks and connections between literacy practices that circulate in society, are worthy of more serious attention in literacy research, including at the local level."

Newcomers to any town or city are exposed to unfamiliar and novel spaces, including physical spaces (the new flat in the new neighbourhood), social spaces (the new school and workplace), and mental spaces (new spaces of authority and power, such as the Job Centre). But also, online spaces, especially those that are freely accessible and encourage networking and information sharing features (e.g. Facebook), are becoming integral for newly arrived people (Vivienne et al., 2016). At the same time, as Vivienne and colleagues (2016) have pointed out, nation states and other institutions increasingly expect migrants who wish to access certain resources (e.g. welfare benefits), to be able to manipulate online spaces such as official government websites.

Lefebvre's Space

As our "online and offline lives overlap more and more" (Pegrum, 2014:8), defining these spaces that are both locally situated and globally relevant, is a challenging endeavour. A good starting point is French philosopher Henri Lefebvre, (1991), who suggests abstaining from binary dichotomies of space (e.g. real/imagined) and instead proposes a 'triad conceptualization of social space'. Lefebvre demarcates space as following:

- Spatial Practice (*perceived space*) [physical space, nature, lived reality, networks, patterns]
- Representation of Space (*conceived space*) [mental/imagined space, ideology, power, knowledge]
- Representational Space / Space of Representation (*lived space*) [social space, space of human interaction]

Lefebvre (1991) makes the case that rather than being inert or static, space is in fact organic and alive; space is actively produced and collides with other spaces. Lefebvre (1991:87) draws on the field of hydrodynamics to illustrate his conception of space and describes space in terms of great movements, vast rhythms, immense waves, which all collide and interfere with one another, whereas lesser movements, on the other hand, interpenetrate. Higgins (2017:102), who offers an accessible introduction into Lefebvre's triad of space, points out that all three spaces (physical, mental, lived) are

inseparable, as "imagined space is where we conceive and analyse social events and the physical environment." Further, Higgins stresses that as physical space is always conceived by and for people, all spaces are ultimately political realms, and power is constantly embedded in their representation and in how people experience them.

Following this understanding then, similar to previously discussed conceptualizations of literacy (Street, 1995), space is *social*; Mills (2016:93) summarizes that "spatial literacy research acknowledges that space and literacy practices, and the organisation and meaning of those literacy spaces, are socially constructed." More than that, Lefebvre's thinking suggests a radical openness to how we should perceive spaces, as he (1991:86) argues that "[w]e are confronted not by one social space but by many - indeed, by an unlimited multiplicity or uncountable set of social spaces which we refer to generically as 'social space'." In this way, "space becomes reinterpreted not as a dead, inert thing or object but as organic and alive: space has a pulse, and it palpitates, flows, and collides with other spaces" (Merrifield, 2006:105).

Lefebvre's spatial theory seems difficult to synthesize within a migration framework at first. However, his ideas can help to better conceptualize today's complex loci of communication, such as multilingual and multimodal Facebook groups, where transnational audiences, such as newly arrived refugees to the UK, might interact with each other; though Lefebvre is not the first to mention it, the break away from binary dichotomies (e.g. online/offline and real/digital) is needed, as they fail to do justice to the observed spatial complexity. Moreover, the proposal of 'the social' aligns with the previously established understandings of literacy and furthermore acknowledges that spaces themselves can be realms of power, inclusion, exclusion, inequality, etcetera. This point seems pertinent vis-à-vis a study of newly arrived Syrian refugees, who, through migrating and traversing from familiar to unfamiliar spaces, have experienced a drastic shift in various capital (e.g. from citizen to 'refugee', from entrepreneur to relying on welfare and so on).

Soja's Space

Soja (1996:60) sees Lefebvre's major contribution in the refutation of reductionist binaries (e.g. local/global, mental/material) and his alternative proposal of a third possibility, a "'moment' that partakes of the original pairing [which] is not just a simple combination or an 'in between' position along some all-inclusive continuum." Soja further develops Lefebvre's notion of 'thirding' and critiques the "binary logic that has dominated traditional ways of thinking about space and geography for at least the past century" (Borch, 2002:114). Soja explains in an interview with Borch (2002:113f) that "Thirdspace includes both material and mental spaces, the real and the imagined, what I described as 'Firstspace' and 'Secondspace'; but also contains something more, something else that we can begin to understand only by widening the scope of our geographical imagination."

Similar to Lefebvre, Soja pushes us out of our comfort zone to think about space outside the prevailing binary dichotomies. Soja's 'Thirdspace' could describe the earlier mentioned Facebook group, which occupies both mental (e.g. the users' conception and attitudes towards that group) and material spaces (e.g. a vibrating smartphone after receiving a push notification of a new message), but also virtual-electronic space, such as the construction of space on the Facebook interface. Moreover, Soja argues (Borch, 2002:113) that we should see the "spatiality of our lives, the human geographies in which we live, as having the same scope and critical significance as the historical and social dimensions of our lives." This is crucial, as it clearly elevates space itself as a key component in the construction of social meaning, rather than it being a mere background factor. Thus, Soja provides further legitimacy for the study of the spatial in literacy studies.

Oldenburg's Place

Oldenburg's notion of third place (1996/7:6) on the other hand is more tangible than the theories put forward by Lefebvre and Soja; Oldenburg argues that whereas "first places (the home) and second places (the workplace) endure and remain central to our lives, third places are disappearing." Third places, Oldenburg (1996/7:6) explains, are "nothing more than informal public

gathering places" that serve important purposes for local community formation. Third places can include a great variety of public places that host the regular, voluntary, informal, and happily anticipated gatherings of individuals beyond the realms of home and work" (Oldenburg, 1999:16). In his sociology (1999) *The Great Good Place*, Oldenburg examines third places in different countries, such as the British pub or the German Biergarten. Oldenburg (1999) concludes that third places are absolutely central to local communities, as people from different ethnic, socio-economic and cultural backgrounds have a neutral space to interact and engage with, build social and share cultural capital. Yet, particularly in the US, third places are disappearing, as land is being used up and built upon and alternative, consumer-driven spaces (e.g. a Starbucks outlet) do not satisfy and qualify as alternative third places (c.f. Soukup, 2006).

Oldenburg's ideas were reinterpreted by Soukup (2006:434), who argues that though physical third places are disappearing, new third places might be appearing online instead; "[w]hile the virtual third place participants do not necessarily share the same physical space during the interaction, they do share a common 'symbolic space' which emphasizes distinct local community-based commitments, goals and values […]." Soukup (2006:425) argues that computer-mediated communication (CMC) can provide a "home away from home." To a certain degree, this relates to Gee's (2004) notion of 'affinity spaces', where people are drawn together, mostly online, based on shared interests, to promote and exchange knowledge. However, both Gee and Soukup conceptualize virtual space as a fairly autonomous and separate system to the offline world. Interestingly, Soukup stresses that neither physical nor virtual third places eliminate status and power, yet they might open opportunities for obtaining social capital. Although Soukup makes a strong case that third places continue online, he acknowledges that technology does not afford the same level of intimacy and the inclusiveness of 'real' third places. However, Soukup's paper was published in 2006. Since then, the internet has become much more personalized and demographically accessible with content being easier to produce. Thus, thinking about contemporary

communicative spaces (e.g. the before mentioned Facebook group) as third places is an interesting exercise; there are obvious examples (e.g. online dating) where 'the internet' as a 'space' is accommodating social practices that would have once (exclusively) taken place in shops, pubs and cafés and so on. Oldenburg (1999), who never intended third places to leave the local community or 'go online', places a lot of emphasis on the notion of 'the local' (e.g. the local pub), where a high proportion of 'regulars' frequent, 'bump into each other' and instigate conversations. Again, we could argue that asynchronous and synchronous group messaging services, (i.e. on WhatsApp) have partly replaced 'the local', where a roughly pre-defined, yet not exclusive group of people interact, at times sporadically, at times more frequently.

However, as Androutsopoulos, and Juffermans (2014:4) argue, it is "not to say that virtual spaces are merely equivalents or copies of urban spaces. They are not, and herein lays the relevance of studying virtual spaces of interaction in superdiverse setting. Social networking sites, virtual environments, online-gaming spaces etc. enable by virtue of their translocal accessibility a flow of semiotic resources that by far exceeds the resources that individual members bring along."

Scales

Scales theory offers an explanation of how persons can sometimes appear inarticulate, silent, deficient or powerless when they move from a space in which their linguistics resources are valued and recognized to a space where they are not.

Mastin Prinsloo (2017:365)

We can further explore the social nature of space within the study of literacy when we turn our attention to 'scales theory' (Blommaert et al., 2005; Blommaert, 2007; Blommaert and Leppänen, 2015; Prinsloo, 2017), which argues that space can explain inequalities, particularly within migration contexts. Prinsloo (2017) states that scales theory is based on world-systems analysis (WSA), which argues that there is a systemic division of the world, resulting from historical factors (e.g. colonialization) to do with how the global system originally expanded into core, peripheral, and semi-peripheral regions. Blommaert et al. (2005:203) explain space as follows: "[s]ome spaces are affluent and prestigious, others are not, some are open to all, while others require intricate and extensive procedures of entrance. And all spaces stand in some kind of relationship with each other – a relationship of power and value difficult to establish beforehand, but nevertheless real and in need of inquiry." Prinsloo (2017:366) thus concludes that there is "a spatial order to this world".

Blommaert (2007:3) further stresses that sociolinguistic phenomena (e.g. literacy events) are "essentially layered, even if they appear to be one-time, purely synchronic and unique events." Blommaert (2007; 2018) and Prinsloo (2017) argue that this has serious implications, particularly for migrants who traverse from the 'periphery' to the 'centre'. Prinsloo (2017:369) exemplifies this with the example of central accents (e.g. British English) opposed to peripheral accents (e.g. Nigerian English); whereas speakers of central accents are associated with "status and identity", a periphery speaker of English might be associated with "periphery identity". However, more recent thinking on scale has distanced itself from a layered world system view, towards embracing more complexity (Canagarajah and De Costa, 2016; Badwan and Simpson, 2019).

Scales theory further builds on Lefebvre's and Soja's notion of the social nature of space; Blommaert and Prinsloo demarcate and bind space, regardless of its size and nature, on a scalar system that ranges from prestigious to insignificant. This seems to resonate within the context of migration, where those who move between spaces often lose various capital (Blommaert, 2005). Scales theory also provides rationales for social, linguistic and economic inequalities within different communities; this might explain why some newcomers to the UK might be marginalized, whereas others are welcomed.

Yet, how can scales theory help to conceptualize complex spaces, such as social media platforms? Presumably, a scalar viewpoint would argue that success and failure to communicate or negotiate meaning within complex communicative environments is to a large extent dependent on the individual's scalar standing. However, this rather causal nature of space then means that social and linguistic inequalities "are not produced in situated and interactive or placed ways" but are the outcomes of "power working hierarchically and systematically as a function of the world system" (Prinsloo, 2017:374). In this sense then, scales theory seems to treat space as monolithic (powerful or insignificant) and thus fall back into previously rejected dichotomies (central vs. periphery). Thus, as Badwan and Simpson (2019:5) point out, "[t]he danger of taking hierarchy for granted, though, is that discourses of globalisation can disempower people as agentive individuals. Thus we continue to acknowledge the usefulness of the scale metaphor while arguing for an ontological orientation towards scale that is open to ecological features that invite contingency and unpredictability."

Chronotopes

In what follows, I want to draw attention to the 'chronotope'; originally, Bakhtin's (1981) notion of the chronotope was instigated to describe the interconnectedness of time and space, particularly in historical discourse (e.g. in historic novels). More recently, chronotopic analyses have been reinterpreted; Blommaert (2018b:5) defines the chronotope "[…] as the thing that could enable us to actually and precisely understand works of literature as socio-historically situated acts of communication." Subsequently, chronontopic analyses have been applied to various discursive contexts within the study of language in society, leading Blommaert (2018b:6) to argue that "[e]veryday social life can be seen, from this perspective, as a sequence of such chronotopically defined situations through which we continuously move, adapting and adjusting in the process our identities and modes of conduct in interaction with others."

Particularly in migration contexts, chronotopic analyses have been applied with various focal points to interpret the lived experiences of past, present and future mobilities (c.f. Dick, 2010; Pennycook, 2017; Blackledge and Trehan, 2018; Blommaert, 2018b). Pennycook (2017) for instance darws on 'assemblage' (Deleuze and Guattari, 1980), which I revisit at a later stage of the thesis. As Blommaert (2017:96) concludes, the "[c]hronotope […] is a "mobile" context enabling not just precise ethnographic description but explanatory potential as well." I apply the notion of the chronotope in more detail in Chapter 5.

'Meaning-making Trajectories'

In a well-known study, Cathy Kell (2009) applies scales theory in the context of housebuilding in the outskirts of Cape Town. Kell observes different literacy practices taking place in particular tasks (e.g. the ordering of building materials) which stretch through time and space (i.e. materials need to be ordered in a building supply shop eight kilometres away, which takes the whole day). Here, Kell (2009:260ff) introduces the notion of 'meaning making trajectories'. Kell (2009:261) argues that "[e]ach of these trajectories needed to be seen as a small thread in relation to wider sets of trajectories operating

on different scales." Kell particularly emphasizes the different temporal and spatial factors involved in literacy events and literacy practices. Kell identifies trajectories (e.g. the negotiation of an oversized house which led to a change of building plans), which take months to unfold and are embedded in a wider set of processes (e.g. City Council meetings on changing plans). Kell (2009:262) argues that these meaning-making trajectories, although operating on different scales (different people of different standing are involved) and covering different amounts of time, can be studied "in the same way". More than that, Kell introduces 'strips', which further demarcate and analytically divide the observed trajectories. Kell (2009:262) explains:

> Within a trajectory, each time the meaning-making process shifted across participant framework and/or space and time, the new 'context' (in the interactive rather than the spatial sense) that thus emerged was called a strip. A strip could consist of a sequence of events separated over time as long as the participant framework and the space in which they took place remained constant. The boundaries of a strip would be reached, when new participants entered or current ones departed the space, or the gathering as a whole took place in a new space and/or time.

Kell provides us with a tangible analytical framework of how literacy practices that penetrate time and space may be studied within a scalar framework. Kell's example shows how, based on the notion of the literacy event, 'strips' become unit of analyses. This section has investigated spatial literacies, particularly within a migration context. I have pointed out that similar to literacy, space is socially embedded. I have explored different conceptualizations of space, which share certain commonalities; there is agreement that space itself is not empty or neutral but has agency. Especially when crossing spaces of different power dynamics, people might feel inhibited or supported. This again is an important realization regarding our understanding of migrant literacy practices; as literacy practices traverse between spaces, (e.g. a tweet meant for a local audience going 'viral') the spatial 'mechanics' will change, too (e.g. the author of the message receiving praise or rejection for their words from a global audience). Thus, thinking about the space(s) in which literacy practices occur, even at a very small unit of analysis, seems pertinent and worthwhile.

2.6 Mobile Literacies for Newly Arrived Refugees

So far, I have scrutinized literacy practices from multimodal, mobile and spatial perspectives. These discussions have informed and contributed towards a deepened understanding of contemporary mobile literacy practices. In what follows, I investigate the mobile literacy practices of forced migrants through focused discussions of 'capital' and 'belonging'; here, I explore how capital is gained (Bourdieu, 1986; 1992) and lost (Blommaert, 2005) as people migrate, sojourn and traverse between spaces, as well as how they this might affect notions of belonging (Yuval-Davis, 2006) and non-belonging (Vallius et al., 2019) towards new places of residence. Moreover, I examine which roles mobile technologies play in regaining various capital and revisit some of the earlier discussions on transnational communicative practices, which – as the analyses to come will show – also relate to how smartphones facilitate notions of belonging for newly arrived people.

Capital and Loss of Capital

As outlined in Chapter 1.1, Bourdieu (1986, 1992) differentiates between economic (e.g. wealth), social (e.g. networks), cultural (e.g. technical, linguistic), and symbolic (e.g. prestige) capital. Bourdieu (1986:253) states that the "different types of capital can be derived from economic capital, but only at the cost of a more or less great effort of transformation, which is needed to produce the type of power effective in the field in question."

Thinking about the different forms of capital, particularly within a migration context, provides us with a greater understanding of newcomers' needs, worries and aspirations; whereas certain capital withstands the challenges of migration (e.g. the cultural capital of being able to play an instrument) and is easy to transfer, other capital might be curbed (e.g. linguistic capital) or entirely lost (e.g. wealth). Blommaert (2005:72) draws attention to the notion of loss of capital:

> The English acquired by urban Africans may offer them considerable prestige and access to middle-class identities in African towns. It may be an 'expensive', extremely valuable resource to them. But the same English, when spoken in London by the same Africans, may become

an object of stigmatisation […]. What is very 'expensive' in Lusaka or Nairobi may be very 'cheap' in London or New York.

Thus, Blommaert points out that what might be considered valuable in one place might be worth less in another. This again aligns with the earlier discussion on scales and spaces, where a change of space might consequent in stigma, exclusion, or loss of capital.

Unfortunately, forced migrants tend to lose much capital (Blommaert, 2005; Leurs, 2014); often, they have little time to prepare for their journeys and are in risk of financial exploitation while trying to reach their destination (Dekker et al., 2018). As there is little they can bring, many arrive with the bare necessities. In a recent study, Dekker et al. (2018) interviewed 54 Syrians applying for asylum in the Netherlands. Their findings show that out of the 54 respondents, 14 owned laptops and 30 had their own smartphones before migration. These numbers changed during migration; only one person brought a laptop with them, whereas n=43 had their own smartphone. Once in a new host country, most refugees will have to do much to regain their prior status. As men and women leave their jobs, houses and their social networks behind, many are left to rebuild their economic, linguistic and social capital from afresh.

Research (Leurs, 2014; Witteborn, 2015; Smets, 2017; Alencar; 2017; Kaufmann, 2018) provides evidence that refugees heavily draw on their smartphones as they re-establish themselves in their new environments. As regaining lost capital is high priority, many draw on mobile technologies to reclaim what was lost; Smets (2017:2) argues that "[t]oday, the study of migration has increasingly become a study of technologies." Alencar (2017:9) found in her study of Syrian refugees to the Netherlands that her participants spent an average of seven hours per day on social media.

Moreover, Alencar reports that this considerable time spent online is due to the fact of being a refugee, as before her participants spent much less time on social media in Syria. Alam and Imran (2015:344) argue that most of the information needs of refugee migrants relating to vital services such as settlement, housing, employment, opportunities, health, and education are

now negotiated online, mostly via mobile technologies. In the following, I further explore how the use of mobile technologies can be perceived from such a capital point of view.

Economic Capital

Leurs (2014) explains that with little access to formal labour, refugees are often unable to provide a regular income. Finding reliable sources of income is high priority for most newcomers. Moreover, qualifications and degrees from migrants' home countries often hold little authority, or have no warrant at all, in the new host countries, leaving migrants unable to resume their existing career paths. More than that, newcomers may find that the skills and experiences acquired in the past are not transferrable, or that there is in fact little demand for them in their new country of residence.

Besides this loss of economic and cultural capital, requirements and restrictive policies issued by the UK government, local councils, as well as other stakeholders (e.g. the Job Centre), can further complicate, delay, and hinder the job seeking process; so called 'non-citizens' (Giurea and Lormier, 2015) such as asylum seekers are prohibited to work altogether. As conventional employment opportunities transpire to be restricted or completely out of reach, unconventional and sporadic means of income within the informal economy become an alternative. Here, mobile technologies are significant; Giurea and Lormier (2015:126) give an account of how smartphones can positively affect newcomers' employment opportunities; those who have to look for informal means of employment in areas of work, such as cleaning, construction, trade, removals or waste recycling benefit from mobile technologies. Giurea and Lormier argue that their success in finding and maintaining business opportunities is based on their expertise to manipulate ICTs, as these jobs are often advertised over online platforms such as Gumtree or eBay and require constant communication and negotiation with prospective clients through texting, calling, and emailing.

Transnational Affective Capital and Ontological Security

As previously indicated, mobile technologies have led to a proliferation of transnational communication (Loveluck, 2015). Various studies (Leurs, 2014; Loveluck, 2015; Witteborn, 2015; Bradley et al., 2017) concerning the communicative practices of refugees report the importance of transnational communication practices. Of particular significance to migrants are apps such as Skype (Witteborn, 2015), WhatsApp (Loveluck, 2015) Viber and Facebook (Bradley et al., 2017; Vollmer, 2019), which offer affordable and reliable communicative infrastructure. There is an overall consensus that migrants typically stay in close contact with those left behind and those living far away. Omerbašić (2015:475) for instance conducted research in the US on nine female teenage refugees and their multimodal literacy practices. Omerbašić concludes (2015:477) that her participants, who utilized technology on a daily basis, engaged in productions of translocality through multimodal literacy practices in digital spaces:

> Sharing of content, including music videos, text messages, and online chats following resettlement established engagement in literacy practices that reflected a bridging of the girls' Burmese or Karen ways of knowing with their post-resettlement locality in the United States. Writing Burmese and Karen using the Latin alphabet allowed the girls to communicate with peers who share their linguistic and post-resettlement backgrounds, while enabling home language maintenance in digital spaces.

Furthermore, Leurs (2014:2) makes the argument that transnational relationships are one of the "few sources of capital available to stranded migrants" and are therefore significant to their 'transnational affective capital', as it helps those living in harsh conditions to cope with stress and to maintain or regain hope (Leurs, 2014). Transnational communication might contribute to 'ontological security' (Giddens, 1990; Leurs, 2014; Loveluck, 2015; Witteborn, 2015), which refers to the factors that are needed for a person to feel safe in a new environment. Leurs' study highlighted the importance of mobile technologies in building transnational affective capital. Leurs (2014:14) refers to this as "digital togetherness". Here, Kaufmann's (2018) study on

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Syrian refugees in Vienna offers important insights into transnational communication. Kaufmann (2018:893) reports how separated parents and children communicate with each other transnationally:

> […] lacking better means of verification, being online in messenger applications like WhatsApp was considered by the family as an equivalent to physical well-being. Therefore, most interviewees reported never going offline. Especially where children were separated from their parents back in Syria, the young adults were highly aware of the relevance of being online, not only as a way of making communication possible, but also as a message in itself […].

Kaufmann (2018:887) points out that for her participants "web services like Google Maps were not available" in their home country. This suggests that newcomers might need to engage in locality-specific re-appropriation processes vis-à-vis their smartphone practices, as a change in physical surrounding necessitates a re-appropriation of smartphone use (Kaufmann, 2018).

Last, Kaufmann (2018) conducted in-depth interviews with ten Syrian newcomers during which she asked her participants "to name their five most important apps. Most often named were Facebook, WhatsApp, *qando* Wien [Viennese public transport app], Google Maps, and Google Translate. Of all the about 90 different apps and functions mentioned in the data, none had been specifically designed for immigrants or refugees" (Kaufmann, 2018:889f). Dekker et al. (2018) had similar findings after interviewing 54 participants, with none of them using particularly tailored content for them. Kaufmann (2018) states the apps mentioned could be grouped as follows:

- Geographical orientation and place-making
- Language learning and everyday translation
- Information access and self-help
- Doing family

Kaufmann's findings thus suggest that refugees preferably draw on mainstream apps rather than on tailored content, an important point of discussion that will resurface throughout this thesis. Reasons for this remain

somewhat speculative. However, it can be argued that applications need to be relevant within a local and situated context. This is why Kaufmann's participants downloaded *qando*, the transportation app for Vienna. Alencar's work (2018), based in a Dutch context, further underscores this. She stresses the popularity of informal Facebook groups aimed at improving intercultural contact between Dutch natives and refugees, as well as other social media sites for the acquisition of language and cultural competences. Alencar (2018:9) argues that there is a "rise of informal refugee networks online." Moreover, Alencar (2018:13) found in her study that social media can be "more pronounced and crucial to tackling the challenges of integration." These findings thus suggest that informal and contextualized social media sites are pertinent spaces for newcomers.

Belonging and Non-Belonging

So far, the literature reviewed in Section 2.6 and more generally in Chapter 2 points towards the wider relevance of mobile technologies for newly arrived migrants to navigate, to adjust to and to feel safe within their newfound environments. Studies by Giurea and Lormier (2015), Loveluck (2015) and Kaufmann (2018) suggest that smartphones in particular seem to shape processes of arrival and settlement in unprecedented ways, a point of discussion I revisit in greater detail in the chapters that follow. However, this interdependence between perceived, or ontological security, and mobile literacy practices raises subsequent theoretical questions in regard to what it means to feel safe, at home and, more generally, connected to a particular place. In Chapter 1.1, I have briefly introduced the theoretical construct of 'belonging', which "allows more clearly questions about the actual spaces and places to which people are accepted as members or feel that they are members […]" (Anthias, 2013:7). In what follows, I further tie the notion of belonging into this discussion of ontological security and forced migrants' technology use.

Yuval-Davis (2006:197) points out that when we speak of 'belonging', an "emotional attachment" is highlighted, which necessitates an emotional and

social component vis-à-vis feeling at home. Research (Witteborn, 2015; Smets, 2017; Kaufmann, 2018) concerned with notions of belongings, for instance of newcomers' feelings of belonging towards their new neighbourhood or their new flat, thus often draw attention to "feeling linked to commonalities and struggles, as well as discourse as a resource for negotiating forms of inclusion and exclusion […]" (Horner and Dailey-O'Cain, 2020:7).

Importantly however, in this context of forced migration, engendering feelings of belonging can be problematic or even unattainable, as newcomers' trajectories of arrival may collide with wider legal or social issues, for instance when undocumented migrants are legally not allowed to reside in their new places of home, or if they are made feel unwelcome. Thus, migrants may find themselves in unforeseen and complex situations where their '(un)belonging' (Horner and Dailey-O'Cain, 2020) or 'non-belonging' (Vallius et al., 2019) provide more accurate descriptions of their current situations. This again points towards the interconnection between feelings of belonging or non-belonging and ontological security; as people find themselves in spaces of (un)belonging or non-belonging, it is only likely that this will affect their perceived sense of security towards a particular place. An empirical study by Noble (2005), which examined the increasing experience of discomfort amongst migrant Australians and their children (n=186) following the September 11 attacks, supports this argument further. Noble states that as many respondents were made to feel unsafe in public spaces through verbal and non-verbal abuse from strangers, their feelings towards the communities they lived in deteriorated. One of Noble's (2005:117) Muslim respondents concludes that "…after September 11, it felt like our home, which Australia has been our home, for almost all of my life…was somehow not our home any more."

More than that, as Anthias (2013:15) points out, belonging "is a term that can no longer be linked to a fixed place or location but to a range of different locals in different ways. This also means that people might occupy different and contradictory positions and have different belongings globally." This not only

resonates with the earlier scrutinized socio-spatial conceptualizations of Section 2.5 and points towards a translocal understanding of belonging, which goes beyond immediate physical spaces, but also acknowledges the previously discussed migrant mobile literacy practices that build towards transnational affective capital and ontological security. This then suggests that migrants' mobile literacy practices can be interpreted as vocalizations of belonging, a point of discussion that will resurface within the analytical chapters that follow, as well as in Chapter 8.

Section 2.6 reviewed literature concerning mobile literacy practices of forced migrants via a discussion of capital (Bourdieu, 1992) and belonging (Noble, 2005; Anthias, 2013; Horner and Dailey-O'Cain, 2020; Yuval-Davis, 2006). As people sojourn and traverse between various spaces, the notion of loss of capital (Blommaert, 2005) gains relevance. Moreover, I examined the roles mobile technologies and particularly smartphones can play in regaining capital and scrutinized current studies of newly arrived migrants to Europe.

In summary, Chapter 2 provides a theoretical backdrop for this study of newly arrived refugees and their mobile literacy practices. The different sections of this thesis chapter discuss a wide range of relevant literature and bring attention to key themes, such as the themes of space and capital, which I revisit at later points. As previously indicated in Section 1.1, new themes, for instance the theme of 'belonging' will appear at given moments throughout the analytical chapters and the subsequent discussion of data, as these first and foremost emerged through the analyses and their findings.

In what follows in Chapter 3, I shift attention from a theoretical concern of this study to address methodological dimensions that demarcate the overall character of this research project. Moreover, informed by the theoretical discussion of Chapter 2, I pose the research questions in Chapter 3.7.

Chapter 3: Methodological Considerations

3.1 Chapter Organization

This chapter outlines the breadth and depth of my doctoral research project, a situated spatio-visual linguistic ethnography, exploring newly arrived Syrian refugees' digital literacy practices on mobile technologies, with particular emphasis on smartphones. In the following, I define ontological, epistemological and methodological dimensions of this study, which have characterized and shaped the research design of this linguistic ethnography. This thesis chapter is consequently organized in eight sections, which collectively address and outline relevant metaphysical, ethical, analytical, but also organizational concerns.

Following this chapter overview, I first make the case for Linguistic Ethnography (LE) (Section 3.2), and pinpoint how ethnographic techniques and principles strengthen the depth and quality of my research project.

Next, in Section 3.3, I demarcate the breadth of my research project; I draw on a visualization of my four-year research activity to provide reference points concerning the chronology and trajectory of my project. Here, I discuss volunteering as an important part of my study and further justify my focus on Syrian male newcomers, as well as discuss issues concerning the insider-outsider dichotomy within this ethnographic inquiry.

In Section 3.4, I provide the reader with an overview of the chosen data collection methods, drawing on ethnographic means of data collection, such as fieldnotes and semi-structured interviews, but also mobile screen recordings, which I have relied on extensively in my fieldwork. I make a case for a meticulous use of fieldnotes and observations.

Next, Section 3.5 is concerned with ethical dimensions of this research project; I discuss the challenges of collecting data from social media platforms, as well as the ethical issues of informed consent. Further, I take a critical stance towards the over-researching of people and places, which I have witnessed on several occasions.

Section 3.6 gives accounts of both my pilot and my main research project. Here, I provide tabular overviews of my datasets, from both the pilot and the main study.

Last, in section 3.7, I discuss analytical concerns, which have been seminal in the development of the three analytical chapters. Here, I pose the research questions, which are organized as follows; an overarching research question (*How do newly arrived Syrian refugees' digital literacy practices support processes of settlement?)* concerned with this study as a whole is further split into two sub-research questions, which are addressed throughout the analyses and subsequent data discussions.

3.2 The Case for Ethnography

Much of what we seek to find out in ethnography is knowledge that others already have.

Dell Hymes (1996:13)

In Chapter 2 I have drawn on and discussed a wide range of literature and research concerned with different conceptualizations of literacy from particular theoretical viewpoints (i.e. *multimodality, spatiality,* and *mobility*). Concluding these discussions, I have argued for a plural, flexible, and inclusive standpoint on literacy, echoing others (Brice Heath, 1983; Street, 1995; Barton and Hamilton, 2000; Warschauer, 2009) who have promoted the inductive and holistic study of situated literacy practices – on a multiplicity of scales (Blommaert et al., 2005) and within different spaces (Wilson, 2000).

As present-day literacy practices increasingly occur in translocal (Omerbašić, 2015) and superdiverse settings (Androutsopoulos and Juffermans, 2014), on the move (Kukulska-Hulme and Pegrum, 2018; Gillespie et al., 2018), and located within novel spaces (Gilhooly and Lee, 2014; Borkert et al., 2018), catered for by affordances that mobile technologies and especially smartphones bring to the table, *a research ontology and epistemology of contemporary literacy studies must accommodate for and produce research designs which unearth and investigate those spaces in which literacy practices take place* – be those formal, informal, educational, recreational, mobile, etcetera. Taking these realizations seriously then provides us with pertinent points of reference and overall guidelines concerning the demarcation and design of this doctoral research project, a study of newly arrived Syrian refugees' digital literacy practices.

Linguistic Ethnography (LE), which has been defined as a "dynamic relationship between linguistics and ethnography" (Rampton et al., 2014:2) and the "conjuncture of ethnography and linguistics" (Rampton et al., 2014:1), is often understood as an "umbrella term", where "established research traditions interact [...]" (Shaw et al., 2015:2). Tusting (2013:2) argues that there

is an underlying belief in LE that "[…] language and the social world mutually shape one another, and that the mechanisms and dynamics of these processes can be understood through close analysis of language use and meaning-making in everyday activity." Thus, as Copland and Creese (2015) point out, LE explores how language is used by people and what this tells us about wider social constraints, structures and ideologies. Tusting (2013:7) argues, drawing on Rampton et al. (2004), that there is considerable common ground between literacy studies and LE, particularly in terms of methodology:

> In terms of methodology, literacy studies subscribes to the ethnographic perspectives outlined in Rampton et al. 2004: regard for local rationalities; questioning over-simplifications, particularly those of policy discourses addressing literacy practices as part of ecologies of cultural organisation, in which a number of different levels and dimensions are interacting in the production of meaning attention to systems and patterns (particularly in describing literacy practices) while remaining sensitive to local particularities and unique events [.]

Tusting's observations are further substantiated when we consult the literature; there is a long-standing tradition of ethnographies with linguistic foci that have in great detail investigated the use of language in a gamut of wider social contexts. This shift from large scale quantitative studies towards ethnographic scholarship has been commented on early on by Graff (1986:126), who stresses that qualitative and ethnographic studies of literacy offer a "much sharper contextual grounding in clearly delineated localities."

Such studies often foreground and explore local literacy practices of particular individuals (Callaghan, 2011) and (more or less) cohesive groups, bound by factors as diverse as geographic location (Milroy, 1987) and local community (Brice-Heath, 1983; Barton and Hamilton, 2000), citizenship (Khan, 2013), blogging (Davies and Merchant, 2007) or *Second Life* (Gillen, 2009). Although linguistic ethnographies have covered the whole spectrum of literacy practices, from the very informal to the highly academic, there seems to be a particular interest in vernacular (Brice-Heath, 1983; Barton and Ivanić, 1991) or 'grassroots' literacy practices (Blommaert and Velghe, 2012) that are often neglected in the wider literature or given little attention in formal education

settings (Warschauer, 2009). Here, Heller's (2008:250) apt description of ethnography help us understand this relationship on a deeper level:

> [E]thnographies allow us to get at things we would otherwise never be able to discover. They allow us to see how language practices are connected to the very real conditions of people's lives, to discover how and why language matters to people in their own terms, and to watch processes unfold over time. They allow us to see complexity and connections, to understand the history and geography of language. They allow us to tell a story; not someone else's story exactly, but our own story of some slice of experience, a story which illuminates social processes and generates explanations for why people do and think the things they do'.

Furthermore, LE provides powerful frameworks for research which is concerned with transnational and multi-spatial mobile and digital literacy practices of refugees (Charmarkeh, 2013; Gilhooly and Lee, 2014; Omerbašić, 2015), refugees seeking asylum (Witteborn, 2015), or marginalized people such as semi-literate women with no access to formal education (Blommaert and Velghe, 2012; Velghe and Blommaert, 2014). Rampton et al., (2014:2) argue that (linguistic) ethnography is situated in everyday practices; they point out that "[e]thnography typically looks for the meaning and rationality in practices that seem strange from afar or at first. It tries to enter the informants' life-world and to abstract (some of) its structuring features, and this entails a process of continuing alternation between involvement in local activity on the one hand, and on the other, an orientation to external audiences and frameworks beyond […]."

Rampton et al.'s notion of 'entering lifeworlds' holds much currency for research situated in (forced) migration contexts, where the biographies of those being researched often differ tremendously from those who instigate and conduct the research, a point I discuss in more detail elsewhere in this chapter. Here, ethnography can act as a mediator between the researcher and the researched. Hymes (1996:13) covers the essence of this, when he writes that "[m]uch of what we seek to find out in ethnography is knowledge that others already have." More than that, particularly for exploratory research concerning the study of mobile technologies, ethnography seems to be pertinent; Gillespie

et al. (2018:4) provide an impressive account, as they share their experiences of researching the roles of smartphones for migrant border crossings.

> The multimedia affordances of smartphones provided, in many instances, rich and often dramatic, poignant, and occasionally joyful ("We have arrived") documentary evidence about refugee journeys. In combination with ethnographic-style interviews, this provided new possibilities for new kinds of engagement with audio-visual data. In fact, as researchers we watched many film clips and photographs of sea-crossings or treks across tough terrain on the Balkans route, or encountered with smugglers.

Collectively, these insights outlined by Heller (2008), Tusting (2013), Rampton et al. (2014), Copland and Creese (2015) and others, concerning the study of language and literacy through LE, provide a convincing theoretical foundation for the study of refugees' digital literacy practices. The argument for LE as an ontological theory for this research project becomes further established, once we shift our attention to principles, which traditionally characterize ethnographic scholarship.

3.2.1 Ethnographic Principles

According to Blommaert and Jie (2010), ethnography has an inductive character, keeps an 'openness to data' (Rampton et al., 2014) and works from empirical evidence towards theory. Here, the data is the starting point (Blommaert and Jie, 2010). Most approaches, Blommaert (2009) argues, aim for simplification and reduction of complexity. In ethnography however, the target is precisely the opposite as reality is kaleidoscopic, complex, and complicated, often a patchwork of overlapping activities (Blommaert, 2009). Furthermore, Street (2001:1) makes the point that ethnographic approaches are more concerned with attempting to understand what actually happens, than with trying to prove the success of a particular intervention or 'sell' a particular methodology for teaching or management. This attention to detail and explicit acknowledgement of complex realities within social practices, provides a fertile ground for meaningful inquires; my ethnography aims to research day-to-day digital literacy practices. This carries a distinct descriptive element, where literacy practices need to be first recognized, then observed,

recorded and later analysed. However, this is often easier said than done; to make sense of and interpret the literacy practices and produce 'thick descriptions' (Geertz, 1973) of what I observe in the field, I need to be able to explore these practices in all their semiotic, spatial, multilingual, and scalar complexities; I argue that ethnography is able to deliver this attention to detail.

Yet, this attention to detail that ethnography affords comes with a price-tag, or a series of commitments to be specific, such as prolonged engagement in the field, or the constant challenge to establish and maintain close relationships with research participants and other informants. These mainly temporal and interpersonal commitments need to be taken seriously, especially in this condensed context of doctoral research, where time and resources are limited, and data collection phases usually do not exceed a few months. Yet, why is this commitment in the field necessary? Although reasons for prolonged fieldwork can vary, there is an underlying ambition to really get to know research sites and research participants.

Though, often, getting access to sites and people initially can take a lot of time, especially when researcher and researched have little shared socio-cultural histories, an issue I address at a later point of this chapter in more detail. Moreover, as ethnography typically works from empirical evidence towards theoretical conclusions, much time is spent observing and trying to make sense of what is going on. Third, ethnographers try to capture "what actually happens" (Street, 2001:1), what participants really think, etcetera. This is often encapsulated with the notion of an 'emic' perspective, which, opposed to an 'etic' point of view, explicitly foregrounds the lifeworlds of those being researched (Bergman and Lindgren, 2018).

Concluding this discussion on ethnography and LE then, we come to realize that an ethnographic approach vis-à-vis the study of situated literacy practices offers fertile ground for contextualized, detailed and in-depth analyses of thoroughly observed social and communicative practices. However, at the same time, this requires a series of commitments, which can be difficult to live up to, especially within a doctoral research project.

In the following section, 3.3, I illustrate how I found a compromise between the ethnographic principles outlined previously on the one hand, and the need to produce research project limited by time and space.

3.3 Breadth and Width of my Research Project

The visualization below provides a reduced and simplified overview of my research activity, from the start of my doctoral studies in October 2015, to the completion of fieldwork in May 2017, to initial data analysis, writing up, and preparation for thesis submission in 2019 and 2020. My aim here is to provide a tangible overview, bringing together chronology (*x-axis*) and trajectory (*y-axis*) of my research project. I introduce data collection sites (yellow) and key participants (turquoise) of my ethnography in greater detail in Chapter 4. In this section however, I would like to, based on the visualization below, draw attention to several seminal factors, which have informed and shaped my interpretation of ethnographic research.
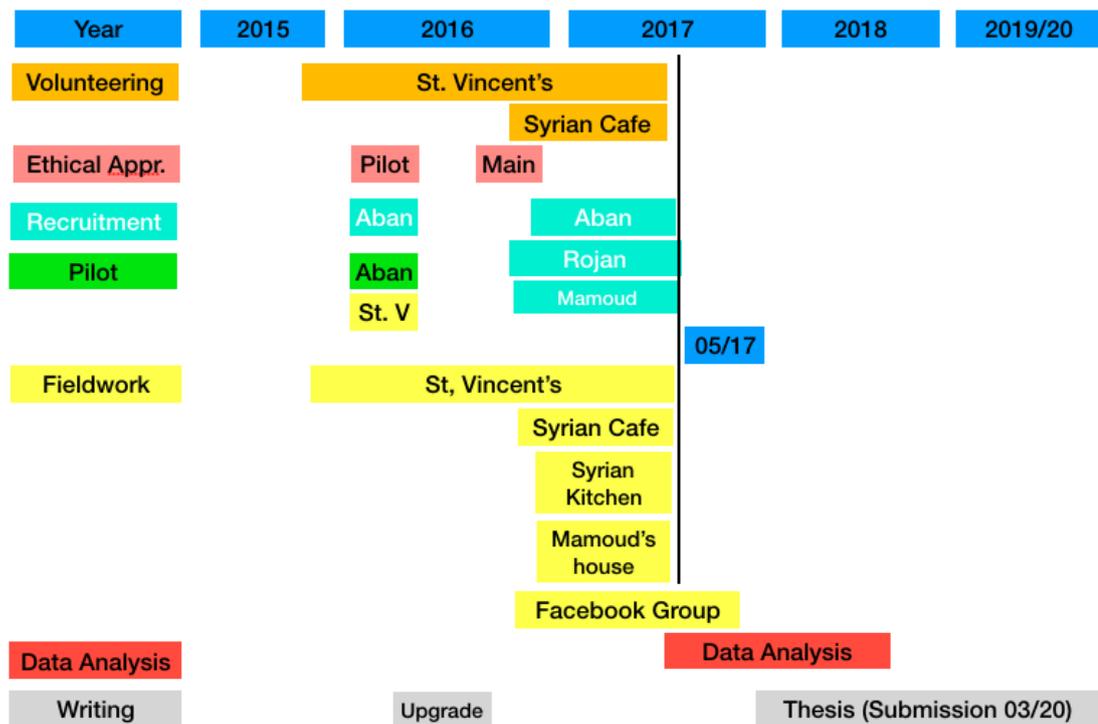
Figure 1: Chronological Visualization of Research Trajectory

3.3.1 Research through Volunteering

As a newcomer to Leeds myself with a limited personal and professional network, volunteering (orange) at a local ESOL provider manifested as an effective "way in"; in October 2015, I started to support pre-entry ESOL lessons at the *St. Vincent's Support Centre*, almost immediately after moving to Leeds. During this 18-month period, I visited St. Vincent's over 30 times and learned much about ESOL provision in and around Leeds; I was able to observe the flows of students who attended and missed classes and I came to know volunteers and members of staff who supported lessons or dropped in class to make announcements. I also witnessed, every week, with how little financial means and teaching resources ESOL is taught. As I carried on my voluntary engagement throughout my first year and most of my second, I started to get to know more volunteers and teachers, more students, more ESOL classrooms. From the first day, I documented my experiences in and around the classroom, conserving everything that sparked my interest. I revisit the St. Vincent's Support Centre in more detail in Chapter 4.2.

Eventually, after a few months into my first year (April 2016), volunteering at St. Vincent's turned into initial participant recruitment (turquoise) and piloting attempts (green), and at a later stage, at the beginning of my second year, led to more focused fieldwork (yellow). More than that, spending time consistently each week at one place, helped me to refine my observational skills and to focus my fieldnote-writing; whereas some factors (e.g. the classroom setting) stayed consistent each week, others fluctuated profoundly (e.g. the student population each week or the use of mobile technologies in class).

This dichotomy of consistency on the one hand and constant change on the other helped me to sharpen my analytical eye. More importantly, my engagement with St. Vincent's eventually led me to one of my key participants (Aban, c.f. Chapter 4.3) and other important informants of my ethnographic project. Furthermore, over time, students and teachers introduced me to places in and around Leeds, which were meaningful to them (e.g. the Syrian Café, c.f. Chapter 4.4) and other spaces, such as charities like RETAS (Refugee Education Training Advice Service), who provide assistance with

access to education, re-qualification, training and employment to help better integrate newcomers in their communities (RETAS, 2020) or online networks such as the SCOLFBG, which I revisit in more detail in Chapter 4.8. In hindsight, my volunteering was crucial, as it laid out the fundament for everything else that was to come in my research project. I give a more detailed account of how I accessed data collection sites and recruited my key participants in the succeeding chapter (Chapter 4: My Ethnography).

3.3.2 Selecting a Research Population

The experiences of men, women, children, families, and individuals from and in various places at various moments can be very different. Demographic characteristics, ideological positions, and linguistic, social, and cultural competencies and forms of digital literacy and access shape uses.

Gillespie et al. (2018:3f)

Since commencing my doctoral studies in October 2015, we have witnessed some of the severest natural disasters and most alarming geopolitical crises in recent history (Borkert et al., 2018). These crises have fuelled the largest exodus of people since the aftermath of World War II, resulting in more than 65 million forced migrants globally – the highest levels of displacement on record (UNHCR, 2018). Adding to existing drivers of migration, such as economic motivation (Collier, 2013), intensifying armed conflicts between nation states, radical extremists, and others, have resulted in many casualties, forcing civilians from their homes, leaving them displaced or stranded in precarious refugee camps in Africa, the Levant, but also in Europe (Moorehead, 2006). Figures[1] from the year 2016, provided by the UNHCR (2017), document these flows of people and provide sobering numbers: in the year 2016, five million refugees and close to 1.4 million asylum seekers from around the globe were located within EU member states. Out of those, the UK hosted almost 119.000 refugees and close to 47000 asylum seekers, with most 2016 asylum applications coming from countries such as Iran, Pakistan, Iraq, and Afghanistan (Full Fact, 2018).

This recent intensification of global migration streams has garnered much attention from the media and has become a fundamental point of contention in political debates. More than that, the increase of migration flows, especially to Europe, has acted as instigators of national and far-right political movements (e.g. PEGIDA in Germany) and has also been seen by some as

[1] Figures drawn on in this section primarily focus on the year 2016, rather than on more recent figures, as they reflect more accurately the overall geopolitical situation when I decided to explicitly research the digital literacy practices of newly arrived Syrians in Leeds.

legitimacy for racism, xenophobia and even more serious crimes; since 2015, there has been a growing hostility against ethnic, religious, and other minority people, noticeable in many European countries. Moreover, in the UK, the 2016 Brexit vote has precipitated an increase in attacks on members of various ethnic minorities (Holden, 2016; Viña, et al., 2016).

Here, one conflict, the ongoing civil war in Syria, has like no other produced headlines and instigated political and public discourse. In 2016 and 2017, most claims for asylum to EU member states came by far from Syrian nationals. The UK has pledged to take in 20.000 Syrians by 2020 under the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme (VPRS) (Wintour, 2015; Home Office, 2017), with around 1000 of those having been settled in Leeds in 2016 (Yorkshire Evening Post, 2016). Yet, currently, Syrians are not the largest refugee population in the UK; in 2017, most positive asylum decisions were granted to applicants from Iran, Eritrea and Sudan (Refugee Council, 2018).

Nonetheless, in 2016, when I made the conscious decision to explicitly research the digital literacy practices of newly arrived Syrians in Leeds, the Syrian refugee crisis was the most severe humanitarian crisis on a global scale, leaving 11 million people displaced, but also within an EU context, as over one million Syrians sought asylum in EU member states (Syrian Refugees, 2016). Importantly, this proliferation of humanitarian crises is clearly noticeable in today's ESOL classrooms, where it is not uncommon that students have experienced war and strife (Cooke and Simpson, 2008).

During my time volunteering at St. Vincent's, most of the (pre-entry) ESOL students came from war-torn and precarious countries, including Eritrea, Sudan and former Portuguese colonies in Africa (e.g. Angola or Mozambique), but also from the Middle East, from countries such as Syria or Iraq. Various extracts from my fieldnotes (Table 1) give insights into the ethnic backgrounds of the student population at these pre-entry ESOL classes. In these cases, students self-reported from which countries they came from. Though I have no reason to disbelieve these accounts, they might not be fully accurate.

Date	Fieldnotes: St. Vincent's student population
13.10.15	Four students come from Portugal, five from Eritrea, four from Syria, one student is from Sudan, one student comes from China and one student is from Morocco.
03.11.15	Where are students from? 7 from Portuguese colonies, 5 from Eritrea, 1 from Morocco, 4 from Syria, 1 from Chad, 1 from Kashmir
26.04.16	Only eight students showed up today. One from Sudan, one from Hungary, one Czech person, one Iraqi, one from the Ukraine, one Nigerian, and two from Eritrea.
10.10.16	11 students in this class. One male, 10 females; students come from Brazil, China, Eritrea, Syria, and Kuwait. Most are from African countries (esp. Eritrea).
11.10.16	More and different people are still coming to this class. Students come from: Afghanistan (2), Syria (1), Morocco (1), Eritrea (3), Iraq (2), Angola (2), Czech Rep (1), Poland (1) and China (2)

Table 1: Pilot Study: Student Population in ESOL classrooms

These accounts give a sense of direction vis-à-vis the student population of St. Vincent's pre-entry ESOL classes in 2015 and 2016; most classes I observed had Syrian newcomers in them. This again gave me a strong sense that the Syrian humanitarian crisis had clearly penetrated my life, via various channels, such as the media, through private and public discourse, and through my own personal experiences in ESOL classrooms.

This again initiated a desire for some sort of response, which is why I decided to situate my own project within this Syrian context. Here, my ambition was – and still is – that my findings would contribute to positive outcomes and produce new insights into a particularly salient and relatively new refugee group within this UK context.

Moreover, I remain hopeful that my doctoral research project positively impacts Syrian people in Leeds and elsewhere; I aspire that my research supports adult language educators, ESOL and migration policymakers, and

others, such as charities and NGOs, who are concerned with Syrian newcomers in various humanitarian, educational, and civic contexts.

While recruiting participants for my main study, I opted roughly for a similar age cohort (+/- ten years) and linguistic backgrounds. All three participants, Mamoud, Rojan and Aban are expert speakers of Arabic with foundational or little experience in spoken and written English, prior to coming to the UK. Further, I only recruited 'newly arrived' individuals, who had lived less than a year in the UK prior to the start of my fieldwork, to make a stronger case for potential comparative analyses. Besides, I wanted to explore in particular, how newcomers draw on mobile technologies to support processes of initial settlement and belonging, such as finding housing and employment, and passing UK driving tests, which newcomers to the UK have to face especially within the first months of arrival.

More than that, vis-à-vis overall project feasibility, I opted to focus my study on male participants only, to reduce gender-related concerns, an issue documented in ethnographic scholarship (c.f. Chapter 9.2); Gillespie et al. (2018:3) for instance report that "[g]ender proved to be a stumbling block throughout the research. The lead interviewer, a Lebanese male, was unable to speak to women refugees easily."

Furthermore, my pilot study, a video-recorded 30 minute interview with Aban, a Syrian newcomer I met in one of the ESOL classes at St. Vincent's, manifested to be invaluable, as it greatly informed my later research design in terms of feasibility of data collection, data management, and data analysis; using my pilot research and the dataset it generated as a point of reference (I discuss my pilot research in greater detail in Section 3.6), I estimated that I could not maintain the close relationships required for ethnographic inquiry, with more than three or four participants, while still being able to produce fieldnotes and manage the collected data.

However, once the recruitment process of three participants was completed in January 2017, I was under no illusion that my research participants, all Syrian, male, middle-aged men, would be a homogenous and uniform group; as Gillespie et al. (2018:3f) argue, "[r]efugees' sociotechnical practices and

informational and communicative needs are multifarious as, of course, refugees are not a homogenous group. The experiences of men, women, children, families, and individuals from and in various places at various moments can be very different. Demographic characteristics, ideological positions, and linguistic, social, and cultural competencies and forms of digital literacy and access shape uses."

3.3.3 Outsiders and Insiders

The importance of shared linguistic, cultural, religious, ethnic, and other commonalities between ethnographer and research population, is often discussed in ethnographic research; Khan (2013), for instance, comments on the benefits of shared religious practices with one of his research participants in his ethnographically informed case study. In my case however, being a white German from the Black Forest, with hardly any knowledge of written or spoken Arabic and limited knowledge of Syria and its people more generally, there was no obvious overlap in sight; still, looking back, my participants and I did have some mutually shared experiences as newcomers to Leeds; for instance, we made relatable experiences accessing civic institutions, such as the Job Centre; whereas I had to seek out the Job Centre only once, to apply for a National Insurance (NI) number, my participants had to interact with the Job Centre on a more regular basis. Extracts from my fieldnotes illustrate this shared experience around the Job Centre (table below).

Fieldnotes: Job Centre, Leeds. November 2016
[…] There is a lady behind a desk at the Job Centre. She looks scary. I approach her, and she barks "YOU SPEAK ENGLISH?" I'm left a little intimidated and eventually, I come back to my senses and reply "Yes, I got some", which is a pretty silly reply. She's unimpressed either way and tells me to wait with the other NI seekers. And thus begins the waiting. I wait for a long time, […]. The more time I spend here, the more I feel like I'm part of a two-caste system: people with NI numbers, and people without them. Meanwhile, the lady at the reception desk has decided to reduce her "you speak English?" to a catchier and more efficient "SPEAK ENGLISH?", which she barks at an elderly Romanian lady. […]

Fieldnotes: The Syrian Café, November 2016

[…] I'm at the Syrian Café for the first time, to observe one of the informal ESOL classes I've heard about. Men and women are working in separate rooms. Yara, a volunteer ESOL teacher, joins the women in the other room and asks me if I can take over teaching the men for a bit. Yara was explaining to them that 'do' and 'not' can be put together to 'don't'. She exemplifies this with sentences starting with 'I don't like'. As Yara didn't tell me what to focus on, I decide to take it from there and introduce more ways to state emotions and feelings. I write down the following statements on the small white board: I love…♥, I like…☺, I don't like…☹, I hate… ☹☹

First, I try to explain the differences between each of the statements. I give examples. In a next step, I ask the men to think of their own examples. Most use the same examples I've given them before (I love coffee, I don't like fish, I don't like alcohol, I hate smoking). However, some come up with their own ideas. Aban says "I don't like hot", whereas another says, "I don't like cold." Slowly, they seem to get it. Then, out of nowhere, Fathi, Aban's mate shouts "I don't like Job Centre!" – and everyone is in stiches, clapping or nodding in agreement. What a sentence, I feel the pain […]

These two extracts underscore how my own experiences with the Job Centre are seminal in my understanding of Fathi's comment and the consecutive reactions of the others that follow. In this case, our 'newcomer' identities helped bridge the gap between the researcher and the researched and created shared understanding. Yet, the more I got to know my participants, the further apart we seemed to be. This became more and more obvious as fieldwork continued and our seemingly shared newcomer identity failed to align; whereas my German passport enabled me almost similar rights in comparison to the local British population, my participants' Syrian backgrounds, in combination with their refugee statuses, held much less currency, which consequently led to serious loss of citizenship (for instance their impaired freedom of movement); this became painfully evident when one of my participants was not allowed to see his sister in Hamburg, Germany, who he hadn't seen in over two years after leaving Syria, while I was regularly traveling home, to visit friends and family. For my participants, accepting and adapting to these new constraints, as well as the ambition to re-instigate what was lost, became a constant underlying theme throughout my fieldwork. I discuss this

in more detail, particularly in Chapter 6, where I explore the use of mobile technologies in the context of passing the UK driving test.

At the same time, it was surprising to me how my German background, which was known to most people, was often beneficial and highly regarded. The following extract from my fieldnotes (14.11.16) underscores this in more detail.

Fieldnotes: Syrian Café, November 2016
Two Syrian couples (all in their 30s-40s, one of the men is a taxi driver) and Yara and I are standing in a circle. She argues that "we get emotional, when we [as in we Syrians] hear someone here speak our language". This clearly underlines what I have been trying to accomplish; me speaking a few words of Arabic will potentially open up opportunities for more conversations. Then the taxi driver asks me where I'm from. I tell him in my clumsy Arabic that I'm from Germany. He didn't expect that and goes on talking about Germany. Yara translates what he has to say. His face is sincere as he speaks. He looks me in the eye, it is a touching moment. His story is similar to others I've heard; he tells me of his brother and his nephews, who found refuge in Cologne. He tells me of his gratitude and respect for the German people but also for Angela Merkel. Everyone agrees and I feel a bit awkward (I haven't done anything) and a bit like I am the German ambassador. He wants me to pass on his gratitude.

3.4 Data Collection Methods

3.4.1 Observations and Fieldnotes

Observing and writing down what I saw, heard, felt, and often tasted – my research took me onto unexpected, but most welcomed, culinary experiences of Middle Eastern cuisine – became my default modus operandi throughout most of my fieldwork. What I wrote down evolved and developed quite considerably; this partly had to do with the change in environments that I observed and spaces that I resided in; whereas I was mostly auditing and observing quite structured environments such as ESOL classes in the beginning of my fieldwork, I later gained access to more intimate, ad-hoc and private events, such as family meetings and meals and BBQs, often taking place in the private homes of my participants.

Blommaert and Jie (2010:42f) encourage novice researchers to take notes and collect "rubbish", whenever they are "in the field". Their rationale for this is that ethnographic inquiry aims to create a very detailed reconstruction of particular events; I took this to heart and tried to be as meticulous and structured with my writing process as I could be. I would generally write down what I saw as either coherent sentences or less structured lists and numbers, both in English and German. Often, I would draw little doodles or sketch the layout of rooms and unfamiliar or new places in my notebook. I occasionally took notes and drew with my phone, especially when forgetting either pen or pencil (see table below, left column). Taking notes on my phone often seemed much less inconspicuous, as people usually thought I was texting. Interestingly, my notebook became a more shared space over time, as my participants would occasionally write phone numbers, notes, or Arabic words in it (see table below, right column). After a day in the field, I set myself the task to transform these raw notes and doodles into more structured and substantial word documents. I kept different word documents for each data collection site, adding logs with dates as fieldwork carried on. This seemed like a straightforward plan at the beginning, as each participant was neatly associated with one data collection site. Yet, over time, things got a bit 'messy', as participants started to unexpectedly show up in different places. Still, I stuck

to this structure, as each entry was clearly coded with data, place, and actor. Eventually, I started to give each log a specific title (e.g. Iranian Heart Attack; Scooter for Sale!), which helped me to remember what happened that day and made it easier to locate particular information in my notes.

20.02.17: Room layout of the Syrian Café at informal driving test preparation class. (M=Mamoud, A= Aban)	23.01.17 Mamoud teaching me how to count and write numbers
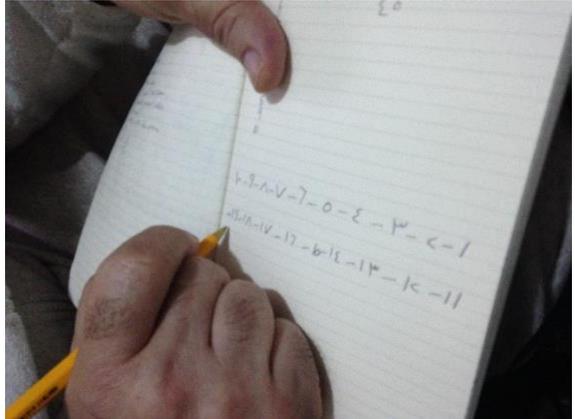
3.4.2 Recorded Conversations and Interviews

Interviews can be valuable tools for language researchers; they can be sources of 'real language data' (Codó, 2008:158) and help researchers gain the aforementioned emic perspective (Copland and Creese, 2015:29). Interviews play a big role in ethnographic research. Blommaert and Jie (2010:42) stress the importance of capturing 'real interaction' rather than staged, artificial, choreographed interviews. They clarify that "there is nothing intrinsically ethnographic about an interview, and doing interviews does not make your research ethnographic: […] research is ethnographic because it accepts a number of fundamental principles and views on social reality. Consequently, interviews can be thoroughly non-ethnographic: when they are decontextualised, massacred, and reduced to something that never happened in a real interaction." Blommaert and Jie (2010:44) argue that interviews are

most importantly conversations. Though these conversations might have an order or a structure, the focus should be on interaction. Kvale (1996:5f) also comments on the notion of interviews being conversations and concludes that qualitative research interviews are based on the conversations of daily life. Here, Kvale points out that semi-structured lifeworld interviews are defined as interviews, whose purpose is to obtain descriptions of the life world of the interviewee with respect to interpreting the meaning of a described phenomenon.

Throughout my fieldwork, I gravitated away from structured, formal interviews towards more informal and spontaneous recorded conversations; whereas the interview for my pilot study was valuable in terms of finding out about Aban's biography and his experience with mobile technologies, it was very interventionistic and intrusive. Thus, during my main study, I opted to mostly record in a more spontaneous fashion, giving the participants much freedom in terms of what they wanted to talk about. I used a designated audio recorder (rather than using my phone) which I found helpful. I also did this, to make it very obvious for my participants that I was recording them. Also, I kept the recordings short, usually not longer than five to ten minutes.

3.4.3 Smartphone Recordings

> *Because my phone all the time is with you.*
> Rojan (Recorded Conversation, 23.02.17)

As previously pointed out in Chapter 2.6, how we draw on mobile devices, such as our smartphones, has drastically changed over the last decade; the smartphone is by far the "most used device" (Deloitte, 2017:3), which is being used in an unprecedented frequency and intensity. Yet, what does this mean in regard to researching smartphone practices? Bhatt and de Roock (2013) argue that in educational research, screen recordings have predominantly been used by researchers interested in on-screen writing on desktop computers. More recently however, screenshot and screen recording techniques have been expanded to smartphones; Baynham et al. (2015) and

Tagg (2015) for instance use screenshots of their participants' smartphones to analyse complex literacy practices.

Still, qualitative and ethnographic research that investigates how people draw on smartphones in daily contexts is relatively scarce. This again could have to do with smartphones themselves; they are deeply located within our most private space and contain sensitive information, which is often well guarded. Most smartphone users will be reluctant to share what content they consume, who they communicate with, etcetera.

Thus, initially, I considered to give out blank or neutral smartphones to my participants particularly for research purposes, which I would have prepared beforehand (e.g. with recording features). Yet, after spending time volunteering and observing how people were using their phones in daily contexts, it was clear that I had to study my participants' devices; there is much customization and configuration happening, ranging from multiple language features, to particular apps, to customized emoji. More importantly, the fact that smartphones are data vessels with a wealth of personal information stored on them suggested that my participants' phones would yield fascinating data.

Once trust was built throughout the fieldwork process, my participants didn't mind me closely observing and eventually recording their smartphone activity in physical settings. Typically, smartphone recordings were taken in the various data collection sites, including community centres, ESOL classrooms and my participants' homes. Here, my aim was to capture my participants' engagement with mobile technology in as much authenticity as possible. Thus, I tried to record moments, in which smartphones were consulted and incorporated into wider daily activities, such as informal conversations. In some instances, I also drew on smartphone data collected via social media platforms or messaging applications such as WhatsApp. The following extract from my fieldnotes (12.01.17) illustrates this in more detail. I provide an account of the quantity and nature of data that I collected for both the pilot research and the main study in Chapter 3.6.

Syrian Kitchen: January 2017

[…] One of the pictures, from 2011, shows Rojan sitting on a big boulder. This picture was taken close to his home in Aleppo. I ask him about the orchard in the back. He tells me that they are olive trees. We talk about Syrian agriculture for a bit. He seems to know a lot about this. He tells me about fruit trees, grapes, pomegranates and how they taste and what happens to them after they are harvested. Whenever he talks about home, I can feel his sadness of having to leave his place of home, but also his personal relations, his culture, his language, his food, the weather – his identity. He carefully flicks through the photos on his phone, swiping his thumb from the right to the left.

Between pictures, he stops, gives context, explains what there is to see. This is clearly a routinized literacy practice. His mother sits next to him and tunes in and out of our interaction.

She sporadically looks at his phone to ask questions or gives additional commentary in Kurdish. Rojan says that these pictures are absolutely precious to him and his family, as they had to leave all the others (the physical ones) behind. I find that a very powerful thing to say

3.5 Ethical Concerns

3.5.1 Over-researching

Throughout fieldwork, the issue of over-researching people and places has been an ongoing concern; particularly in this context of migration and mobility, discourse and data on individual migrant trajectories seemed high in demand by various stakeholders, including the academic community, the media and policy makers. This again led me to occasionally question my own research activity. At times, I regretted collecting data or felt uncomfortable recording everyday interactions. The following vignette from my fieldnotes (01.12.16) underscores this further.

Fieldnotes: Syrian Kitchen, December 2016
We're at the Syrian Kitchen. Rojan and I are talking, sat at a table. While we talk, I notice a man I haven't seen around before taking pictures of us with a very professional-looking camera. I look at him with an air of scepticism. He looks at me and I figure that he must be a researcher or journalist. […] A bit later, Rojan gets up to get a cup of coffee. The photographer approaches him, to ask him to sign a bulky consent form. I suddenly feel uncomfortable being here, about to formally recruit Rojan. I feel like we're pestering these people. Are we really helping them or is it more about getting data or a story out of these people, including Rojan? I remember the first time I met Yara, she told me of the academics and researchers who came into the Syrian Café to collect data, never to be seen again. Will this be me in half a year?

3.5.2 Informed Consent

Upon recruitment, my participants were relatively new to the English language. Therefore, it was crucial that Aban, Rojan and Mamoud understood my research intentions, were aware of what their consent meant and knew what would happen with the collected data. For my pilot research, I decided to ask for verbal informed consent, due to concerns using forms that would require the participant's signature. I supported this with an Arabic translation of the Participant Information Sheet (c.f. Appendix C) which was extremely valuable. I repeated this process for my main study (c.f. Appendix F). All my participants read the English and/or the Arabic version of the Participant Information Sheet while nodding their heads or circling words with pencils.

The notion of consent is much contested, especially when data is collected holistically, for instance through ethnographic research (Kubanyiova, 2008) and from complex spaces such as social media sites. A paper by Tagg et al. (2016) argues that consent is not something static, absolute, or an external set of guidelines implemented before commencing research. Rather, consent, especially vis-à-vis the digital sphere, can be fluid and we as researchers need to remain open to the idea of 're-ethicising'. This means that even though informed consent to use data might be given, researchers have an obligation to question this throughout the research process. This very much applies to my research context, where participants have shown me private or delicate fragments of communication or have shared intimate details of their arrival to the UK.

3.5.3 Anonymization

Regarding anonymization, I opted for the following procedure; the names of all participants and others who appear in this study have been anonymized through the use of pseudonyms. Furthermore, where necessary and where possible, I have asked for explicit permission to use the real names of institutions, as was the case with St. Vincent's Support Centre.

However, in other cases, for instance with informal and community-run grassroots spaces, it wasn't necessarily obvious who had the authority or ownership to give explicit permission. In these cases, for instance with the Syrian Café and the Syrian Kitchen, I made sure that everyone affiliated, for instance Yara and Saad, knew of and were in agreement with my research endeavours and my intentions to publish them.

3.6 Fieldwork

3.6.1 Pilot Study (10/2015-05/2016)

As indicated earlier, the pilot research consists of two sub-sets; first, over the course of several months (10/2015-04/2016), I observed pre-entry ESOL classes that Aban partly attended at St. Vincent's Support Centre and wrote fieldnotes. A preliminary thematic analysis of these observations indicated a richness of digital literacy practices displayed by Aban and his classmates. Second, informed by those fieldnotes and preliminary thematic analysis, I conducted one video-recorded, multimodal, semi-structured 30-minute interview with Aban (in English), investigating his mobile literacy practices outside the formal classroom setting. Here, I took screen-recordings (videos and pictures) of Aban's smartphone at given moments of the interview, to provide more holistic and multifaceted data.

However, the interview itself has less an ethnographic character and is rather interventionistic, as I influenced the outcome of the interview to a considerable extent; I specifically asked Aban about his smartphone practice and further asked, if he would be willing to show me how he engages with his smartphone. Yet, here I argue that this was justifiable, as my main concern, during this exploratory and preliminary phase, was with the overall feasibility of the selected data collection methods (e.g. screen recordings).

The collected data were then coded, and multimodal transcriptions of several salient moments within the interview were created with ELAN, a multimodal transcription software. The data concerning this preliminary research indicates that Aban expertly engages in diverse digital literacy practices and utilizes a variety of apps, social media, and other online resources in a wide range of contexts; for example, Aban illustrates his use of Google Translate (GT) on his smartphone, as he uses the mobile app to translate interview questions, printed out on a sheet of paper in front of him, from English to Arabic. Table 2 below holds an overview of the collected data in the Pilot Study.

Pilot Study		
Participant	**Type of Data**	**Quantity**
Aban	Fieldnotes	5k words
	Interviews/recorded conversations (May 2016)	30min
	Photographs and Screenshots	40 photos
	Screen recordings	10 separate occasions during which screen was recorded, with a video length of about 00:05sec to 01:10min.

Table 2: Data Overview, Pilot Study

3.6.2 Main Study (09/2016-05/2017)

Taking the experiences from my pilot research as points of reference, I used fairly similar approaches regarding recruitment and data collection. As I was spending more time in the field, I also drew on other secondary sources, such as flyers, newspaper articles, radio interviews, social media posts, text messages and multimodal discourse on Facebook groups. In general terms, I was following a 'maximum approach', collecting and recording different types of data within different settings that seemed relevant. As time moved on, I started to find more effective ways to record and maintain data. For instance, whereas I was using Apple's conventional text messages (iMessage) in the beginning to collect screenshot data of my participants, I later switched to WhatsApp with all my participants, as it was easier to transfer text logs onto a desktop computer (c.f. Data Extract 5.3).

One serious challenge through the fieldwork phase was to collect roughly equal datasets for each of the three participants. I only partly succeeded in that, as Rojan's dataset is considerably bigger. This again is based on the fact that I met with him very consistently, mostly on a weekly basis, whereas that wasn't possible with either Aban or Mamoud. Especially collecting data from

Mamoud was difficult at times, as we mostly met at his house and I didn't want to impose to meet with him every week.

As time went on, the fieldwork became more participant-led. Often, I would start the day at one of the established research sites (c.f. Table 3) to meet participants. On numerous occasions, I was then encouraged and invited to accompany them to whatever they had planned that day. Here, for instance, I was invited to people's homes for gatherings, BBQs and parties.

Over time, I grew more confident that I had collected enough data. I was starting to feel more assertive in the field, as I became more established in each data collection site. As I was still volunteering at St. Vincent's every Tuesday and seeing Rojan at the Syrian Kitchen every Thursday, a natural weekly structure came into place (Table 3). Once this routine fell into place, data collection and maintenance became easier, as I knew when I had time to catch up to code data and transcribe interviews.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thurs-day	Friday	Weekend
Syrian Café 11am-3pm (Aban, Mamoud)	St. Vincent's 11am-12.30pm (Aban)	Office (Data Maintenance)	Syrian Kitchen 12.30-2pm (Rojan, Aban)	Office (Data Maintenance)	Mamoud's house Afternoons and evenings (Aban's house)

Table 3: Weekly Schedule, Data Collection Phase

Around the end of May 2017, more than seven months into the field, I was confident that I had collected enough data. However, leaving the field was as difficult as entering it; on the one hand, I was finding it more and more difficult to commit to the weekly schedule of collecting data, particularly as I had moved away from Leeds by the end of the previous year and I was more involved in other academic commitments, including teaching.

Mostly, I was worried to appear ungrateful; many people had been very generous to me with their time. People had fed me and treated me most kindly. I had developed friendships, on different levels, with all of my participants. I had been to people's houses and had met their partners, talked to their parents, and played with their children. Likewise, I occasionally brought my partner and friends to the data collection sites and had opened up my private life, too. Although my participants knew that I was collecting data for my project, I was concerned that they would think that I only used them to get the data I needed.

Rather than leaving the field abruptly, I tried to slowly fade out. First, I stopped to volunteer, as none of my participants frequented St. Vincent's anymore and as the volunteering clashed with other teaching commitments at the university. Then, over the course of weeks, I stopped going to the Syrian Kitchen and the Syrian Café. Instead, I tried to keep in touch with my Mamoud, Aban, and Rojan through social media, WhatsApp and phone calls. The table below holds an overview of the collected data in the Main Study.

Main Study		
	Type of Data	**Quantity (total)**
Aban	Fieldnotes	13.5k words
	Interviews/ recorded conversations	90min
	Photographs and Screenshots	60 photos
	Screen recordings	7 recordings
	Video production about Syrian Kitchen with Aban being interviewed	6min
	WhatsApp Log	1k words
Mamoud	Fieldnotes	11k words
	Interviews/ recorded conversations	30min
	Photographs and Screenshots	30 photos
	Screen recordings	5 recordings

	SMS Screenshots	15 screenshots
	WhatsApp Log	0.5k words
Rojan	Fieldnotes	22k words
	Recorded conversations	3h
	Photographs and Screenshots	70 screenshots
Rojan	Screen recordings	15 recordings
	Facebook Page Screenshots	20 screenshots
	SMS Screenshots	15 screenshots
	WhatsApp Log	2k words
	Mapping Activity with Rojan	1 co-drawn map
Other	St. Vincent's Volunteering Journal	5k
	Reflexive Journal	8k
	recorded conversations with Saad	40min
	recorded conversations with Mary	20min
	Radio Interview with Mary	15min
	All Hallows Facebook Page Screenshots	25 screenshots
	Syrian Community of Leeds Facebook Page Screenshots	150 screenshots
	Syrian Community of Leeds promotional videos	10min
	Newspaper articles about All Hallows Church and Syrian Kitchen	2

Table 4: Data Overview, Main Study

3.6.3 Multimodal Transcription

The audio recordings were transcribed verbatim, which was a straightforward process. Yet, finding ways to bring the screen recordings of my participants to paper turned out to be more complex. Flewitt et al. (2009:45) point out that there has to be a balance between "accurate notations of events, clear descriptions for the research 'readers', and a transcription format that

reflects the purpose of the research *and* does justice to the type of data collected." Yet, they (2009:46) also make the case that transcriptions of multimodal data still remain a critical issue, as the representation of the complex simultaneity of different modes and their different structures and materiality has not yet been resolved in one transcription system in a satisfying manner.

Training and workshops, such as the King's College Ethnography Summer School (c.f. Szabla and Vollmer, 2018) and the Leeds Multimodality Workshop with Gunther Kress and Theo van Leuuwen (Multimodality at Leeds, 2017) have helped me greatly to find a data transcription approach, which does justice to the complexity of the data that forefronts smartphone practices, whilst being manageable and easy to manoeuvre at the same time. Data Extract 7.1 is a good example of my approach to multimodal transcripts, which I explain in greater detail in the analytical chapters.

3.6.4 Data Translations

My inability to conduct research in Arabic or Kurdish meant that all spoken and written interaction with Aban, Mamoud and Rojan occurred in English, a third language, as well as a foreign language to all of us. However, as my participants' everyday communicative interactions, including those navigated online, are direct reflections of their multilingual repertoires, the interactions I recorded and the data I collected during fieldwork, was at times multilingual. Especially social media data, for instance Facebook posts, displayed a fluid multilingualism, where English and Arabic were often drawn on simultaneously (c.f. Chapter 7.4). Likewise, in recorded conversation with my participants, particularly when others were present, such as family members, Aban, Mamoud and Rojan would often translanguage between English and Arabic or English and Kurdish.

As Temple and Young (2004:163) point out, "[m]uch of the huge amount of research 'on' minority ethnic communities, particularly in the 'grey' literature, is written without any reference to language issues." Thus, given this study's multilingual character, it is important to address the handling and analysis of multilingual data further; regarding the collecting of multilingual online data,

such as social media posts, I would initially turn to machine translations, for instance Facebook's translation features, to gain an overview of the nature and content of data. Yet, as the machine translation lacked the needed linguistic accuracy, particularly when it came to the preparation of data for the subsequent analyses, I consulted professional translators to have particular data extracts, for instance social media posts (c.f. Chapter 7.4) or recorded conversations and screen recordings (c.f. Chapter 5.2.2) translated.

Here, I consulted different individuals to produce translations of particular data extracts, for instance researchers based at the Centre for Translation Studies at the University of Leeds. To introduce further validation measures (Günhan, 2019) and to improve overall accuracy of the data translations I aimed to analyse, I had the same data extracts translated by more than one individual.

The example below stems from the multimodal transcript of Data Extract 5.2 and shows Mamoud's use of Google Maps to plan a bus trip from his house to Leeds Station. This particular extract of data, a multilingual screen recording, has been translated by two different individuals. In these cases, the translators were given the part of the screen recording that needed to be translated and the multilingual transcript, but not any already produced translations. The example shows, as with most of the translations, that there is extensive consensus and overlap between the two translations. Following this approach, I was able to ensure the quality of data that was then used for further analysis.

		Translator 1	Translator 2
00:16 00:18 00:20 00:23 00:26 00:30 00:32 00:33		M: Mhh look, **SHAYEF translation (you see?),** I can walk 10 minutes, go to the bus 72 or X6, not different. S:Yeah M: I want 41 minute S: Yeah. M: Mhh after I mhh you want go this, you can go look **SHLON AHOT HAI ALHAFELAH translation (How can I choose OR select this bus)**	M: Mhh look, 'shayef'(شايف)[do you see?]. I can walk 10 minutes, go to the bus 72 or X6, not different. S: Yeah M: I want 41 minute S: Yeah. M: Mhh after I mhh you want go this, you can go look 'Shloon Ahot Hay Al Hafle' (شلون احط هاي الحافلة)[How can I choose this bus?]

3.7 Analytical Considerations

3.7.1 Developing an Approach

After I retreated from fieldwork, I started to organize my dataset. I used the analysis software NVivo to some extent, for exploratory coding and to create a 'master-fieldnote' log, a 70,000-word document consisting of around 160 individual entries, spanning a period of time between October 2015 to July 2017. Perusing the entire corpus of fieldnotes and going through the transcripts of the recorded interviews and conversations (approximately 15K words) several times over, I started to conceptualize the data in more thematic terms. This had several advantages; on the one hand, it enabled me to organize and manoeuvre this fairly large qualitative and visual dataset more easily, as I was labelling content across different types of data. For instance, the theme of 'employment' was present in interviews as well as in screen recordings and social media posts. As Nowell et al. (2017) point out, opposed to other qualitative approaches, thematic analyses are easily implemented and do not require extensive technological or theoretical knowledge. This again meant that I could highlight content in transcripts and organize screenshots and screen recordings accordingly. Last, as King (2004) argues, thematic data conceptualizations highlight the perspectives of different research participants.

Through this thematic approach, I started to see that the theme of settlement was of particular presence to all my participants. For instance, the desire to obtain a UK driving license (c.f. Chapter 6) constantly appeared throughout the entire data landscape; my participants expressed their aspirations of driving in and around Leeds, attended informal classes on passing the theory test, practiced with specific apps and showed me official documents concerned with the test itself. Furthermore, I recognized that my participants, but also other newcomers around them, consistently looked for potential employment opportunities in both the formal and informal economy through mobile technologies (c.f. Chapter 7).

Further, I started to see evidence that although the digital literacy practices that I observed were diverse and multifaceted for each participant, there was

still overlap in how they exploited affordances of their smartphones whilst being mobile themselves, to engage in meaning-making practices, especially in multilingual, translocal and trans-spatial settings (c.f. Chapter 5).

Here, the notions of space and space-time gained particular significance as underlying analytical lenses for this research project; the spatial viewpoints towards my data underscored how my participants' smartphone practices impacted and affected the various physical, virtual and hybrid spaces they traversed, penetrated and aspired to enter.

This focus on the spatial thus became a key concern for this study of newly arrived refugees' mobile practices, as the spatial analyses I produced not only provided detailed descriptions of mobile technology use in the context of settlement, but also highlighted how smartphones changed the reach and redefined the meaning-making potential within everyday situations. These realizations informed my decision to analyse my dataset thematically (c.f. Chapters 5-7) rather than pursuing a multiple case study. Moreover, the themes I identified informed and refined the development of this project's research questions.

More than that, as the analytical chapters started to shape and fall into place and I began to articulate their findings and think about a subsequent discussion of data, I started to develop understandings of settlement that encompassed the notion of belonging. As indicated previously (Chapter 1.1 and Chapter 2.6), this concern for belonging as a key theme to this study, particularly vis-à-vis my participants' smartphone practices, primarily emerged through the analyses and the discussion of data and findings that followed.

Regarding the selection of data within the particular themes, for instance the theme of employment or driving, I tried to identify relevant data extracts from each of the three participants, to ensure multifocal viewpoints. Here, rather than limiting the analytical chapters to particular types of data, for instance to interviews alone, I drew on data from different data sources, in order to inform the analyses as holistically as possible. At the same time, given the study's focus on smartphone-mediated mobile practices, I aimed to foreground the smartphone use of my participants. Here, I substantially drew on screen

recordings and screenshots of smartphone practices. Here, as I started to organize the analytical chapters, I developed a more refined understanding of how the quantity of chosen data extracts affected the depth of the subsequent analyses. I concluded that each analytical chapter should not scrutinize more than five data extracts each, to ensure the needed analytical depth, while still fitting in the given spatial constraints of a thesis chapter.

Furthermore, the order and titles of the three analytical chapters reflect my participants' trajectories from Syria to the UK and their initial efforts to settle and belong to Leeds; Chapter 5 (Journeys: Analytical Chapter I) focuses on mobility and the spatial, as it is concerned with my participants' arrival to the UK, Chapter 6 (Driving: Analytical Chapter II) explores the theme of loss of capital through the example of the driving license. Last, Chapter 7 (Making Money: Analytical Chapter III) follows my participants' efforts of finding work in both the formal and the informal economy. I return to the analytical framework of this study in more detail, as I introduce the data extracts in Chapters 5-7.

3.7.2 Analysis of Visual Data

As previously mentioned, where possible, I drew on recorded smartphone interaction to scrutinize my participants' digital literacy practices in as much detail and authenticity as possible. Thus, each of the following analytical chapters integrates smartphone recordings (c.f. Data Extracts 5.2, 6.2, 7.1) to inform its analyses further. In 3.6.3, I have already commented on the use of multimodal transcriptions to prepare these smartphone video recordings for analysis. In what follows, I draw attention to the theoretical considerations which underpin the analyses of these smartphone recordings.

The multimodal transcripts drawn on in this thesis are organized as follows; key changes on the smartphone screen were used as the guiding principle. This means that the visual is foregrounded, at least to some extent, as the screenshots, together with the transcriptions, underscore the pace and fluidity of this data extract. There are three columns of transcriptions, which capture (1) the spoken interaction between my participants and myself, (2) movement, such as hand gestures and (3) activity on the smartphone itself (c.f. Figure 2).

Furthermore, the data selection process and subsequent organization of the multimodal screen recordings have been informed by Li's (2011) 'moment analysis', where the focus lies within speakers' multilingual and translingual practices within different translanguaging spaces. Here, I suggest that Li's concept can be extended onto the migration and settlement context of this study. Li (2011:1224) argues that "[p]eople present at such moments would recognize their importance and may adjust their behaviour according to their importance of them." This applies to the smartphone data that follow, as they encapsulate how my participants' use of mobile technology can accommodate fluid, smartphone-mediated mobile literacy practices. Yet, where do 'significant moments' start and end and what leads to such a moment?

Li (2011:1225) points out that "[m]ultilingual individuals have an innate capacity to perceive the situation, choose between the languages they have acquired, and create space to their benefits, using the linguistic resources available to them […]." The smartphone data that follows shows that I extend Li's concept, as I argue that Aban, Rojan and Mamoud utilize their smartphones as vehicles to accommodate and support 'linguistic resources'. For instance, in Data Extract 7.1, Rojan includes his smartphone as our conversation shifts to his job-searching trajectory. This is why that "moment" and its subsequent analysis start at this particular point, as Rojan engages in inter-semiotic translanguaging (Baynham and Lee, 2019), as attention moves from talk to the smartphone interaction.

Furthermore, to the demarcate the screen recordings in analysable units, I draw on Lemke's (2000) concept of timescale and draw on the notion of exchanges; Lemke (2000:276) explains that "exchanges" are often recurring dialogues that develop a situation, which "recur […] on different days, in different stations, and even in different classrooms in different schools." The notion of 'exchanges' provides a useful framework to prepare this significant moment further for analysis.

The multimodal transcripts thus also include a temporal dimension: a 'Timestamp' column documents the chronology of unfolding interaction. A 'Screen' column (SC) holds screenshots within the screen recordings and

further organizes the particular 'moments' and each of the exchanges. Importantly, as there are obvious time and space limitations concerning the visual transcription and presentation of video data, screenshots of smartphone screens had to be selected sparsely. The following example (Figure 2), which shows the initial exchange (Lemke, 2000) of a screen recording concerning Data Extract 7.1, illustrates the overall organization of the multimodal transcriptions used in this thesis in more detail.

Ex	Time-stamp	Screen	Transcription R= Rojan, S= Researcher		
		SC= Screenshot	Spoken	Movement	Smartphone
1	00:03 00:05 00:08 00:10 00:15 00:34 00:36 00:40 00:41 00:44		S: So, this is your account? R: Yeah, this is "Home", this is my "CV" S: Wow R: I have CV already inside S: Yeah. R: And mhh (2) when I want to apply for a job S: Yeah	Hovers right index finger over screen. Presses CV button. Scrolls up and down page. (15) Presses Menu button. Presses Menu button again. Presses 'Show Search Form' button.	UJ is open on Rojan's smartphone browser. New window opens up showing 'saved CVs'. Side bar appears again. Side bar disappears. New window with text boxes appears.

Figure 2: Multimodal Screen Recording

3.7.3 Research Questions

The Research Questions (RQ) of this ethnographically informed study emerged through the fieldwork and the data it produced. Particularly the initial observation of participants and their respective smartphone practices informed this process further. Moreover, the research questions were refined following close engagement with the relevant literature (c.f. Chapter 2). The overarching RQ and Sub-RQ 1 and 2 concerning this ethnographic inquiry are thus as follows:

> **Overarching RQ:** How do newly arrived Syrian refugees' digital literacy practices support processes of settlement?

> > **Sub-RQ 1:** How do Aban, Rojan and Mamoud, three newly arrived Syrian refugees to Leeds, draw on smartphone-mediated mobile literacy practices, to engage with and support notions of belonging in their everyday lives?

> > **Sub-RQ 2:** How does my participants' smartphone use affect and impact the physical, virtual and hybrid spaces they traverse through and reside in within their newfound environments?

3.8 Summary

Chapter 3 discussed methodological aspects (Section 3.2) and considerations of this doctoral research project and particularly emphasized a rationale for pursuing an ethnographic approach to this study. Section 3.3 laid out the breadth and width of this ethnographic inquiry and commented on the notion of volunteering (3.3.1) as a way into the field.

Furthermore, this chapter gave an overview of the various data collection methods used to acquire data (3.4) and also discussed ethical concerns (3.5) that arose during fieldwork, as well as the issue of anonymization. More than that, in Section 3.6 I gave an overview of the data that I collected during fieldwork. Here, I also addressed my rationale for multimodal data transcripts (3.6.3), as well as for data translations (3.6.4).

Last, in this chapter, I initiated a discussion vis-à-vis analytical concerns of this study, where I pointed towards the decision-making process involved in the selection and consequent analysis of particular data extracts. In Section 3.8, I posed both the overarching RQ, as well as the two sub-RQ of this PhD project.

Chapter 4: My Ethnography

4.1 Chapter Overview

Chapter 4 precedes the three analytical chapters and outlines this ethnographic project in terms of key participants and research sites. This chapter is first and foremost informed by my fieldwork and provides necessary contextual information concerning the dimensions of this project; it aims to bring forward focused vignettes of people and places relevant to this study, which resurface and are to be investigated in the analytical chapters that follow. Moreover, I outline the nature, connections and movements between data collection sites and participants, as these links yield important insights for the data analyses and consecutive discussions (Chapters 8 and 9) that follow.

Regarding organization, I follow a *diachronic* approach in signposting and outlining this ethnographic inquiry in this chapter; I introduce data collection sites and participants in the chronological order of the unfolding data collection process (i.e. the chronological order in which I interacted with people and places), following the overall trajectory of my fieldwork for this ethnography. My rationale for this is as follows. There is much fluidity and movement between data collection sites and the main protagonists of this research project. Key participants cannot be clearly affiliated with 'one' or 'the other' data collection site. Rather, participants traverse between one or multiple data collection sites and then 'move on' to other spaces. Adding a temporal dimension to this chapter aims to do justice to the complexity and fluidity of my participants' interactions with others and the data collection sites.

The table below illustrates my two-year engagement with different data collection sites and individuals who are central to this research project. Those names that appear in bold, I consider key participants, whose mobile practices are scrutinized in detail in the chapters to follow. Moreover, the dates in brackets behind names mark the time period, during which I observed these participants at the particular sites. Following this approach, my participants' movements during fieldwork can be visualized to some extent.

Research Engagement	Data Collection Site	times visited	Participant(s)
10/2015 – 05/2017	St. Vincent's Support Centre	32	**Aban** (01-06/16)
10/2016 – 05/2017	Syrian Café (Ebor Garden Community Centre)	13	Yara and Saad, **Mamoud** (01-04/17), **Aban**
11/2016 – 05/2017	Syrian Kitchen (All Hallows Church)	17	Yara and Saad, **Aban**, **Rojan**, Mary, **Mamoud** (pre data collection)
11/2016 – 05/2017	Mamoud's House	7	**Mamoud** (11/16 – 05/17)
10/2016 – 09/2017	THE SCOLFBG	multiple times per week	Yara and Saad, **Mamoud** (10/16-04/17), **Aban**

Table 5: Research Engagement at Research Sites

4.1.1 Fieldwork in Leeds

As previously mentioned, this research project is situated in Leeds, a superdiverse city (Baynham et al., 2015) in the north of England, with a population around three quarters of a million (Simpson, 2019b). Before I introduce each data collection site in more detail, I first provide an overview of those neighbourhoods relevant to this project, at which research was conducted; at the time of data collection, all three participants were residents of various Leeds neighbourhoods: Mamoud lived in Armley, Rojan was based in Hyde Park and Aban was located in Harehills. These three neighbourhoods were also the areas where a large proportion of data were collected.

The map below offers a more detailed account of the physical data collection sites (Numbers: 1-6). The majority of these sites are located in the East of Leeds, in the Harehills and Saxton Gardens area, close to York Road (Numbers 1-4). The Syrian Kitchen (Number 5) on the other hand, where I often met up with Rojan and Aban, is based in the Hyde Park area. Last,

Mamoud's house, which became a crucial data collection site, is located in Armley.
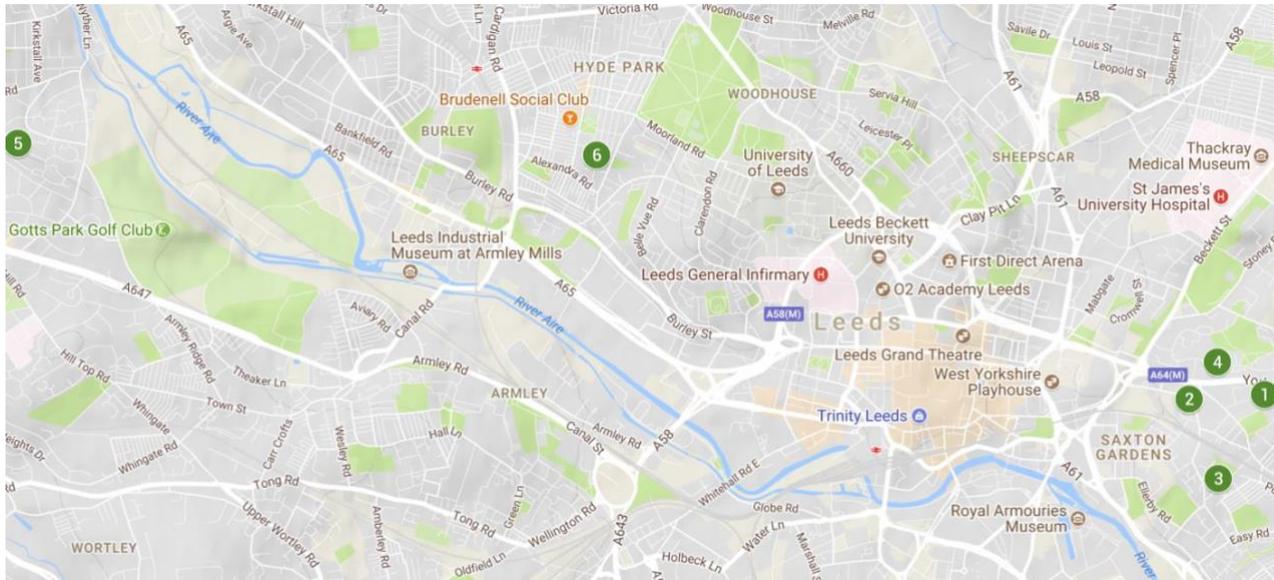
Figure 3: Map of Data Collection Sites

1: St. Vincent's Support Centre

2: Temple of Worship Church (affiliated with St. Vincent's)

3: Richmond Hill Community Centre (affiliated with St. Vincent's)

4: Ebor Garden Community Centre (The Syrian Café)

5: Mamoud's house

6: All Hallows Church (The Syrian Kitchen)

Harehills & Saxton Gardens

In his ethnography on Leeds-based asylum seekers, Callaghan (2011) writes in depth about Harehills, Aban's neighbourhood; this multi-ethnic area, with its "noisy shops and busy pavements" (Callaghan, 2011:149), displays particular superdiverse traits. Baynham et al. (2015:29) argue that "Harehills developed as a result of successive phases of inward migration […]". Today, Harehills, with its cheap accommodation and ethnic shops, is still attractive to newcomers from around the world.

To the south of Harehills, across busy York Road, sits Saxton Gardens, another diverse neighbourhood that shares many of Harehills' multi-ethnic features. Here, in Saxton Gardens, St. Vincent's Support Centre (c.f. Chapter 4.2) is located, which is an important site to this ethnography. Surrounded by

industrial estates, storage units and council estates, this area is a densely populated urban neighbourhood.

Hyde Park

Hyde Park, another inner-city neighbourhood, is located in between the University of Leeds campus and Headingley and is popular among students. Hyde Park with its back-to-back terraces, takeaway shops and corner shops is home to many places of worship, including Leeds Grand Mosque and All Hallows Church, which houses the Syrian Kitchen (c.f. Chapter 4.8). Hyde Park is best known for its large park, also named Hyde Park, a social nexus point.

Armley

Last, Armley, which is located in the west of Leeds, less than a mile from the city centre, is a working-class neighbourhood in proximity to the Rive Aire and the Leeds-Liverpool canal. This is where Mamoud and his family live in a council estate. Armley consists of many back-to-back terraced houses, as well as council homes built in the 1960s.

4.2 St. Vincent's Support Centre

In October 2015, I began to regularly spend time at the previously mentioned *St. Vincent's Support Centre* in Leeds, a registered charity, observing and volunteering at weekly ESOL classes. My ambition here was to acquire a better overall understanding of ESOL provision in Leeds, as well as of ESOL teachers and their students. St. Vincent's was relocated during my fieldwork and its main building is now located on the outskirts of Harehills, close to York Road. The community centre simultaneously runs a range of classes in several premises, which are all in close proximity to the main office. Besides, in its main building close to York Road, classes are also taught in nearby *Richmond Hill Community Centre* and in rooms of the *Christ Temple of Worship* church. Newcomers to Leeds, as well as established residents, local and from around the world, meet and interact in these facilities, to access a range of freely accessible social, legal, and educational services.

Like many other ESOL providers in Leeds and elsewhere, St. Vincent's is a non-government charity that increasingly relies on donations and volunteers to deliver a gamut of services for the local community. Extracts from my fieldnotes (13.10.15) give an account of my first observation of a pre-entry ESOL class, which took place at the premises of the Christ Temple of Worship church. This extract illustrates not only St. Vincent's financial pressure to facilitate ESOL classes and provide teaching materials, but also gives glimpses into the everyday environment in which ESOL teachers and students find themselves in.

Fieldnotes: St. Vincent's Support Centre (October 2015)
[…]. The pre-entry ESOL classes are taught twice a week (Monday and Thursday, 90min each) and take place in a nearby church. Matt (pseudonym), a volunteer, is running these classes. […]. Desks and chairs have to be set up in advance by the volunteer teacher and students. The room is big but cold. Throughout the lesson I have to put my jacket back on, as it is that cold. Teaching equipment is scarce and in bad shape. There is only one old dirty whiteboard available. In response to this, Matt uses his own laptop and projector to offer his students additional visual and audio-visual input. Desks and chairs are in bad shape – worn out and dirty. There is neither an overall syllabus, nor a concrete lesson plan. Matt has to make

> lessons up as he progresses through the term. Teaching materials seem to be unavailable or not within reach. Today's material is exclusively downloaded from the internet and was designed for L1 primary school students, rather than adult ESOL students. […].

The community centre offers a spectrum of adult classes on various levels. At St. Vincent's, ESOL is taught to around 200 students from diverse educational, linguistic and socio-economic backgrounds, as well as legal status. Typically, there is much fluctuation regarding class attendance, with class sizes varying significantly each week. During my time volunteering, I have seen some students weekly, others on a monthly basis, and again others only a handful of times over the course of 18 months. More than that, each week, new students, mostly newcomers to Leeds, join the existing classes. Students come from all over the world; many arrived in the UK as refugees or refugees claiming asylum from war-torn and unstable countries, such as Somalia, Eritrea, Afghanistan, Iraq or Syria.

Then again, others come from former Portuguese colonies, such as Angola, Mozambique or Cape Verde or eastern and southern European countries like Poland, the Czech Republic, Spain and Portugal. Further noteworthy to mention is that St. Vincent's itself is part of an increasingly connected network of close to 70 ESOL providers in Leeds (c.f. Learning English in Leeds, 2018), which range from informal groups, such as conversation clubs and charities, to more formalized and well-resourced language providers, including Leeds City College. During my fieldwork, I noticed that students tend to sojourn, as they access different ESOL providers with different statuses of authority over time. I will explore this observation in more detail at later points in this chapter.

At St. Vincent's, classes are taught on all weekdays in five different levels, ranging from *Pre-Entry* to *Level 2*. Throughout fieldwork, I spent more than 18 months volunteering and co-teaching at the pre-entry ESOL class described in the extract above. Throughout this period of time, I got to know dozens of students, volunteer teachers, and full-time administrational staff.

Though for some time, particularly during their initial stages of arrival, my participants did also attend more formalized, government-affiliated ESOL provision, for instance at Leeds City College, the majority of their classroom-based language and literacy learning was delivered by the voluntary sector. Different factors led to this development; on the one hand, as Simpson (2015) points towards, adult migrant language provision in the UK is considerably fragmented, with ESOL being poorly organized and its funding being inconsistent or under threat altogether. This again points toward wider inconsistencies within UK ESOL policy (Simpson, 2019a).

As I have observed with Aban and Rojan, there is an underlying drive to integrate newly arrived migrants into the labour market as quickly as possible. This then results in newly arrived language and literacy learners being increasingly placed in short-lived, employment-related "language for work" syllabi (Pöyhönen et al., 2018:494). Thus, as Simpson (2019a:29) aptly summarizes, "this piecemeal and partial approach to the funding of ESOL at the scale of national policy means that much responsibility for ESOL provision has become shouldered by the voluntary sector". This again is exactly what happened to my participants and other newly arrived Syrians to Leeds. This is a point I revisit in more detail in Chapter 7 (*Employment*), as well as in Chapter 9.3.

4.3 Aban

One of the ESOL students I met at St. Vincent's is Aban. I first met Aban in a pre-entry ESOL class in January 2016. Aban and his family arrived in Leeds in October 2015. Aban is a father of four, in his thirties, who identifies as a Muslim Syrian. His youngest son was only two months old when we first met. Aban grew up in Homs, Syria. After leaving school at the age of 12, he started to work in a family-run business as a plumber. Before coming to the UK, Aban had very little exposure to the English language.

His journey of arrival to the UK is a long and difficult one; Initially, Aban fled to Lebanon with his family, after he was shot at and injured whilst driving a van to work. After spending more than a year in Lebanon, Aban and his family were eventually granted asylum in the UK as part of the UK government's pledge to accommodate 20,000 Syrian refugees through the VPRS (Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme) (Wintour, 2015; Home Office, 2017). The VPRS is the UK's response to the Syrian humanitarian crisis; the scheme pledged to resettle 20,000 Syrian refugees from refugee camps in the wider Levant area to the UK and prioritized vulnerable people, such as women and children at risk, those requiring medical treatment and victims of torture (Home Office, 2017). Under this scheme, Syrians are granted with "5 years' Refugee Leave" (Home Office, 2017:6).

Upon arrival, Aban was initially housed in Armley, where three of his children started to go to various schools. However, the family was later relocated to Harehills. The reasons for this move remain unclear. Yet, Aban continues to take two of his four children to primary school in Armley, by bus.

Aban with two fellow newly arrived Syrians regularly attended pre-entry ESOL classes at St. Vincent's from January to June 2016. During this period of time, in April 2016, I was able to recruit Aban for my initial pilot research. As previously outlined in Chapter 3.6.1, I collected two datasets; first, over the course of several months, I observed his ESOL classes and collected fieldnotes. Moreover, I conducted one video-recorded, multimodal, semi-structured interview with him. The preliminary study has been central to the

development of the research design and informed my understanding of how mobile technologies are integrated into everyday practices.

After this initially successful pilot study, I aimed to recruit Aban for successive research. Yet, upon returning to St. Vincent's after the 2016 summer break, Aban and the other Syrian students were no longer attending any of the classes at St. Vincent's. As previously mentioned, I observed during my fieldwork that students' trajectories of accessing ESOL classes can be both fragmented and complex. This resonates with Aban; it took me several weeks to find Aban and the other Syrians again, as they stopped going to classes at St. Vincent's, in favour of two other ESOL providers, Leeds City College and The Syrian Café; whereas the Job Centre mandated Aban to take classes at Leeds City College several times a week, to increase chances of employment, Aban's decision to attend the informal, bilingual classes at the Syrian Café seem more his own initiative.

4.4 The Syrian Café

The Syrian Café (SC) is an informal and grassroots network of Syrian residents in Leeds, located at Ebor Garden Community Centre in Harehills. The SC meets on a weekly basis and is partly made up of already established Syrians, as well as of newly arrived Syrians, but also of individuals from the greater Levant area (e.g. Jordan and Lebanon). I first heard about the Syrian Café from Debbie, a member of staff at St. Vincent's. Debbie offered to put me in contact with Yara, who runs the Syrian Café. Extracts from my fieldnotes (10.10.16) recount this moment.

Fieldnotes: St. Vincent's Support Centre, October 2016
[…] I'm sitting in the St. Vincent's café and am thinking about what had happened. Debbie comes in and tells me that she had spoken to Yara, the Syrian lady, who runs the *Syrian Café*. Debbie says that Yara is looking forward to meeting me. I'm pretty sure that this will be a valuable experience. Debbie advises me to also volunteer at the *Syrian Café*.

The SC was instigated by Yara and her husband Saad in 2012. Yara, who has been in Leeds for more than 15 years, felt she had to help newly arrived Syrians in Leeds. The SC does not have official charity status and is not an NGO. However, the SC has received funding in the past (e.g. from other local charities and from the BBC). The SC has access to the Ebor Garden Community Centre every Monday from 11am to 3pm. Usually, during the first two hours, informal, bilingual, drop-in language classes take place, which are run by volunteers. The second part of the meetings are of a more social nature; in the past, authentic Syrian meals were prepared in the professional kitchen of the community centre and lunch was shared and eaten together (hence the name Syrian *Café*). However, due to the lack of relevant health and safety qualifications, the culinary aspect of the SC was under threat of being closed down. Thus, in late 2016, the cooking was outsourced to another venue, the *All Hallows Church*, located in the Hyde Park area of Leeds. At All Hallows Church, the SC teamed up with members of the local church congregation,

other volunteers, and *the Real Junk Food Project* (TRJFP, 2019), a well-known non-profit initiative, which aims to reduce food waste.

From this point onward, the SC started to cook authentic Syrian dishes from food donation for a wider audience on a weekly basis. This new outlet, which is located at the All Hallows Church, is now called the *Syrian Kitchen* (SK) and has become popular ever since, not only serving hundreds of customers every month, but also offering a space for locals and newcomers to Leeds to meet and interact. Although the cooking aspect of the 'Syrian Café' was outsourced at the beginning of my data collection phase, other activities relevant to newcomers, for instance legal advice and informal, bilingual driving classes (c.f. Chapter 6), but also social events, still take place at Ebor Garden. Thus, this community centre has become an important data collection site, which I frequented regularly (13 times) over a period of seven months. I started to attend these Monday sessions in October 2016. The following extract from my fieldnotes (30.10.16) give further account of my first engagement with the SC.

Fieldnotes: The Syrian Café, October 2016
This was the first time that I went to the *Syrian Café*, which takes place every Monday from 11am-3pm. The Ebor Garden Community Centre is next to York Road in Harehills. Various activities take place here. Recently, the council has been thinking about using the location for something else. The building consists of different rooms. There is no Wi-Fi. Upstairs, there is a room with a big television. The community centre is equipped with toilets and a full, professional kitchen. The room in which the teaching takes place has tables, chairs, and a small whiteboard and is roughly 30 square metres. The whole centre is looked after and clean.

ESOL provision at the SC is much more informal and less structured than at St. Vincent's. Throughout the seven months that I observed the SC, a number of volunteer teachers, including myself, delivered ESOL lessons. By the end of my fieldwork, Leeds Council provided temporary ESOL provision at the SC, by outsourcing an ESOL teacher from Leeds City College to Ebor Garden community centre for several weeks. Again, extracts from my fieldnotes (30.10.16) offer insights into these classes

Fieldnotes: The Syrian Café. October 2016
Linda is one of the volunteers, who is teaching ESOL at the SC today. She is in her twenties and a recent Oxford graduate (B.A. in French and Arabic). She spent one year in Jordan, to learn Arabic. The lesson is bilingual. There are three co-teachers; Linda, Yara and another Syrian lady called Lima. The teaching is quite fluid and seems to be very spontaneous, so is the translanguaging that is constantly happening. All teachers are expert speakers of both Arabic and English. First, the lesson focuses on descriptions of people [nice/fat/tall]. Students have their own little whiteboards, which seems like a good resource. At the beginning, six students are present. Five of them are female. There are three trolleys present in the classroom. Two babies are sleeping. Later, they are looked after by siblings/ parents/ teachers. People constantly drop in and out. The class is starting to fill up; from six students, to almost 20. Most of them are women/mothers wearing headscarves. But there are also men, one boy in his teens, two younger children and about three toddlers. Students have their own little whiteboards to write words or take notes. The lesson itself is fast paced. First, Linda talks about adjectives, which describe people (tall/ fat/ nice). She fluidly traverses between both languages, encouraging people to participate in English one minute ("What about you?") and praising their contributions in Arabic ("Mumtaz!" – Excellent). At one point, Yara takes over the lesson and asks about students' daily routines. "When do you get up?" she asks all students. Then she asks them: "What's the first thing you do in the morning?" One student replies "drink coffee", another points out "look at my phone". Other students nod their heads and laugh. Yara looks at me, aware that this must be pure gold for me, then asks; "who checks their Facebook first thing in the morning?" Again, there is laughter and general agreement. One student says, "I look at Facebook, I look at iPad". It becomes clear to me that this is a very relaxed and friendly environment. I feel perfectly fine being here. Two children happily join in. Cultural and gender issues seem to be much less prominent than in classes at St. Vincent's, where students are much more heterogenous. It's further noticeable that almost every person in the room has a smartphone. Several people are taking calls / texting/ looking up stuff on the internet while I'm here. Then Yara leaves the room, only – to my surprise – to come back with a massive 25kg bag of donated wheat/barley. There is a lot of excitement. Eventually everyone claps, as one lady volunteers to cook a soup with the donation. "Mumtaz" I think to myself, happy to experience this.

This extract from my fieldnotes above equips us with a better understanding of the SC, not only as a multilingual, 'bottom-up' ESOL provider, but also as a locus of community formation. This stands in contrast to the English dominant, monolingual language use at St. Vincent's. Those who attend the SC, seem to be part of a tight knit, but also inclusive community; parents come to the SC

with their children, which are looked after by the wider community. Moreover, the lesson content is specifically tailored and relevant for the predominantly homogenous audience. There is much multilingual interaction among the students, as well as the students and the teachers.

It is here at the SC that I meet Aban again and succeed in recruiting him for my main study. Throughout my fieldwork, it became apparent that the SC is not only an informal and inclusive space for Syrian newcomers, but also that Saad and Yara, who initiate and plan the social events and lead most of the sessions, are flexible in adapting to the current needs of their community. Here, it is worthwhile to look at Saad's engagement with the Syrian population in Leeds in more detail.

4.5 Saad

Saad is Yara's husband and a long-term Syrian born resident in Leeds. Saad works as a dentist, which is why he is often referred to as 'doctor'. Besides being involved with the SC and the Syrian Kitchen (SK) at All Hallows Church, Saad administrates the *Syrian Community of Leeds Facebook Group* (SCOLFBG), an open Facebook group with close to 1500 members (March 2020). Also, Saad runs a range of informal advice sessions and wider 'community' events, targeted at newly arrived 'Syrian' audiences. Among these sessions, Saad has organized and hosted informal, bilingual (Arabic & English) driving test preparation classes at the SC, which he promoted via his Facebook group and other outlets (e.g. flyers) (c.f. Chapter 6). Saad and Yara are well connected with other informal and formal institutions in and around Leeds, such as religious organizations, charities, and Leeds City Council. All my key participants know Saad and Yara and have, to some extent, participated in their events, including the above-mentioned driving test preparation sessions. Whereas Yara often delivers the ESOL classes, Saad usually supports individuals, who seek his advice and help. While doing my fieldwork, I have repeatedly observed Saad acting as both a language and 'culture' broker, as he negotiates with internet and energy providers, on behalf of others, who are less confident in speaking English over the phone. The following extract from my fieldnotes (27.02.17) illustrates this clearly.

Fieldnotes: Syrian Café – Saad. February 2017
I had an exciting session last week at the SC, so I decided to come back. I make sure that I'm on time, to not miss anything. I get to Ebor Garden for 11am. Saad stands in the entrance area, holding up his phone in his palm. It's on speakerphone. He is waiting. There is background music doodling. […] He smiles at me. […]. I ask him what he's doing, He tells me that he's trying to sort out some lady's gas and electricity bill.

However, regarding my ethnography, one of the most significant of Saad's contributions is the part he plays in administrating the Syrian Community of Leeds Facebook Group.

4.6 The Syrian Community of Leeds Facebook Group (SCOLFBG)

The SCOLFBG is what Facebook (2017) refers to as a 'Public Facebook Group', meaning that anyone can see the group, its members, and their posts. This multilingual and constantly growing Facebook group is used by a mix of individuals, groups and other stakeholders. Among the members are newly arrived Syrians and already established Syrians in Leeds, other migrants from Syria and the greater Levant, who reside in Yorkshire, England, the UK, but also abroad.

Furthermore, local volunteers from the Leeds metropolitan area, ESOL providers, members of religious institutions and charities, as well as NGOs are among the audiences and stakeholders, who interact on this platform. This Facebook group has been active and constantly growing for over seven years. As mentioned before, the group has been instigated by Saad. Informal recorded conversations with Saad have revealed that this group started as a very informal and grassroots space – from Syrians for Syrians – as Saad felt the need to offer an open, accessible platform to Syrian newcomers to Leeds. Saad's thoughts (recorded conversation, 31.01.17) on the role and the affordances of this group give valuable insights:

Recorded Conversation with Saad, January 2017
Saad: […]. Members use the group to find information [a]bout Leeds, about activities, about things that we run through the community. Jobs, any job offers, any queries they have that might be answered through our Facebook group. So, sometimes we receive information, or we receive a question from somebody. We put that, if anybody's got any comment or if he knows the answer, he can put it in the answer straight away, or they can discuss with each other. […] Lots of them [Syrians], they don't actually have a specific email they can open. They, all the time, like to communicate through Facebook. On the other hand, we can [upload] some photos. Photos can speak more than a hundred words. [It is] easier to communicate on Facebook, than sending an attachment.
On Facebook you can reach about 800 members straight away. By email, you cannot guarantee that you are reaching all of them or they are interested in reading the emails […]. On Facebook, it's easier for me to use my phone for the Arabic keyboard. So, I put whatever I want in Arabic. […].

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Saad's reflections help us to understand how new arrivals, such as Syrian refugees in Leeds, use mobile technologies in daily contexts. Firstly, Saad points out that Facebook is the established and preferred platform of communication. The affordances of the social network such as its flat hierarchy, instant access via smartphones or the possibility to post multimodal content, help make communication faster and more efficient. Secondly, Saad indicates the benefits of mobile technology use within a Facebook context, as smartphones offer multilingual keyboards, thus facilitating the platform as a space for translanguaging. Last, Saad comments on the openness and inclusiveness of this group. Every member is able to share and add information to occurring queries. A whole range of multilingual and multimodal content is posted, shared, and disseminated on this platform.

As I have described elsewhere (Vollmer, 2018b), the SCOLFBG acts as a translocal platform that amplifies and relays relevant content to wider multilingual audiences; in Vollmer (2018b), I bring attention to how Saad disseminates content concerned with Leeds-based professional training opportunities to the members of the translocal SCOLFBG, a point I revisit in more detail in Chapter 7.4.

An initial content analysis of 200 posts, which have been posted between December 2016 and March 2017 offers insights into the many aspects and facets of everyday life that are being liked, shared and discussed by the members of this group. Each of the 200 posts has been coded and assigned to an overarching theme. The left column of the table below shows the different themes. Furthermore, numbers in brackets give account of how often posts were concerned with a particular theme. The right column shows some examples of the actual posts. Although this content analysis by necessity cannot do justice to the complex realities of newly arrived Syrians' lives, it nonetheless gives glimpses into the daily issues and topics that are being negotiated online by newly arrived Syrian refugees in Leeds.

Content Analysis of 200 posts (12/16-03/17)	
Themes	**Examples**
Social events and 'the Syrian Kitchen' and the Syrian community in Leeds (47)	Family entertainment day, Trip to the Yorkshire Dales, Games Exchange Day, Arabic School and Homework club for children
(trans)national news / policy / information relevant to newcomers in the UK (46)	Brexit, council housing, NHS, Visa application, Travel Ban guidelines, new regulations on flying
Employment and Further Education opportunities (28)	Formal and informal job offers in Leeds, upcoming employment fairs
Call for donations and volunteers for refugee relief (14)	Hope for Humanity donation calls, bake sales
ESOL and English Language provision (13)	Upcoming classes, idioms of the week
New life in England (12)	Gas, electricity, and Internet provider
Business promotion of shops, restaurants, enterprises (10)	Restaurant opening in Bradford, Links to online shops
Informal driving classes (7)	multilingual informal sessions on theoretical part of UK driving test
Citizenship and Political Activism (7)	Invite to 'One Day Without Us Event', March for Syria, Refugees Welcome event
'White Helmets of Leeds' (5)	Syrian refugee volunteers in Leeds using their labour skills to do community charity
Syrian culture (5)	Syrian Music, Syrian food
Other (6)	Incomplete posts (unavailable links)

Table 6: Content Analysis of the SCOLFBG

Looking closer at these themes, it becomes apparent that the immediate wants and needs of newcomers seem to be constantly negotiated; posts relating to further education and employment opportunities, ESOL provision and passing the driving test are recurring topics that are being posted and shared. This again suggests that newcomers seem to vocalize their needs fluidly between online and offline spaces; finding employment or further education

opportunities, as well as finding appropriate ESOL classes is a high priority for most new arrivals. Moreover, this content analysis suggests that informal 'bottom-up' platforms, such as this Facebook group are powerful, fast paced and well-connected spaces. Due to its flat hierarchy and inclusive layout, the needs, wants, but also expertise of all members can be made vocal almost instantly. It is here, through the SCOLFBG that I got in contact with Mamoud, another of my key participants. I revisit the findings of this content analysis in more detail in the analytical chapters, as well as Chapter 9.

4.7 Mamoud

Mamoud is a Syrian Muslim from Damascus, who is in his late thirties. In the beginning of 2016, he arrived in Leeds with his wife Aisha and his four sons. Similar to Aban's family, Mamoud and his wife and children arrived in the UK as officially recognized Syrian refugees through the VPRS. Throughout his life, Mamoud has pursued various careers; first and foremost, Mamoud is an established chef and restauranteur, who ran several establishments in Damascus. Mamoud is passionate about everything culinary. Also, adding to his entrepreneurial character, Mamoud has worked as a minibus driver, taking worshippers from Medina to Mecca. Moreover, back in Damascus, Mamoud used to run a bespoke furniture business, in which he specialized in detailed mosaic wood working. I first got to know Mamoud in November 2016, after he replied to one of Saad's Facebook posts on the above-mentioned Facebook group, in which Saad searched for an Arabic language tutor for me. My ambition here was that more understanding of the Arabic language would be of benefit for my fieldwork. Mamoud, who had no experience in teaching Arabic, agreed to be my tutor. We started to meet regularly at Mamoud's house to study together, to share food, but also to discuss his new life in Leeds. Regularly spending time at Mamoud's house gave me unique insights into the home of a newly arrived family. Thus, eventually, I recruited Mamoud as a key participant, while continuing with the language tuition. Other than with Aban, most of the data collection took place at Mamoud's family home. The following extract from my fieldnotes (19.01.17) gives account of this.

Fieldnotes: Mamoud's house, January 2017
[…]. I feel like I'm slowly progressing with my Arabic; words don't sound as alien anymore. This is refreshing for a change. […]. I ask him, if they grow dates in Syria. This triggers a long conversation about Mamoud telling me about Syria's agriculture. He knows a lot about fruits and vegetables. He tells me that he once owned a greengrocers in Damascus. […]. The conversation then moves on. Mamoud tells me of the Syrian countryside and Syrian weather; warm, hot, dry, water. He tells me of him swimming in the Mediterranean Sea. Mamoud is a good swimmer. […]. I ask him, if he's been swimming in the UK. Mamoud tells me that he's been to Scarborough, where he's been swimming in the North Sea. […]. Then the phone rings. Mamoud

speaks Arabic. I understand some words, some numbers. He's telling someone that he's speaking English with me. After the phone call, he tells me that a new Syrian couple has moved into his neighbourhood. They are very old and unfamiliar with the area. Mamoud says that he's been asked (by whom?) to look after them, help them find their way in Leeds. This interests me. I ask him about the family. He tells me that he's only met them once and that they don't know anybody. They are both very old and frail. Mamoud has taken the man to the mosque. I wonder, who asked him to look after these newcomers. I feel like that Mamoud very much sees himself as a successful newly arrived person, who's now sharing his acquired knowledge and expertise with others. I'm convinced that this is what's happening. In my understanding, Mamoud thinks of himself as a Leeds resident, as a new local, someone who has already established a network, someone who has made friends and who can find his way. I feel like that Mamoud is now ready to give support and help to others.

These visits to Mamoud's house are precious for acquiring a better understanding of how newly arrived refugees, such as Mamoud, establish themselves in new environments. As mentioned before, most of our interaction took place at his home. However, at one point, I started to see Mamoud at the Syrian Café, where he, for a short time, was attending ESOL classes, as well as Saad's informal driving sessions. Conversations with Mamoud have also revealed that he was volunteering at the Syrian Kitchen as a chef.

4.8 The Syrian Kitchen (All Hallows Church)

As previously mentioned in this chapter, the Syrian Kitchen (SK) is located at All Hallows Church in the Hyde Park area of Leeds. I started to regularly visit the SK at the end of 2016, after finding out that newly arrived and already established Syrians to Leeds were gathering here and cooking meals on Thursdays. Between November 2016 and May 2017, I visited this site 17 times. All Hallows Church is a particularly inclusive Church of England church, which is passionate in welcoming people of different faiths, backgrounds, and sexual orientations; members of the church congregation, volunteers, university students, the wider local community, but also vulnerable people, including the elderly, refugees and asylum seekers, the homeless, and recovering drug addicts may seek out All Hallows for different reasons. Many are regular visitors of the 'pay as you feel' café, which provides free cooked meals, free hot drinks and food donations on a daily basis. This mix of people makes the SK an interesting, but also unpredictable place. The following extract from my fieldnotes (09.02.17) exemplifies this.

Fieldnotes: Syrian Kitchen, February 2017
This time, I cycle down to All Hallows Church, as I'm running late. I lock my bike and walk inside. […]. The first thing I see, as I walk into the café, is Aban, dressed in grey, slightly oversized overalls, with a shiny white builder's helmet on his head. He looks excited. I notice a guy with a camera taking pictures, who moves through the café, as if he's scouting his next model. The photographer is about my age. I sit down at Table 3 today, which is the table closest to the café entrance (right hand side). Bobo, the guy from Jordan, who I've taught weeks ago at the SC and then again saw at this place some time ago, is back. He's always well dressed. I remember that he had (still has?) a business, trading and selling machinery. Rojan is also sitting at that table. As mentioned, Aban is here, too. They are all having lunch. Today they are serving falafel.
I ask Aban, why he is wearing these overalls, he happily answers: 'Plumber!' I remember that the week before, the gent's bathroom had been blocked and he it seems as if he is trying to fix it. Some time later, I see Saad coming in – it seems like everyone's here today. He's also wearing overalls and a shiny white helmet. I'm slightly confused what's going on; eventually, I find out that the café at All Hallows is trying to start a community garden project in their backyard. I have a short conversation with Rojan. He tells me that he's been invited to the PGR Open Days at Leeds University the next day (10.02.17). That's great news, I offer to come join him. He agrees. I don't

see much of Rojan after this. He walks in and out of the café to smoke and talks to different people. He speaks to a young Syrian guy called Sam, who's a confident English speaker. I've met Sam before. They exchange phone numbers. […]

The vignette above illustrates the quick pace and fluidity of the SK; people come, go, stay and leave with their own agendas and own trajectories. It is here, during my first visits, that I met Mary, a retired English teacher and member of the All Hallows congregation. Mary is a regular at the SK, who helps with organizing the pay-as-you-feel meals but also tutors new arrivals in English, for free. She introduces me to Rojan, a newly arrived Syrian man from the Aleppo area.

4.9 Rojan

Rojan is in his early 30s and has been living in Leeds with his mother Dilara and brother Jino since mid-2016. He identifies as a Kurdish Syrian. After completing his studies (B.A. in Science) at a Syrian university, Rojan has worked as a laboratory technician at a hospital in Aleppo. He is fluent in Kurdish and Arabic, has proficiency in spoken Turkish and had, prior to coming to the UK, foundational knowledge of written and spoken English. During fieldwork, Rojan was preparing for the IELTS entry exam, hoping to pursue a postgraduate degree in translation studies (Arabic and English) at the University of Leeds. I first met Rojan and his family at the Syrian Kitchen, where I was able to recruit him for my research project. Unlike Aban and Mamoud, Rojan did not enter the UK as an officially recognized refugee, but on the back of a lorry, a point I will return to in Chapter 5. Most of the interaction between Rojan and myself took place at SK. The extract below illustrates the initial meeting of Rojan and the recruitment process further.

Syrian Kitchen: Recruiting Rojan, November 2016
I'm at the SK. Mary tells me that she is looking after a Christian Kurdish family from Syria and that they are about to come for lunch. She tells me of her efforts to learn Kurdish. She starts asking me questions about my research project and she is excited about what I do. She invites me to come to church sometime and invites me to come to the Real Junk Food Dinner they do every Friday (where they cook a restaurant styled meal from food that would usually land in the bin). Mary must be in her late 50s. Eventually, her Syrian contacts arrive - a man in his late 30s and a woman in her 50s. I start talking to the man, his name is Rojan. His English is superb. He is from Aleppo. He speaks Kurdish and Arabic. I tell him about my Arabic and give him a sample of the three phrases I know. He loves it. I ask him about his background. He used to work in a hospital, in a laboratory. He's been in Leeds for nearly one year. Before, he's been in Hull for three months. He arrived in Straßbourg (from Greece). Rojan is super friendly and approachable. We chat for almost half an hour. He's got a powerful iPhone 6S. I tell him about my work. He's excited and wants to know more. I ask him about his mobile phone practices. He tells me about Google Translate and about looking up words.[…]. I ask Rojan, if he would like to stay in touch and would like to participate in my research. He is happy to do that. He says that I could teach him English and he could teach me Arabic – that sounds like a plan. I'm thrilled that my learning Arabic plan seems to work as a conversation opener. We exchange numbers, Rojan writes his into my notebook.

4.10 Visualizing my Project

The schematic overview below is an attempt to visualize the fluid and evolving interconnections between data collection sites and research participants. Here, the graph shows key participants (red ovals), secondary participants (white oval) and data collection sites, both online (FB = Syrian Community of Leeds Facebook Group) and offline (rectangles). The relationships between people and places are represented with different lines; broken lines stand for former or ceased relationships (e.g. Aban, who stopped going to ESOL classes at St. Vincent's). Coherent lines reflect an ongoing relationship during my fieldwork. Although this visualization is an obvious and flawed reduction of an inherently complex and fluid network, it helps to grasp and understand actors and institutions that are at play. This abstraction of my fieldwork is based on my observations and fieldnotes.
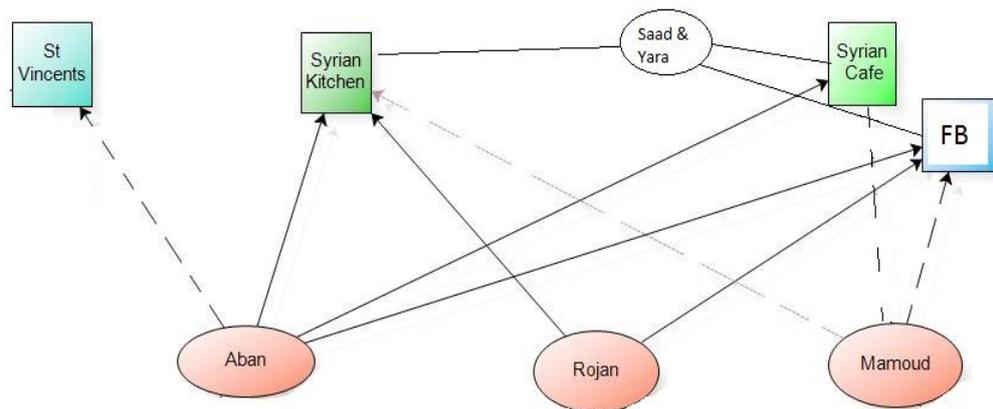
Figure 4: Visualization of Data Collection Sites and Key Participants

4.11 Concluding Remarks

Chapter 4 introduced key participants and the crucial data collection sites, both online and offline, to this ethnographic research project. Further, in this chapter I gave an overview of various neighbourhoods in Leeds, where I conducted research and commented on ESOL language policy. Here, I pointed towards the fragmentation and inconstancy of current ESOL provision in the UK, which is also noticeable in Leeds and which has affected my participants' language and literacy learning trajectory.

In what follows, I return to the key participants and the data collection sites in the succeeding analytical chapters; the data analyses are organized in three overarching analytical chapters (Chapters 5-7). Each chapter explores a central theme related to settlement and belonging that consists of several data extracts relevant to my research project, a linguistic ethnography concerned with newly arrived Syrians' digital literacy practices.

Though it is not the aim of this situated study to generalize findings beyond its intended contextual scope, the selected data extracts discussed in the following entail central themes and aspects of current migration trajectories, which are likely to align with the wider experiences of forced migrants to the UK and elsewhere. Throughout these three analytical chapters, it is my aim to bring to light how smartphones are central – and become central – to newly arrived migrants' day-to-day socio-spatial and communicative mobile practices. With this concern for mobile technologies and migration in mind, I scrutinize stories of mobility, arrival and settlement that have emerged from my ethnographic fieldwork.

Chapter 5 (*Journeys*) explores how Syrian refugees draw on mobile technologies to support local and transnational spatiotemporal movements; on the one hand, the data discussed in this chapter shines light to how my participants utilize their mobile devices to penetrate, navigate and access novel physical and virtual spaces. On the other hand, I investigate in this chapter, how smartphone-mediated spatial and communicative practices occur within urban flows of mobility. In a wider sense then, this chapter

explores how smartphones shape and influence spatial movements and vice versa.

Analytical chapter 6 (*Driving*) is concerned with processes of settlement as it investigates my participants' efforts to reinstate their right to drive in the UK; this chapter discusses how Syrian refugees develop and perform strategies to prepare for the theoretical part of the UK driving test and the roles that mobile technologies and particularly smartphones play within this driving test domain of practice.

Finally, Chapter 7 (*Making Money*) explores how my participants seek and find employment opportunities within the formal and informal economy. Again, we see throughout these data extracts that mobile technologies and especially social media platforms, such as Facebook, hold central positions in newcomers' chances of finding paid work.

Each of these analytical chapters is organized as follows; first, I develop brief rationales for each chosen theme. Second, I provide the reader with a tabulated overview of the chosen data extracts. Next, I introduce the data extracts in the following way; I first offer necessary contextual information (a – context), often drawing on my extensive fieldnotes from my ethnography. Following this, I provide the data extracts, either as interview transcriptions, multimodal transcriptions, or visual data (b – data extract). Last, I produce my analyses (c – analysis).

Although the analyses I bring forward might vary in their overall organization, structure and scope, they all explore two underlying dimensions, which are informed by the research questions posed in Chapter 3.7.2; first, my analyses aim to provide detailed and thick descriptions (Geertz, 1973) of the mobile practices that the actors of my ethnography engage with throughout the discussed data extracts. Here, the analyses aim to position, interpret and lastly conceptualize these practices, bringing particular attention to how mobile technologies interplay with my participants' evolving life worlds. Second, the data extracts are scrutinized through a spatial lens.

Finally, I summarize each chapter and give overall comments. Taken together, these three chapters aim to provide a detailed and situated study of newly arrived Syrian refugees and their digital literacy practices.

Chapter 5: Journeys (Analysis I)

Every story is a travel story – a spatial practice.
Michel de Certeau (1988:115)

A smartphone allows people to tell stories anytime and place […].
Kenton O'Hara et al. (2014:1133)

5.1 Rationale

Chapter 5, the first analytical chapter is organized as follows; first, in Section 5.1, I offer a brief rationale for discussing data concerning this particular theme of settlement. Next, in Sections 5.2-5.4 I introduce and analyse three data extracts (Data Extracts 1-3). Last, in Section 5.5, I draw conclusions.

Journeys, the first analytical chapter of this doctoral thesis, brings together three interactional and multimodal data extracts. Taken together, the data provide spatio-temporal insights into how Syrian refugees utilize mobile technologies, particularly smartphones, to accommodate local and transnational movements at various stages of their migratory settlement trajectories.

In today's globalized and transnational world economy, navigating through and accessing new spaces is a fundamental part of life, as we traverse between places near and far, for education, employment and enjoyment, etcetera. On the other hand, ongoing geopolitical and economic crises, as well as natural disasters, have left an unprecedented number of people forced from their homes. As the 'World Refugee Day' reminds us, one out of 113 people worldwide have been forced from their homes (UNHCR, 2018).

The above quote at the beginning of this section by Kenton O'Hara and colleagues (2014) indicates that wireless and mobile technologies provide us with powerful means to communicate and interact with others, unaffected by spatio-temporal limitations (Tagg, 2015). Here, mobile and wireless technologies in migratory contexts, especially with a focus on transnational communicative practices, have been explored in some detail (Vertovec, 2004;

Law and Peng, 2008; Tagg, 2015; Christiansen, 2017). Yet, studies that have produced detailed descriptions of newly arrived migrants' spatial digital literacy practices, particularly in contexts of arrival, settlement, and belonging remain scarce.

As Baynham (2009:135) argues, "narratives of migration and settlement emphasize particularly strongly the dislocations and relocations in space and time […]." Therefore, Chapter 5 develops conceptualizations of timespace within specific 'social situations' (Goffman, 1964) of forced migration, in order to deepen an understanding of my participants' smartphone-mediated mobile practices. As we will see, time and space are two interconnected themes that resurface throughout the analyses that follow in the two succeeding analytical chapters.

5.2 Data Extracts

The three data extracts concerning Chapter 5 explore dimensions of spatiality and temporality within smartphone-afforded mobile interaction; Data Extract 5.1 stems from a recorded interview with Rojan and gives evidence of how smartphones become crucial instruments of navigation for transnational movements, such as border crossings. Data Extract 5.2 scrutinizes a multilingual literacy event that draws attention to Mamoud's practices of translanguaging (García, 2017) and spatiality, which occur on Google Maps. Last, Data Extract 5.3 investigates a smartphone-mediated interaction between Aban and myself that occurs on a bus.

Actors and Platforms	Description	Analytical Concern
1. Rojan – *GPS tracking* (Recoded audio Interview)	Rojan shares experiences of his journey to the UK and the role his smartphone played in it.	Smartphones as key navigation tools for transnational movements and for ontological security (Giddens, 1990; Witteborn, 2015)
2. Mamoud – *Google Maps* (Screen recording)	Demonstration of Multimodal and multilingual mobile navigation resource	Claiming and accessing spaces: the new neighbourhood through Google Maps.
3. Aban – *WhatsApp* (WhatsApp transcript)	Dialogic, multimodal, synchronous and asynchronous mobile interaction via WhatsApp	Smartphone-mediated communicative practices while being on the move.

Table 7: Overview Data Extracts Chapter 5

5.2.1 Data Extract 1: On the Lorry

(a) Context

The following interview extracts stem from a one-hour recorded conversation with Rojan, recorded in January 2017 at a bar in Leeds city centre, where we met to play ping-pong. The conversation takes place after we've played ping-pong for about an hour. We're engaged in a deep conversation. There's loud music playing in the background. I ask Rojan if he would mind me audio-recording our chat. He consents. A few minutes into the recording, we start talking about his journey from Afrin, Syria to the UK, a topic we have not discussed in detail before. It is here that Rojan tells me for the first time that he made the passage to England on the back of a lorry, after spending several months in Calais' *Jungle*.

(b) Data Extracts 1A-D

```
Extract 1A: Lines 131-151

Stefan: Did you use, did you have a phone.

Rojan:  Where? When I lived there [Calais]?
Stefan: Yeah. Did you use your phone for different, for a lot of
things? Was that important to you?
Rojan:  For speaking. For GPS.

Stefan: Yeah GPS.

Rojan:  Because sometimes we are in lorry, we need to know where
you're going. Because you don't know where [it] is going. You need
to open GPS. You open GPS, sometimes the lorry go to Holland.
[undistinguishable] Netherland. No go to England. Or go to Spain.

Stefan: You're going the wrong way. Wow.

Rojan:  Yeah. Going the wrong way. A lot of people I know, some
people go to Spain.

Stefan: By mistake!

Rojan:  Yeah mistake [laughing]. One week, I, one week later, they
come back. Some people go the Netherland.
```

(c) Analysis

Extract 1A takes us straight into the precarious realities of contemporary migratory movements; Rojan's first-hand account foregrounds the importance of smartphones and GPS tracking for undocumented transnational border crossings. As we realize just how crucial and indispensable smartphones are for so called "non-citizens" (Tonkiss and Bloom, 2015; Vollmer, 2019) and

others of contested legal status, we also come to see to which desperate measures undocumented migrants might draw, to reach their desired destination. Yet, as Gillespie et al. (2018) point out, relatively little attention has been paid to such migrant journeys and crossings. Rather, there has been a focus on the causes and consequences of migration. Therefore, In the following, I want to explore this initial data extract in more detail; first, I briefly discuss the role of smartphones in unofficial and temporary camps and transit point such as *the Jungle*, an "informal (semi-)permanent place of passage and residence" (de Vries et al., 2016:2) in Calais, France, which drew global media attention in 2015 and 2016. Following this, I analyse how smartphones afford and enable Rojan to enter new spaces.

1.Digital Passage

As undocumented migrants are stripped of their capital (Bourdieu, 1986; Blommaert, 2005) and are stuck in temporary and precarious conditions (Gillespie et al., 2018), smartphones become important, very important; Latonero (2015) describes in a newspaper article how "social media, mobile apps, online maps, instant messaging, translation websites, wire money transfers, cell phone charging stations, and Wi-Fi hotspots have created a new infrastructure for movement as critical as roads or railways." Keeping Extract 1A in mind, this does not seem to be an understatement. Unofficial temporary camps like *the Jungle* are dangerous places, where too often despair and hopelessness are exploited and taken advantage of. Extract 1B, which stems from the same interview, gives us a clearer picture of Rojan's difficult living conditions in Calais.

```
Extract 1B: Lines 69-76
Rojan: But when you live there, Dunkirk or Calais, it's terrible,
dangerous, because [undistinguishable] [wild] dogs or mhh. […] And
these people [Rojan refers to 'these people' as organized, violent
mafia-like groups], they don't care. They just can kill you. Hurt you.
It's terrible.
Stefan: So, did you sleep, did you sleep in a tent?
Rojan:  Yeah. It's not good.
```

Gillespie et al. (2018:6) argues that in dire circumstances like the one Rojan describes, "[…] smartphones become a kind of currency. They are bought and sold, exchanged and bartered, fought over and gifted, personalized and loved." This prioritisation of mobile technologies, and of the smartphone in particular, aligns with Rojan's own experiences, who throughout my fieldwork, often emphasized the significance of his phone during different stages of his migration trajectory.

In this context of immediate and omnipresent danger, as visible in Extract 1B, the notions of 'ontological security' (Giddens, 1990; Loveluck, 2015; Witteborn, 2015) and 'transnational affective capital' (Leurs, 2014) are useful concepts; whereas the former describes the actions of people to feel secure in insecure and dangerous times, the latter stresses the importance of transnational relationships maintained with friends and family. Recent studies in migration and technology (e.g. Leurs, 2014, Smets, 2017; Dekker et al., 2018) clearly position smartphones as key vehicles in affording and facilitating both ontological security and transnational affective capital. Smets (2017:2), for instance argues that "the study of migration has increasingly become a study of technologies." Let us now take a closer look at how Rojan draws on his smartphone to find safe passage to the UK.

2. "Going the wrong way"

Gillespie et al. (2018:7) stress that digital navigation and informal communication platforms are essential for undocumented border crossings, as few legal alternative tools are available. This clearly seems to be the case for Rojan who, as Extract 1A illustrates, had to rely on GPS tracking to verify safe passage to the UK: "Because sometimes we are in lorry, we need to know where you're going. Because you don't know where is going" (Extract 1A). Before we take a closer look at how smartphones might be of assistance in these unfortunate situations, I want to draw attention to Rojan's personal experiences in trying to enter the UK on the back of a lorry (Extract 1C).

```
Extract 1C: Lines 205-221
Rojan: But is very dangerous, is terrible. […] You, you, you get
into, you get in, to lorry. You don't know this lorry. What is that?
Is fish? […] But you cannot trust them [the mafia-like smugglers],
because they just need money [up to £500]. They need to go. You go,
no problem. Yeah, you go in, you don't know what happens. What's
inside. […] If you go in, you don't go out. They close the door. OK.
You stay here. You can't do anything. You can't do, no, I want to go
out.
```

Refugee journeys are often uncertain (Osseiran, 2017), tremendously exhausting and dangerous (Moorehead, 2006), and at times harrowing experiences. As Gillespie et al. (2018:1) stress, refugee journeys are "profoundly unsettling, formative, and transformative experiences in which all kinds of life-baggage have come to be contained in and transported through a smartphone." Rojan's experiences described in Extract 1C are doubtlessly dangerous, terrifying, even traumatizing, particularly against the backdrop of recent tragedies, where repeatedly, stowaway migrants have died whist trying to reach the UK on the back of lorries (Dubow and Kuschminder, 2019); there are clear signs of loss of agency ("They close the door […]. You can't do anything"), financial exploitation ("they just need money") and acute danger to life ("If you go in, you don't go out"), where undocumented people are put through distressing experiences. It is here that we see how little agency people have and how little information is given to those who enter the back of a lorry. This is an important point that exemplifies how smartphones can provide a form of lifeline and a sense of control, with features such as a flashlight, mobile internet and the ability to call for help when needed.

More than that, as Data Extract 1D indicates, we begin to understand that 'jumping on lorries' becomes a routine action for those wanting to cross the English Channel. As chances of success are low, people have to persevere to make it. Rojan estimates that he has unsuccessfully tried to enter the UK over forty times, before he succeeded.

```
Extract 1D: Lines 254-263

Stefan: Yeah. But how many times have you tried?

Rojan:  Too many. About every week, maybe four times.

Stefan: Four times a week?
Rojan:  Four times, five times.

Stefan: Wow. And what, and usually they would usually notice? The
drivers would usually see there someone in my truck, my lorry.

Rojan:  Somebody notice? Yeah, some driver notice, they said 'go
out'. But some drivers, they scared. Some drivers scared. They don't
say you go out.
```

Data Extract 1A-D then suggests the following; first, the data underscores how mobile technologies can provide aspects of ontological security (Giddens, 1990; Witteborn, 2015) and transnational affective capital (Leurs, 2014) by bestowing their users with a sense of control and agency throughout the most precarious of moments of their refugee journeys. Data Extract 1A clearly brings this to attention, when Rojan describes his smartphone use to track his location whilst being on a lorry ("You need to open GPS. You open GPS.").

Second, as Baynham (2009:135) argues, "narratives of migration and settlement emphasize particularly strongly the dislocations and relocations in space and time […]." This applies to Data Extract 1A-D; from a spatial viewpoint, Rojan's journey from Syria to the UK, as well as his temporary stay at the *Jungle* is thus not only an act of traversing nation states, but also a penetrating of legal spaces.

As Salter (2007) points out, there is a hierarchy vis-à-vis passports, where some particular nationalities are entitled to move freely between nation-states, whereas others are not; Rojan's mobility is greatly inhibited and obstructed by his lack of official status, which again hinders him from entering the UK legally. Unlike Mamoud and Aban, who are also Syrian nationals, Rojan was not able to enter the UK as an officially recognized refugee. Thus, as Osseiran (2017:257) reminds us, "[c]apital (social and economic), class, religion, gender and sexuality all affect the access different Syrian refugees have to countries and their ability to move freely." Hence, Rojan finds himself in a place, where his only option is to enter the UK via an undocumented border crossing. The

succeeding chapter explores this notion of passport hierarchy further within the context of the UK driving license.

5.2.2 Data Extract 2: Going to Leeds Station

Data Extract 2 is a multimodal transcript of a smartphone screen recording, which documents Mamoud's use of Google Maps (GM) at his home. This 75 second video was recorded in January 2017.

(a) context: fieldnotes – Mamoud's house (10.01.17)

> I'm at Mamoud's house and he demonstrates how he uses *Google Maps* (GM). It is the first time that I can collect visual data from him, as he has given me consent to record. Mamoud shows me how he uses GM to find directions and access to public transportation details (see screen recording). He points out that this is easy, and he always uses this to find his way around town. He then shows me, in an exemplary way, how to take a bus from his house to Leeds station. Mamoud explains this in detail and points out that a lot of his peers (fellow Syrians) struggle to use GM, as even though the app's language can be changed to Arabic, some features (e.g. bus numbers) will remain in English. He points out that for this reason, some of his friends struggle to use GM and that this is why he often ends up navigating, finding train and bus details.

(b) Data Extract: Mamoud Google Maps

Ex	Time-stamp	Screen	Spoken	Movement	Smartphone
1	00:03 00:04 00:06 00:09 00:11 00:14		M: Mhh you see? S: Yeah. M: "Leeds Station" S: Yeah. M: Now, I put this, the bus, look 41 minute. S: Yeah.	Mamoud presses blue bus icon (bottom left corner) then points at blue +41 number that appears.	Google Maps (GM) is showing Mamoud's house on a map of Leeds (red pin). Mamoud searches for the train station.
2	00:16 00:18 00:20 00:23 00:26 00:30 00:32 00:33		M: Mhh look, 'shayef' (شايف) [do you see?]. I can walk 10 minutes, go to the bus 72 or X6, not different. S: Yeah. M: I want 41 minute. S: Yeah. M: Mhh after I mhh you want go this, you can go look 'Shloon Ahot Hay Al Hafle' (شلون احط هاي الحافلة){How can I choose this bus?} 'Hala' (هلا) {So} mhh one minute,	Mamoud points at first bus route option. Points at '41' Moves screen up with his finger	The screen changes. The app shows different bus routes between his house and Leeds station.
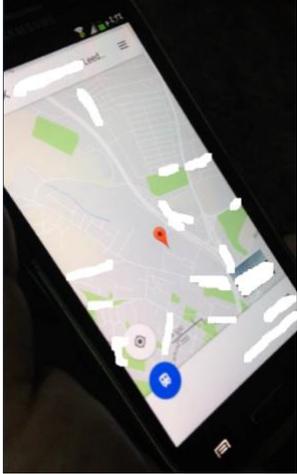
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| 3 | 00:38 00:40 00:41 00:45 00:47 00:49 | | Now, now, now, OK, go this. Mhh. S: Alright yeah. M: You come S: It tells you where to go. M: Yeah, where you go. S: Easy. M: Yeah, very very easy. S: Yeah easy yeah. 'Shayef? Hata look yaani Mawqi'aaq' (يـعـنى حتي look مـوقـعك شايـف){Do you see? look there is even your location.} | Mamoud scrolls up and down the screen and presses the first bus route option. | The screen changes. GM shows a detailed route description, linking Mamoud's house and Leeds station on a map (top of screen) and written directions, which are partly in Arabic partly in English, (bottom of screens). |
| 4 | 00:54 01:00 01:06 01:08 01:11 | | you walk to the bus stop. S: Yeah. M: 72XX, you here stop. S: Yeah. M: In the H3 <<Bus stop>> walk one, one minute S: Yeah. M: You come this S: next bus M: But this my phone, sometimes speak to me. S: Yeah. M: In English. "You go left, right" S: It tells you the direction M: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Very easy. | Mamoud moves screen up, so written directions are in full view. Points at top right corner of directions. Points at screen, where it says '+1' Puts smartphone away. | |
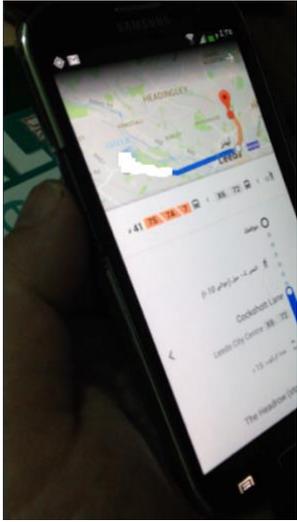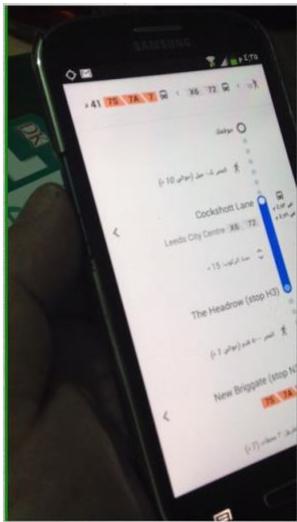
(c) Data Analysis: Mamoud GM (10.01.17)

To gain a deeper understanding of how Mamoud draws on *Google Maps* (GM) in Data Extract 2, I want to focus my analytical attention on the following two aspects: first, I scrutinize GM from a multilingual and multimodal point of view and then explore the notion of spatiality within this data extract.

1. Multilingualism

First, it is helpful to take a closer look at GM and its affordances; GM, which was instigated in the early 2000s, is an app and online resource owned by Alphabet Inc. that provides a wide range of mapping services based on satellite images, street maps, but also 360-degree street view features. Today, GM also provides users with up-to-date traffic data (Google Traffic), satnav features and route planning options that include walking, cycling and public transportation data. GM itself is available in different languages, including Arabic. Yet, as the app heavily draws on a range of external data (e.g. data on local public transportation), utilizing GM often is a multilingual experience, with English playing a dominant role. This applies for most apps and social media platforms in particular. As Tagg (2015:21) points, out "[…] English is embedded into the infrastructure or technological features of the platform: within the messaging apps, elements such as the time and date of messages, automated messages, and commands like Send are in English."

Data Extract 2 documents how Mamoud engages in multilingual practices via GM on his smartphone. Noteworthy here is that although the app's default language setting on Mamoud's smartphone is in Arabic, much of the displayed content and information, such as bus numbers or street names, remains in English. Thus, this interaction between Mamoud, his smartphone and myself is inherently multilingual; whereas Mamoud's use of GM on his smartphone is partly in English, partly in Arabic, the interaction between Mamoud and me, concerning his use of GM, occurs mostly in English. Here, at times (Exchanges 2 and 3), Mamoud switches to Arabic, while he navigates GM.

Prior to this recording, Mamoud himself points out (c.f. Data Extract 2, (a) context: fieldnotes) that this hybridisation of both Arabic and English script

within GM is problematic and a serious hindrance for some of his Arabic speaking peers. This is crucial revelation, as it foregrounds issues of access to multilingual mobile technology affordances, particularly for users who are English language and literacy learners; as the screenshots of Data Extract 2 point out, even though GM is in an Arabic language setting, certain features, including street names and bus numbers, are still displayed in English. Thus, to effectively manoeuvre GM, users must have a certain English language and literacy proficiency, as well as a geospatial understanding of Leeds, in order to decipher and interpret GM's navigation features.

This then suggests that for smartphone affordances, such as navigation applications, to be accessible, users must possess English language proficiency, regardless of the app's default language setting. This again points towards the significance of ESOL provision, which prepares students to use mobile applications such as GM. This seems particularly pertinent for novice English language and literacy learners, who are also newcomers to Leeds, such as Mamoud and his peers. This is a point I revisit in Chapter 9.3.1.

2. Spatiality and Multimodality

Higgins (2017:103f) stresses that "[s]pace both shapes and is shaped by multilinguals' language practices, and hence spaces should be seen as sites where power relations and inequities are made visible, but also where they can be transformed." Higgins' observations resonate with Data Extract 2 in several ways.

First, once we conceptualize GM not as a physical but as a translingual space, we see how Higgins' commentary relates to the issue of access, particularly for novice English language learners, such as Mamoud's peers, previously mentioned in this data analysis. Here, lack of English language proficiency, for instance, not being able to read bus numbers and street names, hinders access to this particular space. In a wider sense then, this suggests that considerably useful online spaces for new arrivals, such as mobile navigation via GM, remain out of reach for those who lack the needed linguistic capital, which again adversely affects their chances to settle and belong to their new places of residence.

Second, Data Extract 2 exemplifies how GM's multimodal layout shapes Mamoud's literacy practices; the screen recording illustrates this clearly, as the app's display of information prompts several utterances from Mamoud, such as in 00:18sec, "I can walk 10 minutes. I go to the bus 72 or X6". As the screenshots of Data Extract 2 underscore clearly, GM's inherently multimodal layout caries a lot of meaning, as different modes such as written text, colours, icons, geo-spatial data, but also the vertical positioning of the travel itinerary, distinctly broker the meaning-making process. More than that, as Mamoud points out in 01:06sec, "[b]ut this my phone, sometimes speak to me", GM also has spoken language features, which give directions (00:08sec, "In English. 'You go left, right'"). Thus, interaction with GM is an inherently multimodal experience, which simplifies manoeuvring the app (00:45sec, "Yeah, very easy").

Third, GM increases Mamoud's reach and mobility over the Leeds city space, which is his new place of residence, as the app supports him in navigating the city whilst being on the move, as well as provides an overview of the Leeds public transport services. This is of particular relevance for newcomers including Mamoud, as GM affords to locate and map out unfamiliar and unknown streets, places and areas. Moreover, opposed to the monolingual bus timetables and other public transportation information in the UK, GM's multilingual features offer further assistance to newcomers, which in this context of settlement and belonging, seems crucial. In a wider sense, then, multilingual mobile navigation services like GM empower newcomers to access public transportation as well as familiarize themselves with unknown territory and spaces.

5.2.3 Data Extract 3: On the Bus

Data Extract 3 consists of a WhatsApp transcript that holds a multimodal (i.e. written text, emoji, voice message and spatio-visual) interaction between Aban and me, which occurred over a 45-minute period in April 2017. This particular stretch of data has been chosen and prepared for analysis for multiple reasons; firstly, Data Extract 3 analyses everyday movements across urban spaces, in this instance it follows Aban on a daily bus commute across Leeds. Importantly, as Chapter 5 is concerned with spatiotemporal movements and smartphone-mediated practices, Data Extract 3 offers crucial insights into how smartphones expand communicative practices while being on the move, as well as bring attention to spatial urban trajectories of new arrivals to Leeds.

Mobile messaging data are powerful means of analysing language use online and offer ways of exploring mobile literacy practices in daily encounters; as Tagg and Asprey (2017:6) have shown, the 'digital literacy repertoires' of people displayed via mobile messaging can be "reconstructed in post-hoc fashion". Tagg and Asprey (2017:6) use the term 'digital literacy repertoires' to describe "the range of resources available online, including punctuation, emoji, photos, and voice recording". Yet, due to the app's unlimited texting features, WhatsApp interactions have been described as ongoing, "phatic", and even as never-ending (O'Hara et al., 2014:1137). Therefore, a rationale for the selection of this particular data sequence is needed; the following extract from my fieldnotes shows my intentions and provides the setting for this data extract, which is concerned with negotiating a meeting between Aban and myself.

(a) Context: Fieldnotes – University of Leeds (25.04.17)

[…] It's early in the morning. I'm in the office and write up my fieldnotes from the last few days. While writing, I feel like I've been neglecting Aban […]. I've seen him on a regular basis, often at the Syrian Kitchen or at Ebor Garden Community Centre. Unfortunately, these interactions were mostly too short and too superficial. As I keep writing, I try to think of other ways to reach out and connect with Aban. I remember that I've seen his profile on my WhatsApp (which I rarely use) the other day. It's 7:20am now and I've been in the office for about 15min. I pick up my phone, browse through my contacts. I see that he has already been online earlier this morning. He told me recently that he takes his children

to school in the mornings; his children have to take the bus from Harehills (where they live now) to Armley (where some of his children go to school, as they used to live there), which is a tedious journey with public transportation. As I look at his profile picture, I consider reaching out to him through WhatsApp. Once I messaged Aban through Facebook Messenger and he never replied. Still, I think to myself that I've got nothing to lose, so after a while, I send him a message via WhatsApp. […].

The fieldnotes provide a clear rationale for contacting Aban via WhatsApp. Moreover, they offer key biographical and geo-spatial information concerning Aban and his family, which I will revisit shortly.

(b) Data Extract: Aban WhatsApp Transcript

1 07:55:11: Stefan: Good morning Aban! How are you?

2 08:14:37: Aban: Good morning

3 08:14:58: Stefan: How are you my friend?

4 08:16:04: Aban: A'm good

5 08:16:13: Aban: Thanks

6 08:16:18: Stefan: ☺

7 08:16:26: Stefan: What are you doing today?

8 08:17:20: Aban: A go to city colig

9 08:17:27: Aban: 😮

10 08:17:31: Stefan: For English classes?

11 08:17:52: Aban: Yes

12 08:17:56: Stefan: Cool!

13 08:18:07: Stefan: What class are you going to?

14 08:18:13: Stefan: Level1?

15 08:19:01: Aban: An trey 1

16 08:19:10: Stefan: Entry 1!

17 08:19:13: Stefan: Good!

18 08:19:25: Aban: Thanks

19 08:19:40: Stefan: Is at at the Thomas Danby college?

20 08:21:11: Stefan: Are you going to the Syrian kitchen on
21 Thursday?

22 08:21:35: Aban: No

23 08:22:38: Aban: I have go to college 4 days

24 08:22:46: Stefan: Wow 😣

25 08:23:01: Stefan: What days do you go?

26 08:23:48: Aban: At Tuesday to Friday

27 08:24:30: Stefan: Do you like the classes?T

28 08:25:31: Aban: 3 days morning and Friday after

29 08:25:51: Stefan: Wow!

30 08:26:12: Aban: I like good

31 08:26:22: Stefan: 👆

32 08:26:29: Aban: ☺

33 08:26:32: Stefan: What are you doing this weekend?

34 08:27:18: Aban: Monday

35   08:27:51: Aban: And Saturday

36   08:28:14: Stefan: Ok!

37   08:28:28: Aban: Thanks

38   08:28:45: Aban: You welcome

39   08:29:49: Stefan: Do you want to meet up this week?

40   08:30:50: Stefan: To talk some more English ☺

41   08:31:23: Aban: Ok

42   08:31:26: Aban: Thanks

43   08:31:34: Stefan: When are you free?

44   08:32:05: Aban: Afternoon

45   08:32:13: Stefan: Today?

46   08:32:22: Aban: Ok

47   08:32:27: Stefan: Cool!

48   08:32:31: Stefan: Where?

49   08:34:16: Aban: You comn home

50   08:34:25: Stefan: To your house?

51   08:34:51: Aban: Address Postcode

52   08:35:01: Stefan: Thank you Aban!

53   08:35:05: Stefan: What time?

54   08:35:23: Aban: Thanks

55   08:35:49: Aban: 2017-04-25-AUDIO-00000055.opus <"You coming
56   today, mhh house, after, after, after 5pm." [loud engine noise
57   in the background]>

58   08:36:34: Stefan: ☺☺

59   08:36:41: Stefan: After 5 pm ✌

60   08:36:47: Aban: 👍

61   08:36:52: Stefan: I'll see you later ☺👍

62   08:37:20: Aban: See you there to

63   08:38:06: Stefan: Cool!

64   08:40:45: Aban: Than

(c) Analysis: Aban WhatsApp

> Language use online has typically been explained with reference to affordance, whereby people's use of social media is seen as being determined by their perceptions of the possibilities or opportunities provided by a technology, shaped in turn by their previous use of technologies, their communicative purposes and awareness, their digital literacy skills, individual communicative repertoires and technological competence […]. (Tagg, 2015:31)

As Tagg brings to attention, analyses of online language use benefit from approaches that not only take an interest in the foregrounded technologies that facilitate online interaction, but also scrutinize their users with their unique biographies and (linguistic) trajectories. Moreover, Pennycook and Otsuji (2015:9) argue that "we need to understand the relations between personal trajectories, current activities and spatial repertoires in order to account more fully for the language practices of […] metrolingual interaction." Taking this in consideration, I first discuss WhatsApp and its affordances in some detail, before shifting my attention to Aban and his spatio-temporal mobile practices.

WhatsApp

WhatsApp is a freely and almost globally accessible[3], mobile instant messaging platform, which has more than 1.3 billion users who send approximately 55 billion messages per day (ZDNet, 2017). Purchased by Facebook in 2014, WhatsApp has been constantly developing and updating its messaging services; whereas in its beginnings in 2009, its main vehicle of communication was via text messages, today, WhatsApp caters for a range of semiotic features and allows for diverse multimodal (e.g. via video) communication between two or more interlocutors (e.g. via group chats). WhatsApp's popularity can be traced back to its key affordances; the app was the first freely accessible, cross-platform and transnational messaging service which offered free of charge texting, not only between different mobile phone operating systems (e.g. between BlackBerry and Android), but also between nation states. The app experienced a further rise in popularity after introducing

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[3] WhatsApp is banned in several countries, such as Iran and China.

photo sharing options. Moreover, users can place free and transnational audio and voice calls. This is particularly important to all those who rely on inexpensive and reliable transnational communication infrastructure, a trait which in today's inherently interconnected and globalized world is more in demand than ever before. Therefore, WhatsApp has become a much relied upon messaging application for migrants and others, who engage in transnational communicative practices (Borkert et al., 2018; Gillespie et al., 2018).

Today, WhatsApp users can choose between text messages, photos, videos, files, audio messages, and location information to communicate with. Importantly, WhatsApp interaction between two or more interlocutors remains largely unaffected by space and time, two factors which are crucial for successful face-to-face communication; the app, which relies either on a Wi-Fi or on a mobile internet signal, allows for both synchronous, as well as asynchronous communication. Over time, WhatsApp has introduced several notification mechanisms, such as grey and blue ticks appearing after sent messages, which indicate that messages have been sent, reviewed and read. O'Hara et al. (2014:1138) argue that this heightened visibility provides information about users' temporal behaviours, which again raise potential issues regarding "presence and notions of social availability."

Kaufmann (2018:893) has shown that in forced migration contexts, these notification mechanisms are being used as "means of verification"; "[e]specially where children were separated from their parents back in Syria, the young adults were highly aware of the relevance of being online [on WhatsApp], not only as a way of making communication possible, but also as a message in itself […]." Tagg (2015:29) points out that although mobile messaging can be used "quasi-synchronously", interactions are often embedded in other activities, thus taking a more asynchronous character. Here, I argue that developing a concern for time and space vis-à-vis this data extract yields valuable insights into Aban's mobile practices, but also illustrates wider characteristics of contemporary smartphone-mediated communication.

(1) Time

As indicated before, WhatsApp interactions have been described as never-ending, affording an "ongoing casualness of exchange" (O'Hara, 2014:1137). However, the narrative boundaries of this data extract are fairly clearly demarcated, as it is concerned with negotiating a meeting between Aban and myself. This process covers a timespan of almost 45 minutes during which the interaction takes both synchronous and asynchronous character. The graph below aims to visualize this further; the x-axis displays time (in hh:mm:ss), whereas the y-axis holds a quantification of the digital literacy repertoires (Tagg and Asprey, 2017) displayed by Aban and myself. Here, written and audio-recorded text messages are displayed in 'word count per message', indicating the quantity of each message by volume of spoken or written word. Similarly, emoji and GPS data (Aban's address on Apple Maps) are quantified following this approach. Moreover, the chronologically unfolding narrative is grouped in four different parts, visualized through black arrows (bottom of the graph). Last, a dotted line at the top of the graph adds a further layer of mobility and spatiality to the data, as it indicates Aban's movement from his home in Harehills to his children's school in Armley. The 'X' marks the moment at which engine noises can be heard in the background of a voice recording that Aban sends me via WhatsApp.
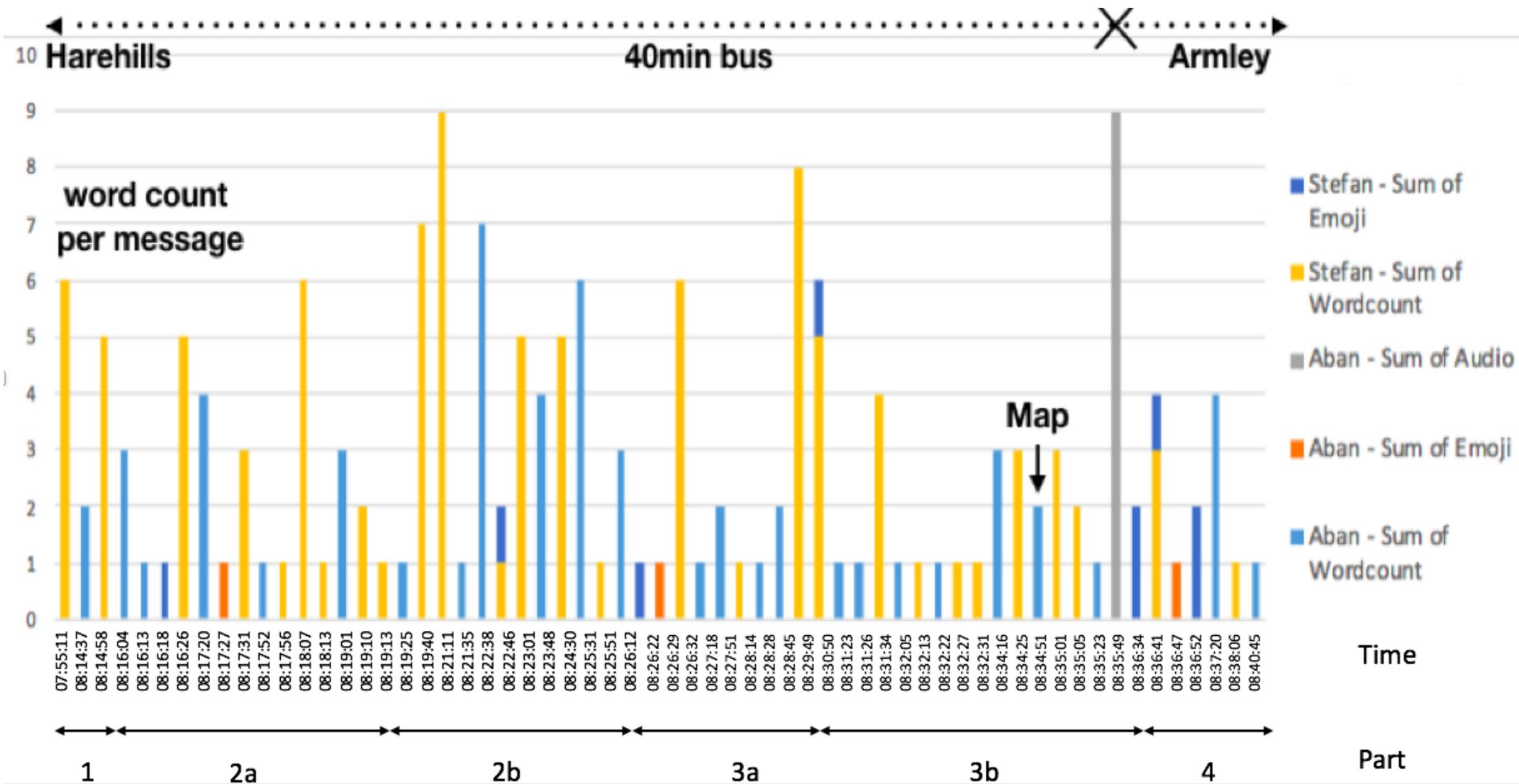
Graph 1: Visualization Aban Bus, Data Extract 5.3

As the timestamps and the 'word count per message' indicate, the quantity of interaction intensifies at various moments throughout the data extract (e.g. in part 2b), but also fragmentises and comes to a standstill (e.g. in part 1, after 07:55:11). Reasons for this fluctuation in interactional pace are manifold and can be further explained when we draw on secondary data; the WhatsApp chat protocol shows that my initial message (sent at 07:55:11am) was read by Aban at 08:13am (blue tick). This lets us assume that until 08:13am, Aban hadn't seen the message on his phone. Here, fieldnotes from my ethnography offer further insights into Aban's biography and spatio-urban movements. As mentioned earlier, Aban chaperones his children to school every morning by bus, from his home in Harehills to a primary school in Armley. The following extract from my fieldnotes (02.02.17) below gives account of this.

Fieldnotes: Syrian Kitchen, February 2017
[…] I start a conversation with Aban. He looks tired and tells me that he gets up at 6am every morning, to bring some of his children from Harehills (where they live) to a school in Armley. I wonder, if it is the same school that some of Mamoud's children go to. […]

The fieldnotes yield important details concerning Aban's daily spatio-urban movements. As outlined in Chapter 4.1.1, Harehills and Armley are two neighbourhoods on opposite sides of Leeds, approximately four miles apart, a distance which takes at least 40 minutes to cover by bus. During this commute, Aban and his children most likely have to change buses once (on the Headrow in Leeds city centre). The fieldnotes above state that Aban gets up at 6am to get ready for this trip. As primary schools in Armley and elsewhere in Leeds start their lessons around 8:45am (Jefferies, 2018), we can assume that a significant part of this WhatsApp episode took place on a bus, or on the walk from a bus station to a school.

This is an important realization as Aban's immediate surroundings and environment seem to affect the availability, overall engagement and response time of his communicative practices. This again means that smartphones not only affect and reimagine 'traditional' timescales (Lemke, 2000) of communicative mobile practices (i.e. the changing pace of interaction), but

also that smartphone-mediated communication is sensitive to interlocutors' changing timespace and mobility. I return to this point later, when we explore Aban's modal choices of semiosis; as Mills (2016:91) points out, "[t]here is a growing recognition that the spatial dimension of literacy, including the flows, networks and connections between literacy practices that circulate in society, are worthy of more serious attention in literacy research, including at the local level."

(2) Space

The people present in the space, the modes of conversation and time of day affect the diversity of language use, register and repertoire.

Pennycook and Otsuji (2015:51)

As the interaction between Aban and me unfolds, it becomes evident that unlike myself, located on campus, Aban is in fact 'on the move'. Him being on a bus is confirmed as distinct engine noises can be heard in the background of a voice message that Aban sends me (marked with 'X' in the graph). This is crucial; Aban's quotidian mobile practices are embedded within a myriad of wider habitual and routinized socio-spatial practices (i.e. taking his children to school). This might seem trivial, yet it is important nonetheless and worth discussing further, as WhatsApp's affordances allow Aban to partake in spatially and temporally independent communicative practices.

The further we reconstruct Aban's smartphone practices on the bus, the more we realize how this data extract might bear resemblance with the daily smartphone-mediated practices of migrants and others living in urbanized spaces; Aban is a newcomer to Leeds, a densely populated city. Also, he is a father who brings his children to school every morning. Like many other newly arrived migrants, parents and Leeds residents, Aban relies on public transportation to circumnavigate the city. Pegrum (2014) asserts that we particularly draw on smartphones while we wait and during times that might otherwise 'be wasted'. As Pennycook and Otsuji (2015) have shown, public transportation are prolific spaces of smartphone-mediated, multilingual communication. Therefore, drawing on mobile technologies to negotiate

meetings with others, while using public transportation, will be a familiar practice to many. Yet, as Soukup (2012:227) reminds us, online and mobile practices have predominantly been studied in isolation from people's immediate environments and surroundings. He argues:

> In general, ethnographers have tended to isolate these cultures studying the virtual community as separate from the coffeehouse culture and examining the popular culture of commercial media as separate from the organizational culture. Yet, considering this increasingly representative example [Julie, a Starbucks customer, who listens to her iPod, while working on her laptop, checking her emails and taking a call on her mobile], it is apparent that these diverse, fragmented cultural practices and processes are seamlessly integrated into Julie's everyday life – Julie simultaneously experiences these divergent "cultures" as banal, routinized and ritualistic.

Similar to Julie, Aban's mobile communicative practices are 'seamlessly integrated' into his everyday life and are, without doubt, routinized. He is on a bus, chaperoning his children to their school, while communicating with me. Thus, WhatsApp provides crucial affordances, namely geographically and temporally independent, mobile communication. In this context, Mills' (2016:92f) notion of spatiality is a useful starting point, which she defines as

> […] the socio-material relations of space-time that are central to literacy practices, conceiving of spaces as more than storehouses of social action. The spatiality of communication includes the temporal dimension of flows and connections between literacy practices across social sites and geographies, and the spatial dimensions of texts themselves and their associated practices.

Mills recognises spacetime as central in the study of digital literacy practices, pointing out that literacy practices include a temporal and geographical dimension. This then leads us to questions vis-à-vis the relationship between mobility and meaning-making within smartphone-mediated mobile communication: what does Aban's mobility 'add' to this interaction? And would this interaction be any different if, like me, Aban would have remained stationary? In search of answers for these questions, I first revisit Goffman's (1964) concept of the 'social situation' and then triangulate this with the notion of the 'chronotope' (Bakhtin, 1981; Blommaert, 2018b).

First, Goffman (1964:133) makes the case that analyses of communicative events need to be aware of the immediate interactional environment or 'microecological orbit'. Here, Goffman (1964:134) distinguishes between the (a) physical setting and (b) a situational "social occasion"; whereas the former is concerned with the place of encounter, the latter draws attention to the appropriate and normative (communicative) behaviour, or what Tannen (1979) and Blommaert (2018b) refer to as 'scripts', within these physical settings. Taken together, they describe 'the social situation'. Applied to our example then, the locus of this social situation would be set in a moving bus in Leeds, on a Tuesday morning, driving from Harehills to Armley. The social occasion on the other hand might entail that the bus driver asks new passengers for tickets, whereas the bus passengers (children going to school, adults going to work, parents chaperoning their children etc.) sleep, read, listen to music, talk to each other and interact with their smartphones.

Second, I want to revisit the notion of the 'chronotope'; as introduced in Chapter 2.5, Bakhtin's (1981) notion of the chronotope describes the interconnectedness of time and space in historical discourse (e.g. in historic novels). Subsequently, chronontopic analyses have been adapted to various contexts within the study of language in society. Blommaert (2018b:6) argues that "[e]veryday social life can be seen, from this perspective, as a sequence of such chronotopically defined situations through which we continuously move, adapting and adjusting in the process our identities and modes of conduct in interaction with others."

Triangulating the 'social situation' of this data extract then with 'chronotopic' viewpoints, provides us with novel spatio-analytical perspectives; first, as the bus is moving and entering new spaces while leaving old ones behind, we come to realize that each moment on Aban's commute is unique, offering unique meaning-making potentials. In Goffman's terms, Aban's social situation differs depending on whether the bus is stopping at a junction, about to reach his stop and so on. Second, this means that we are in need of fine-grained spatio-temporal analyses; from personal experience, we know that we behave differently, depending on whether we are getting on, riding, or exiting the bus and other means of public transportation. Therefore, as the social occasion for

a passenger changes during a bus ride, so does the potential to use smartphones.

Researching the multilingual practices of an Australian construction site, Pennycook and Otsuji (2015: 50) describe how the

> [linguistic] resources change with the mobility and rhythms of the space (the time of day, the day's work schedule, the arrival of equipment and materials), objects (mobile phones, the food they eat), material arrangements (the space set aside for lunch breaks, the state of construction work, the location of the site) and people (who is in the space).

Pennycook's and Otsuji's description of a construction site, with its changing space, time and objects, shares similarities with Data Extract 5.3. The construction site is not a static or monolithic space. Rather, it undergoes constant change and transformation. This is where the notion of the chronotope is helpful; rather than seeing 'the bus ride' as consistent and one dimensional, we should perceive Aban's journey as a constantly changing "mobile context" (Blommaert, 2017) that affects the meaning-making potential of his smartphone. Hence, foregrounding Aban's ability to draw on his digital literacy repertoire during different stages of the bus ride, brings us closer to an understanding of quotidian mobile communication.

As previously pointed out in Chapter 2.5, Pennycook and Otsuji (2015) and Pennycook (2017) use the term assemblage to conceptualize particular moments in spacetime. Although, assemblage shares similarities with chronotopic understandings, which I apply in the analyses that follow, Pennycook's term emphasises multimodal, transmodal (e.g. smell) and non-human actors and thus gives it more of a focus on the 'everythingness'. However, in this study's context of smartphone-mediated literacy practices, I first and foremost develop a concern for space and time, which chronotopes foreground more clearly.

In the following, I further investigate, how Aban makes use of various semiotic resources.

(3) Written Text

It is helpful to look at the narrative of the data extract in more detail; though there are surely numerous legitimate ways of organizing the content in this transcript, the following four-part structure seems most fitting for the purpose of my analysis:

1. Opening (lines 1-6)
2. Aban's routine (lines 7-31)
   a. Aban's day (lines 7-19)
   b. Aban's week (lines 20-32)
3. Meeting up (lines 33-60)
   a. The proposition (lines 39-42)
   b. Negotiating time and place (lines 43-60)
4. Closing (lines 61-64)

The bulk of the interaction throughout these four parts is negotiated via written text. All this is exclusively done in English. Tagg (2015:21) points out that the use of English in online communication is "shaped in part by each participant's level of comfort" with the English language, as well as other languages. Yet, in this case, Aban's exclusive use of English can primarily be explained with my inability to hold a conversation in Arabic, thus making English the only shared language. Aban recognizes and fluidly responds to standard conventions (e.g. greetings and questions) and integrates interpersonal elements into his writing. He appropriately replies to greetings (line 2), uses markers of politeness (line 5,18) and confidently answers questions (line 4,8). Our written interaction is fairly informal, pragmatic (Aban) and expressive (myself). Concerning his written language production, there are several examples, such as *A'm* (line 4) or *An trey 1* (line 15), which would suggest that Aban's writing attempts to represent the sounds of spoken English, a common phenomenon of mobile messaging (Tagg, 2012). On the other hand, it can be argued that he is partially trying (e.g. *A'm*, line 4) to reproduce accurate standard written English.

However, other examples, such as the various respellings of the word *college* (*colig* in line 8, *college* in line 23) indicate that Aban draws on a range of spellings, a feature, which is typical for mobile communicative practices (Tagg, 2012). Important here is that Aban's partly informal writing practices are clearly intelligible and do not hinder the interaction. Still, there is an occurrence of misinterpretation; in line 33, I ask him about his weekend plans. His answer (*Monday and Saturday* – lines 34-35) could be seen as an account of his days off college. Although much more can be said about Aban's English writing practices, I want to now focus on Aban's other modes of semiosis.

(4) Emoji

Aban draws on emoji[4] on three different occasions (☺ line 9, ☺ line 32 and 👍 line 60) throughout our interaction. Tagg (2015:25) describes how 'stickers' in the instant messaging app *Viber* are "both used by themselves to convey a message and alongside other semiotic modes, chiefly language, and can be used to fulfil a range of functions: to add an element of fun, convey emotion, or make a point […]." Although this data sample is neither concerned with 'stickers' nor *Viber*, there is some overlap; Aban's use of emoji could be broadly described in the two following ways: first, Aban uses emoji to support and amplify already verbalized utterances (e.g. line 32).

Also, emoji are used to produce meaning independently. However, the examples seem to not clearly fall into one category or the other, as they share elements of both distinctions; the 👍 emoji in line 60 for example, could be interpreted as an independent approval of my prior utterance (line 59), or it might be understood as part of the wider meaning-making process that is at play. Tagg (2015:27f) concludes that emoji appear to do much interpersonal work. She argues that "their meaning, in each case, is dependent on the surrounding text and on the participants' shared knowledge and background […] and thus they tend to heighten intimacy and strengthen interpersonal

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[4] The original WhatsApp data shows colourful emoji. Yet, in the WhatsApp transcriptions, these emoji are displayed as two black and white emoji, which look slightly different to the original data.

bonds." This again seems to concur with Aban's and the researcher's use of emoji.

(5) Spatio-visual Information

So far, I have referred to Mills' concept of spatiality and Bakhtin's chronotope and have pointed out the significance of Aban's changing geographical location during our online interaction. Yet, not only Aban's mobility vis-à-vis his communicative online practices is noteworthy, but also, it is tenable to explore, how spatial and spatio-visual information is displayed and disseminated via WhatsApp. This becomes evident, as Aban invites me to his house, while we negotiate a time and place for our meeting. In line 51, Aban sends me a link of his full address as a text message, which, if clicked, shows the exact location of his home in *Apple Maps* (see screenshot below).

This screenshot was taken from *Apple Maps*. The map, which appears when the link of his address is clicked, shows the location of Aban's house (red pin) in the wider Leeds area.
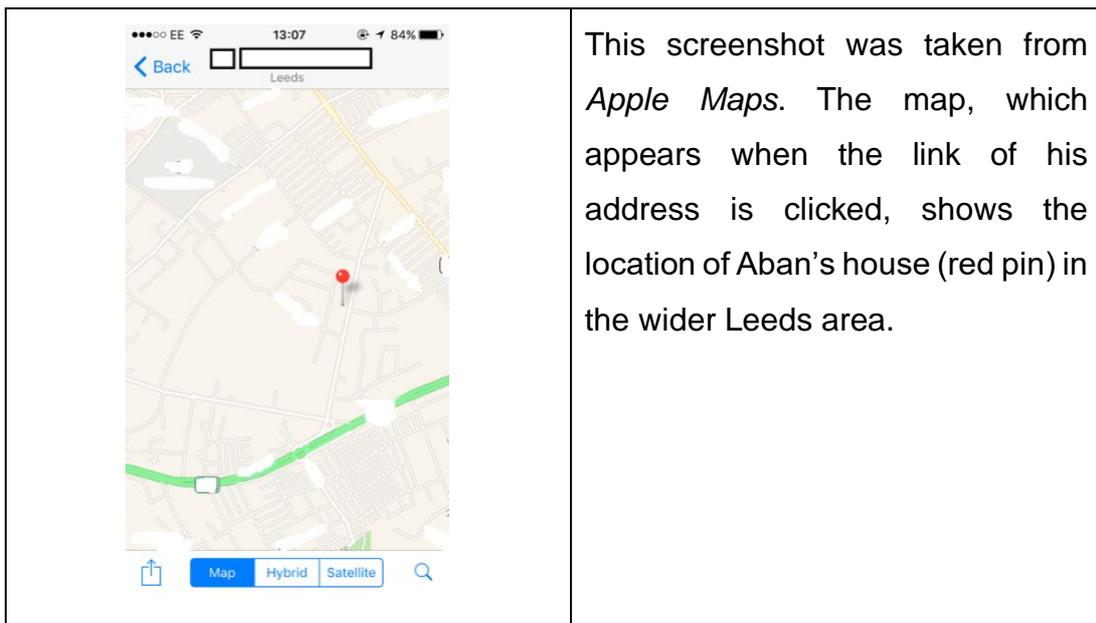
However, it is unclear, whether Aban sent me this spatio-visual information of his immediate home and neighbourhood intentionally; WhatsApp automatically provides hyperlinks to mapping apps such as *Apple Maps*, if spatial information (e.g. addresses) appear in written text. Although it remains somewhat speculative if Aban included this spatial visualization of his home address intentionally or unintentionally, we can nonetheless project and further

assume from this that an accomplished WhatsApp user like Aban has come in contact with these spatio-visualizations before. Mills (2016) argues that spatial approaches have the potential to uncover complex relations between people, places and literacies as social practices. This notion seems fitting; if we accept these spatio-visual practices as part of Aban's wider quotidian digital literacy practices, we gain further insights into the overall role and potential of mobile technologies and instant messaging services like WhatsApp. In this sense, WhatsApp allows the integration and visualization of spatial information, such as addresses and landmarks, into interlocutors' ongoing online interactions. This, so I argue, has significant currency and potential, especially to new residents like Aban, who are constantly expanding their geographical and spatial knowledge of their new habitat.

(f) Audio Message

As mentioned earlier, I have structured the interaction between Aban and myself in four parts. Whereas parts 1 (Opening) and 4 (Closing) primarily function as frames for our online dialogue, in parts 2 (Aban's routine) and 3 (Meeting up) the bulk of the written interaction takes place. Here, I like to focus on part 3b (lines 43-60) in some more detail. As we negotiate a potential meeting between us, Aban takes an active role in setting up and finalizing our meeting. He chooses the time of day (line 44) and location (line 49) of our rendezvous. Thus, the upcoming meeting is geographically bound, and the date of the meeting has been established.

Only the exact time of our meeting still needs to be negotiated. Hence, in line 53, I ask Aban at what time he wants to meet. His reply is worth a detailed analysis; the interaction in part 3b is relatively fluid, with the occasional pause (e.g. between lines 48-49). Aban replies to my time-related question in less than 45 seconds (lines 55-57). However, his reply is not communicated via another written text, but is instead a 13-second-long audio recording of him speaking. On first glance, it seems both surprising and extraordinary, as Aban has so far exclusively used written text and the occasional emoji to convey meaning (assuming that the use of the spatio-visual feature was unintentional). Thus, the obvious question arises: Why does Aban answer my

question via voice message and not through already established modes of communication?

There is little research on the function or role of audio recording features in mobile messaging services that can be consulted. Still, there are several observations that can be made from the data; first, taking the response time of the audio message and the length of the recording itself into consideration, we can further make the case that Aban is an established and experienced user and consumer of these audio features; Aban knows how to record and disseminate audio files. Hence, we can rule out that he composed this message accidently. Second, the audio recording itself (You coming today, mhh house, after, after, after 5pm – lines 55-57) bears crucial information concerning our meeting. However, there seems to be no obvious reason, why he couldn't have communicated this message as a text. Aban clearly articulates this utterance and he does not seem rushed or in a hurry. Interesting are the multiple repetitions of the word *after*. My hypothesis is that Aban is still contemplating a suitable time to meet while he records this message, hence he uses the word *after* several times in a transitional way, until he has thought of a suitable time (5pm). Yet, again, Aban could have given himself more time to think of a suitable time through asynchronous texting, which offers a longer response time compared to spoken interaction.

Thus, Aban's rationale for sending this audio message still remains somewhat unclear. It can be assumed that Aban prefers oral to written interaction. This is to some degree plausible, as other participants have voiced this during my ethnography (e.g. Mamoud). Yet, Aban could have called me at any time, or he could have recorded more audio files of himself throughout our long WhatsApp interaction. Therefore, I want to return to a chronotopic point of view.

Soukup (2012) and Tagg (2015) have argued that online and mobile communicative practices are embedded in wider social practices. Soukup reminded us that it is important to study digital practices holistically. As Aban is on a bus, I argue that his use of audio features can be best explained by a change in chronotope. Texting is often a preferred modus operandi while being on public transportation; as crowded spaces, such as buses or trains provide

little privacy, texting (opposed to calling) offers a fairly suitable, non-verbal alternative. Interlocutors can communicate in relative privacy and comfort, without exposing themselves to others. However, texting also has drawbacks, as checking, reading and composing written messages requires much manual and cognitive attention. Hence, texting is rather unsuitable while walking, cycling or driving, but also not recommended while holding a child's hand or walking a dog, etcetera. It could be argued that Aban deliberately shifts his previously established mode of semiosis from written to (recorded) spoken interaction, as written language is no longer compatible with his immediate surroundings. Mills (2016:88) argues that "[c]ommunication is increasingly multimodal as multimedia technologies, screen-based interfaces and electronic networks proliferate." This seems to very much apply to Aban's daily communicative practices; Aban might have reached his destination, left the bus with his children, or the social context demanded more attention from him. Although this will remain speculative to some extent, it seems plausible that interlocutors reassess their preferred modes of communicative practices and remain flexible, depending on the immediate social context they find themselves in.

5.3 Concluding Remarks

The three data extracts of this chapter explored how smartphones are utilized as vehicles of transnational, translocal and local spatio-temporal and translingual movements; for Rojan, Mamoud and Aban, smartphones and mobile internet become indispensable, to enable and facilitate their movements across novel spaces of legality (5.2.1), the multilingual neighbourhood (5.2.2) and multimodal, trans-spatial communication (5.2.3).

The first data extract (5.2.1) indicates how access to smartphones reinstates lost agency to undocumented migrants, as they make undocumented border crossings arranged by traffickers. In a wider sense, 5.2.1 shows that for migrants tangled up in border crossings, smartphones contribute to a perceived sense of safety, ontological security (Witteborn, 2015) and agency.

Data Extract 5.2.2 on the other hand highlighted how Mamoud gains access to the English language dominant Leeds public transportation system, with the help of Google Maps (GM), as he plans a bus journey from his house to Leeds station. 5.2.2 thus shows, how through mobile translanguaging, English spaces become accessible to migrant language learners.

Last, Data Extract 5.2.3 gives evidence to how the multimodal and transmodal WhatsApp messenger app (WA) is utilized by Aban to arrange a meet-up while he is on a Leeds bus, chaperoning his children to school. Moreover, this data extract offers novel insights into how adult English language learners strategize in selecting different modes on WA, such as recorded speech or the sharing of GPS data, to maintain informal smartphone-mediated conversations and disseminate meaning.

Collectively, the three data extracts of Chapter 5 offer insights into contemporary migrant mobile literacy practices, particularly through a lens of mobility; Rojan's literacy practices, which take place while in the back of a lorry, point towards the strong interconnection between mobile literacies and perceived ontological security (Giddens, 1990). His monitoring of GPS data, whilst on a lorry towards an unknown location, bring to light how migrant literacy practices often reflect the precarious situations they find themselves in.

Mamoud's example on the other hand shows how smartphones are used to mediate multilingual literacy practices in English dominant spaces. His use of Google Maps draws attention to adult language and literacy learners' strategies to incorporate mobile navigation applications into their digital literacy repertoires (Tagg and Asprey, 2017).

Last, the multimodal literacies of Data Extract 3, concerned with Aban's use of WhatsApp while on a bus, foreground the importance of mobile contexts (Blommaert, 2017) vis-à-vis interlocutors' semiotic potentials. Furthermore, this data extract points towards the inherently multimodal nature of contemporary communicative practices. Thus, Chapter 5 sheds light on everyday mobile literacy practices and the central parts they play in the instigation and facilitation of migrant settlement trajectories.

In the chapter that follows, I explore notions of mobility and urban movements from a different point of view, as my participants develop strategies to obtain a UK driving license. Here, the analyses point towards the importance of mobile technologies to support notions of settlement, such as becoming an eligible driver.

Chapter 6: Driving (Analysis II)

6.1 Chapter Overview

Driving, the second analytical chapter, investigates how my participants Rojan, Aban and Mamoud prepare for the theoretical part of the UK driving test through mobile technologies, in hope to regain their right to drive, now they are in a new country. Similar to the preceding analytical chapter, the data extracts that comprise Chapter 6 investigate themes of (loss of) mobility and space within this context of obtaining a UK driving license.

This thesis chapter is organized as follows; first, Section 6.2 provides a rationale for the analysis of data concerning this driving license theme; I develop the notion that newly arrived migrants to the UK find themselves in unprecedented and disadvantageous situations, in which their driving licenses from their respective home countries have nullified. This loss of capital and mobility (Blommaert, 2005) has dire consequences, as it plays havoc with people's professional and private lives.

Here, my participants' newfound status quo of inhibited mobility and lost capital (Bourdieu, 1986; Blommaert, 2005) serves as the conceptual starting point of the analyses comprised in this thesis chapter: as newcomers are stripped of their right to drive a vehicle, they seek to reinstate what has been lost on the way. The data extracts that follow show that to accomplish this, my participants habitually draw on their smartphones, often in creative and ingenious ways. Yet, how exactly do my participants' use of mobile technologies come into play within this driving context?

A two-part analysis, located in Sections 6.3 and 6.4 aims to shed light on how Rojan, Aban and Mamoud encompass and navigate mobile technologies to obtain a UK driving license. More specifically, part one (6.3) investigates Rojan's trajectory of becoming an eligible driver in Britain through exclusive and autonomous smartphone-mediated online study. Rojan draws on the app *iTheory* to study for the theoretical part of the UK driving test. Here, I analyse both interactional and visual data to scrutinize Rojan's trajectory further.

Section 6.4 on the other hand explores an informal and multilingual, community-based approach to prepare for the theory test. In this example, Mamoud and Aban join ad-hoc, bilingual test preparation classes, led and advertised by Saad on the aforementioned Syrian Community of Leeds Facebook Group (SCOLFBG) (c.f. Chapter 4.6). I draw on ethnographic, interactional and visual data to explore the interrelation between this particular Facebook group and informal, Leeds-based preparation classes. Finally, in Section 6.5, I summarize this chapter's key findings. The table below holds an overview of the discussed data extracts in this thesis chapter.

Part	Data Extract	Actors, Platforms, Devices	Short Description	Analytical Concern
Part 1	1	Rojan – *Recorded audio conversation*	Rojan describes his use of *iTheory* and *Google Translate* to study for the theoretical part of the UK driving test.	Rojan, as a smartphone-dependent user and reappropriation of his smartphone practices
	2	Rojan – Screen recording of *iTheory* on Rojan's smartphone	Rojan uses *iTheory* to study for the theoretical part of the driving test.	Multimodal, episode-by-episode analysis of *iTheory* in use, with a focus on the app's potential as an informal and mobile learning resource
Part 2	3	Saad and Mamoud – Screenshots, SCOLFBG	Four screenshots by Saad on the SCOLFBG which advertise informal, bilingual theory test preparation classes.	A spatial and temporal analysis of meaning-making trajectories (Kell, 2009) on the SCOLFBG
	4	Mamoud (and Aban) – recorded audio conversation	Mamoud describes his rationale for attending the advertised classes outlined in Data Extract 3	The SCOLFBG as an ethnically and linguistically homogenous network (Tagg, 2015)
	5	Mamoud – informal conversation, fieldnotes	Mamoud describes his conflict with Saad and his subsequent boycott of the SCOLFBG and related events	Traversing between spaces (Blommaert et al., 2005) and hierarchical flaws in bottom-up community efforts

Table 8: Overview Data Extracts Chapter 6

Similar to Chapter 5, the data presented in this analytical chapter is organized in the following way; firstly, I provide necessary contextual information (a – context), often drawing on and incorporating fieldnotes from my ethnographic research. Next, I present the chosen data extracts, either as interview transcriptions, multimodal transcriptions, fieldnotes, or visual data (e.g. screen shots) (b – data extract). Last, I produce analyses for each one (c – analysis) with one or multiple focal points.

6.2 Chapter Rationale

Any work he ask you, "you have a car?" I tell him no!

(Mamoud, March 2017)

As the above quote by Mamoud hints, the right to drive a vehicle holds significant implications for most newcomers to the UK; on the one hand, obvious personal advantages concerning mobility and autonomy, but also, as in Mamoud's case, economic advantages vis-à-vis finding and maintaining employment (Correa-Velez et al., 2013), correlate with the warrant to drive. Then again, a UK driving license itself constitutes as proof of officialdom and legitimacy (Khan, 2013; Vollmer, 2019); the license acts as an official document, issued by a high-status institution.

However, not all newcomers who hold driving qualifications from their respective home countries are seamlessly granted the right to drive in the UK. Different rules apply to different individuals; whereas licenses from certain high-status countries (e.g. the EU and other 'designated' countries) are given little cause of objection, license holders from low-status countries, such as many Middle Eastern or African states, are obligated to retake theoretical and practical driving tests upon their arrival to the UK (GOV.UK, 2019).

Especially for new arrivals from non-dominant countries, reinstating their lost legitimacy to drive is high priority. Yet, often, these are time-consuming and complex processes; this certainly applies to Rojan, Mamoud and Aban, who, as 'recognized refugees' from Syria, are allowed to retake theoretical and practical driving exams in the UK. Throughout data collection of my fieldwork, my participants' ambitions and efforts to reinstate their right to drive surfaced and emerged repeatedly, in a variety of ways, often in conjunction with various mobile and communicative practices. Therefore, investigating this 'driving' theme in more detail, particularly vis-à-vis the mobile literacy practices displayed by my key participants, is a tenable and promising analytical point of focus, offering a further lens on the role of mobile technologies and particularly smartphones for new arrivals within daily life contexts.

6.3 Part 1: Autonomous App-Mediated Study

As outlined in the initial chapter overview, this first analytical section investigates Rojan's efforts to study for the theoretical part of the UK driving license test through informal and exclusive smartphone-mediated study. Similar to Mamoud's motivation for driving, expressed at the beginning of this Chapter rationale, (*Any work he ask you, "you have a car?" I tell him no!*), Rojan's aspirations for obtaining a UK driving license are strongly shaped by his hope of finding paid work in his new environment. The brief extract from my fieldnotes below illuminates this further.

Work and Driving (20/04/2017)

R: Rojan, S: Stefan,

S: Do you want to work with a car? Do you want to drive for a job?

R: Look, it's good for me, because I can work like delivery. (…) It's good. I can put, in my city, I have five minutes.

In fact, all participants of this research project perceive the UK driving license as an economic gatekeeper, particularly vis-à-vis the growing gig-economy sector, which can act as a stepping stone into employment for marginalized groups, including refugees (De Stefano, 2016); this again is unsurprising, as for many newcomers, driving people (e.g. Uber) or goods (e.g. Amazon) from one place to another are plausible first employment opportunities (Ghosh, 2017).

Though Rojan is eager to drive again, his trajectory from wanting a driving license, to taking, and ultimately passing theoretical and practical tests, is time-consuming and difficult; as UK driving tests must be taken in English, Welsh, or British Sign Language (GOV.UK, 2019), many test takers, particularly those who are also English language learners, turn to online resources, to prepare for the test and to negotiate and broker between languages. For a growing number, including Rojan, the smartphone acts as the default device to access these resources. Data Extracts 1 and 2 highlight this further.

6.3.1 Data Extract 1: Talking about iTheory

[A]ll the time you have phone, it's with you. [...]. It's very close to you. Where you go.

(Rojan, Data Extract 1, line 26f)

(a) Context

Data Extract 1 is part of a longer recorded conversation (February 2017) between Rojan and me, recorded at the aforementioned *Syrian Kitchen*. This interaction takes place shortly before Rojan is taking the theoretical driving test, which he passes on first attempt. Among other things, we talk about his use of the *iTheory* app, a monolingual, English only, mobile driving test preparation application (iTheory, 2019).

The boundaries, i.e. the beginning and end of this recorded conversation were chosen based on its intended analytical focus; how does Rojan draw on his smartphone to prepare for the theoretical part of the driving test? Similar to previous interactional data, this data extract has been transcribed verbatim.

(b) Data Extract 1: Interview with Rojan about iTheory

Transcription codes: R: Rojan, S: Stefan

```
1   S-So when are you taking the <<driving>> test. Maybe next week?

2   R-Maybe.

3   S-Have you studied only on your phone?
4   R-Yeah yeah, just on my phone.

5   S-Yeah?

6   R-Yes, I go on internet, I download the app <<iTheory>> for theory
7   test.

8   S-Yeah.

9   R-Read the questions.

10  S-Is it free?
11  R-Yeah, they have, yeah, it's free. Yeah and mhh I do that. It's OK,
12  because my phone all time is with you.

13  S-Yeah.

14  R-You can use <<it>>

15  S-You have it on you all the time?

16  R-All the time. Yeah, before you sleep, in bed, outside.

17  S-<<LAUGHS>>

18  R-<<Laughs>> in the bus.

19  S-Is it the same questions on your app?

20  R-Yeah.

21  S-Is it the same questions on your phone and in the test?

22  R-Yeah. It's the same. You can do on the computer or telephone.

23  S-Same thing.

24  R-But on telephone, is very mhh easy.

25  S-Because, why?

26  R-Not easy, mhh it's very useful. Because all the time you have
27  phone. It's with you.

28  S-Yeah.

29  R-It's very close to you. Where you go.

30  S-How much time have you practised?

31  R-Mhh I practised mhh I not very hard, about two months. A little
32  bit.

33  S-Every day a little bit?

34  R-Not every day. Sometimes.

35  S-Yeah. Do you

36  R-But I do, it's very useful. I do translations, in my phone,

37  S-Really?

38  R-In my phone. Yeah

39  S-So how do you do that?
```

40   R-If some word I don't know, I go to translation.

41   S-Which translation <<services>> do you use? Google Translate or?

42   R-Yeah. Translation!

43   S-Show me! <<Rojan opens the Google Translate app on his phone>>

44   R-This one.

45   S-Ah yeah, Google Translate.

46   R-I go Google Translate and mhh

47   S-You put in "exhaust" or

48   R-And this, when I started study this theory test, I have a lot of
49   words, some words I don't know. This is practice for me.

50   S-So you learn new words?

51   R-Yeah, I learn new words.

52   S-It's a very different language isn't it? It's all about the car
53   and about the road.

54   R-It's useful for me yeah.

55   S-That's good yeah.

56   R-It's nice.

(c) Analysis

The prime analytical concern in what follows lies in obtaining an in-depth understanding of Rojan's smartphone practices in this driving test preparation context. Therefore, I focus my analyses concerning Data Extract 1 on the following three aspects; first, I draw attention to Rojan's 'smartphone dependent' (Mossberger et al., 2016) mobile technology use. Second, I interweave the notion of reappropriation (Kaufmann, 2018) into this analysis. Last, building on the concept of reappropriation, I investigate Rojan's fluid online and mobile translanguaging practices displayed in Data Extract 1.

1.Smartphone-dependent usage

In line 4 ("Yeah yeah, just on my phone"), Rojan mentions that he exclusively uses his phone to study for the theoretical part of the driving test. He neither uses paper copies of test study guides, nor does he consult online resources through a desktop computer at home or elsewhere. Instead, Rojan's sole study medium is iTheory (line 4), a smartphone app that simulates questions from the theoretical driving test (iTheory, 2019). At first glance, this may seem trivial. Thus, why does Rojan's choice of internet access to study for a test matter to this analysis?

Firstly, the smartphone practices that Rojan describes in lines 7-12 echo with a wider development in quotidian technology use, which again underscores the prolific shift from the stationary to the mobile device; Pegrum (2014:3) describes this shift from the 'desktop era' to the 'mobile era' fittingly; "i[n] the desktop era, the internet seemed like a separate place partitioned off from everyday life by monitor screens. Mobile devices, especially our multiplying smart devices, integrate the virtual and the real as we carry the net with us, entertaining and informing ourselves and sharing our thoughts and experiences while we navigate through our daily lives."

In Rojan's case, this repudiation of the home computer seems to suggest itself, particularly once we revisit his extraordinary journey to the UK, described in Chapter 5.2.1, and the role his smartphone played in it; only being able to take what he could carry, Rojan's smartphone has taken a very central position in his everyday life. This becomes more obvious at a later stage of this data

analysis (3. Translanguaging) in this chapter as well as the preceding one (Chapter 7).

Research conducted in the US by Mossberger et al (2016:2) shows that at least 10% of the US population are so called 'smartphone dependent users', i.e. individuals who exclusively access the internet through mobile devices. Importantly, this pull towards exclusive mobile online access can be witnessed on a global scale and is bound to intensify further over the next years; De Souza, Silva and Sheller (2015:4) describe this development most fittingly, as they point out that we "[…] no longer enter the Internet – we carry it with us." The ever-increasing popularity of the mobile can partly be explained with the increase of more affordable, high-performing smartphones and tablet devices on the one hand, and the abundance of freely accessible, well designed and user-friendly apps on the other.

Further, as the costs of mobile data have noticeably decreased in recent years, and free Wi-Fi infrastructure continues to improve and expand, particularly in urban areas, more and more smartphone users consider opting out of home broadband access in favour of more affordable and flexible smartphone data plans. This applies to Rojan, who has a large 20GB monthly data plan, but no reliable broadband access.

However, to understand the smartphone practices discussed in Data Extract 1 on a deeper level, it is worthwhile to interweave the notion of reappropriation into this analysis, which was first introduced by Thompson (1995) and later applied by Kaufmann (2018) onto a migration context.

2. Reappropriation

As lines 26-27 indicate ("[A]ll the time you have phone, it's with you."), for Rojan, his smartphone is an essential and indispensable everyday companion. In the following, I draw on the notion of reappropriation (Kaufmann, 2018), to explore this further.

The prolific and often exclusive usage of mobile technologies and particularly of smartphones by migrant populations is well documented in current ethnographic and sociolinguistic literature (e.g. Leurs, 2014; Loveluck, 2015; Witteborn, 2015; Bradley et al., 2017). As summarized in Chapter 2, current

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understandings of mobile technologies as 'social glue' (Vertovec, 2004) and keepers or facilitators of translocal and transnational ties (Androutsopoulos and Juffermans, 2014) are widely disseminated; more than that, as newcomers navigate the novel and the unknown, mobile technologies supply much needed 'problem-solving tools' (Kaufmann, 2018).

This certainly seems to be the case for Rojan; his phone stays close to him, at all times. Data Extract 1 highlights this again (e.g. line 12) and again (e.g. line 16). As a newly arrived "smartphone dependent" user, Rojan heavily draws on his phone to navigate and facilitate his everyday life and the challenges that arise. This again warrants for Rojan's intensive smartphone usage, which surfaces in this data extract (e.g. lines 15f,18) but is also noticeable in other data extracts (e.g. Chapter 5.2.1). Yet, conceptualizing Rojan's smartphone practices primarily in terms of quantity and intensity of use, i.e. the hours he spends on his phone each day, does not fully do justice to the synthesis of smartphone-mediated practices into his everyday life. For that reason, the concept of reappropriation (Kaufmann, 2018) is of help, as it yields a more refined analytical viewpoint.

Kaufmann (2018) argues that especially for newly arrived people, physical locality vis-à-vis their smartphone practices is crucial, as newcomers' technological surroundings or "information landscapes" (Lloyd et al., 2013:122) distinctively change as people traverse between countries, migrate and settle in a new place. In other words, the capacity and potential with which we access and interweave our smartphones into daily life tremendously depends on where we are, which internet infrastructure is available to us, which online services are of reach, restricted or banned, etcetera.

Kaufmann (2018:887) for instance points out that for her participants, newly arrived Syrian refugees to Vienna, "web services like Google Maps were not available" in their home country. This again means that many newcomers have to engage in locality-specific re-appropriation processes concerning their routinized smartphone practices, as a change in physical surrounding necessitates a re-appropriation of smartphone use (Kaufmann, 2018). Yet, how is the notion of re-appropriation applicable to Rojan's smartphone practices displayed in Data Extract 1?

Rojan's selection procedure to use iTheory amongst a plethora of other theory test preparation apps, as well as the consequent incorporation of Google Translate (lines 42-51) into his mobile and autonomous study, can be conceptualized from a re-appropriation lens. As discussed in Chapter 6.2, Rojan's arrival to the UK resulted in the invalidation of his Syrian driving license, i.e. in a severe loss of capital (Blommaert, 2005). We have seen in earlier examples that as a prolific "smartphone-dependent" user (Mossberger et al., 2016), Rojan habitually consults his phone to resolve challenges he faces in daily life, such as the voidance of his driving license.

Here, Rojan's relocation from Afrin to Leeds affected the smartphone application landscape accessible and available to him; for instance, the availability of transportation services (e.g. *Uber*, *Google Maps*) or online dating applications (e.g. *Tinder*, *Grindr*) varies significantly between Syria and the UK (Kaufmann, 2018). Therefore, Rojan's new geographical home necessitates a process of smartphone re-appropriation; Rojan needs to identify and select legitimate mobile applications relating to different aspects of his new life in Leeds, including smartphone applications concerning the UK driving test. In a wider sense, then, Data Extract 1 yields insights not only into the displayed mobile practices of preparing for the theory test but also adds to our understanding of how newcomers navigate new "information landscapes" (Lloyd et al., 2013) and engage with the notion of re-appropriation in the concrete example of preparing for a test. This matters, as driving theory tests are not global, homogenous entities, but are diverse, region-specific constructs, which often support underlying political agendas (Khan, 2013); the UK theory test aligns with a monolingual, one-nation-one-language ideology, which gives little room to the multilingual realities of today's test takers in the UK, a point I return to shortly.

More than that, there is a large number of apps and other online resources available for the UK market that claim to be relevant for driving test preparation. However, many of those primarily serve commercial interests (e.g. through in-pay features) or disseminate untrustworthy and outdated information. Therefore, Rojan must display criticality in regard to region specific online learning material selection; he points out that the app works on

the basis of the actual test (line 22). This again relates to issues of ESOL policy; ESOL classes are generally tailored to support students in their daily language and literacy encounters. However, as Cooke and Simpson (2008) point out, very often this is not the case; current ESOL pedagogy needs to support their students in developing strategies to manoeuvre online language and literacy resources, such as discussed in this data extract. This again would imply a more critical ESOL pedagogy, a point I revisit in more depth in Chapter 9.3.

3.Mobile Translanguaging

Furthermore, this re-appropriation process of choosing a suitable app to study for the driving test leads to Google Translate-afforded mobile translanguaging practices, which Rojan comments on further in lines 42-51. iTheory is a monolingual, English only application, which caters for English-speaking audiences. Therefore, the app excludes many migrant test takers, particularly those, who are also novice learners of English. As previously mentioned, iTheory aligns with the government's 'English only' policy, which obliges prospective UK drivers to take the theoretical part of the driving test in English, Welsh, or English Sign Language. Against the backdrop of this politicized English-dominated agenda, Rojan draws on his technological capital, i.e. the integration of GT, to create a tailored multilingual space, which allows independent and self-catered study. In a wider sense, this exclusive use of English as test-taking language resonates well with the notion of 'monolingual habitus' (Piller, 2016:32), which again describes the "ways in which institutions organize linguistic diversity". Moreover, this is a clear example of what Simpson (2019b:2) refers to as a "use of language tests as gatekeepers for citizenship and settlement."

Therefore, as smartphones are able to run different tasks concurrently, Rojan circumvents this monolingual barrier, by interweaving GT into his smartphone-mediated study; in lines 39-49, Rojan describes, how he simultaneously uses iTheory and GT; unknown words he comes across while studying with iTheory are translated in GT. Thus, Rojan harnesses GT, a translocal online resource, to fully utilize iTheory, a region specific, monolingual smartphone app. In this

sense then, Rojan's smartphone is a powerful tool, as it compensates for the app's monolingualism.

Last, Rojan's mobile phone practices seem to serve more than one purpose: on the one hand he consciously prepares for the upcoming theory test with iTheory and he does so exclusively through this app, channelling his focus on one resource. In lines 31-32, he points out that he did not study "hard". However, it can be argued that Rojan consistently (over a two-month period), systematically and independently interacted with this app. Though these interactions might be short, they are structured and intentional. On the other hand, by using iTheory in combination with GT, Rojan extends his English lexis and English literacy proficiency: "Yeah, I learn new words." (line 51)

6.3.2 Data Extract 2: Using iTheory

(a) Context

Data Extract 2 is a screen recording of Rojan's smartphone that was captured at the Syrian Kitchen in January 2017. The multimodal transcription below holds a 62 second video, which shows Rojan using iTheory.

(b) Data Extract 2: iTheory Transcript

E x	Time-stamp	Screen	Transcription R= Rojan, SV= Researcher		
		SC= Screenshot	Spoken	Movement	Smartphone
1	00:02 00:04 00:08 00:13 00:17 00:20 (SC)		R: Before (2), turn right, <<undistinguishable>>. R: <<quietly reading out to himself>> "Stop, apply the handbrake and then select a lower gear. Position your vehicle well to the left of the side road. Check that the central reservation is wide enough for your vehicle. Make sure that you leave enough room for a vehicle behind."	hand gesture with right hand moving towards the right following text on SP with his right index finger, while holding SP in his left hand	Driving app already opened on SP
2	00:25 (SC) 00:27			Touches SP Screen with right index finger. Touches SP screen	"Answer option 1" is chosen. "Submit" button is pressed.

3	00:28 (SC) 00:30		R: Ah! S: <<laughs>> R: No, this. Didn't tick that.	points at correct answer with right index finger.	Red 'Wrong' bar appears at the top of the screen and right answer is highlighted in red. The app gives an explanation for the right answer (blue box, bottom screen).
4	00:31 00:34 00:38 00:40 00:42 00:44 00:46 00:48 00:50 (SC) 00:52 00:53 00:55 00:57 00:58 01:00 01:02		S: Woah, that's difficult. R: Yeah. This is a (1) test, drive test (1). It's very S: The theory? R: Theory. S: The theory driving test, yeah? That's all in English? R: All English. S: Can you do it in a different language? R: No, just S: It must be in English? R: It must be in English. Just if you go to Ireland, S: Ireland, yeah R: you can S: Do it in your own language R: Arabic language S: Ah! So do a lot of people go to Ireland? R: Yeah for Arabic language. But mhh (1), I prefer English language S: Yeah? R: that is nice. S: Why? R: Cause, you learn	Touches SP for next question.	New question with four answer possibilities appears.
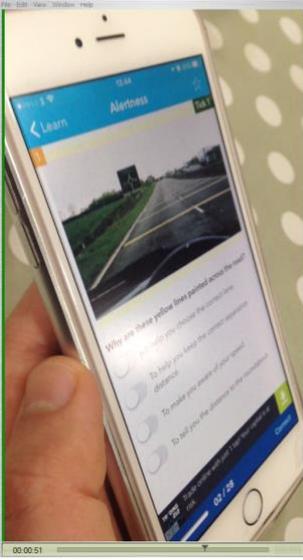
(c) Analysis

As previously mentioned, the analysis concerning Data Extract 2 is organized in two parts; whereas Part 1 develops a necessary descriptive layer of the four exchanges (Lemke, 2000) as they unfold, Part 2 explores the app's potential as an informal and mobile learning resource.

1. Exchange by Exchange

Exchange 1

Exchange 1 is a 24-second-long sequence and shows Rojan interacting with a multiple-choice question (*You're turning right onto a dual carriageway. What should you do before emerging?*). At the very beginning of the recording (00:02-00:04sec), Rojan first reads and then processes this question concerning 'Alertness' by uttering the words 'before' and 'turn right'. The two second pause between 'before' and 'turn' already indicates that Rojan is carefully absorbing this question; it could be argued that he is aware of the dense and often technical language, which is used within this register of driving test language. The fact that he only utters key words, which are significant in terms of understanding this question, rather than rephrasing the entire question, supports this notion.

Although the camera angle is focused on the smartphone screen, the recording still captures a subtle hand movement (00:04sec: right hand moving further towards the right), as Rojan utters the words 'turn right'. This further substantiates the notion that Rojan is (1) accessing the question through silent reading, then (2) processing it by reading out certain key words (00:02sec: 'before') and last (3) attaching meaning to it, through embodied practice (Tiwari, 2010); Tiwari (2010) suggests that we encounter our lifeworld through our bodies. In this sense, Rojan is drawing on non-linguistic modes (Kress, 2010), in this case movement of his right arm, to support semiotic work ('turn right').

Then, Rojan engages in a phase of screen reading; he reads out the four multiple choice answers that iTheory suggests for this particular question. He does this in a quiet voice, which is almost a whisper. Rojan does not read out the answer possibilities for or to me, but again makes use of the semiotic

resources (reading out quietly) that are available to him, in order to decipher and access the information, which the app confronts him with. Moreover, he follows the text he reads with his right index finger. Again, this suggests that he is engaging in embodied on-screen reading practices, by drawing on a range of semiotic resources.

Exchange 2

Exchange 2 is a much shorter, two second sequence. Rojan has now made up his mind and chooses answer option one. With his finger, he swipes a button, located in front of answer option one from the left to the right. Next, he 'submits' his answer, by pressing a button on the bottom right corner. Thus, it has taken Rojan 27 seconds to read a question, read potential answers, choose an answer and submit said answer. This shows that Rojan has spent almost half a minute, a significant amount of time, on one question, which again offers a point of reference concerning the level of intensity, with which Rojan engages in smartphone-mediated literacy practices through this app; Rojan is not just flicking through the questions, randomly ticking boxes and pressing buttons. Rather, he is focused and strategic.

Exchange 3

Exchange 3 again covers a short time span (three seconds) and provides the result to his selected answer; Rojan chose the wrong answer. He acknowledges this with lightness and humour (00:28sec: Ah!), giving the impression that this is not the first time that Rojan has chosen the wrong answer. This again gives further clues into how he interacts with this app; Rojan utilizes his right index finger to draw attention to the correct answer, while uttering the phrase (00:30sec: No, this. Didn't tick that.).

Rojan is clearly paying attention to the questions and is allowing himself time (27 seconds) to reflect. Yet, it seems as if he is used to getting answers wrong, which is unsurprising, given the high level of content knowledge and needed linguistic proficiency. His reaction to his 'failure' however implies that he is resilient and willing to try again, acknowledging the correct answer. Moreover, several things happen in Exchange 3, after Rojan selected his wrong answer; on the one hand, a red 'wrong' bar appears at the top of the screen and the

correct answer is highlighted. On the other hand, an explanation box highlighted in blue with additional text appears, which Rojan does not seem to pay attention to, as the next question appears soon after.

Exchange 4

In Exchange 4, a new question concerning the theme of 'Alertness' appears on the phone screen. This question shows a picture of a road, the actual question and three answer possibilities. However, the focus shifts from Rojan engaging with his smartphone to Rojan interacting with me. This is noticeable by the change in quantity of spoken interaction, but also by the lack of movement or smartphone activity.

This shift of focus is important; Rojan now fills in the gaps and explains to me what I have witnessed: he points out that this app shows theory test questions (00:34-38sec). In 00:44, I ask Rojan, if it is possible to use another language. Here, my question is meant to be focused on iTheory's monolingual layout. Yet, Rojan re-interprets my question, by pointing out that it is possible to take the test in a different language in (Northern) Ireland (00:50sec), rather than commenting on the language options within the app. Rojan's reinterpretation of my question offers interesting insights: he is aware of the restrictive policies concerning language use, both in driving tests and its preparation resources. Still, Rojan chooses to take the test in English (01:02min).

Moreover, he adds (01:00min) that a lot of people in similar positions to his choose to go to Northern Ireland instead, to take the test in Arabic rather than English. For many new arrivals, this 'Irish alternative' was a repeated point of discussion during my fieldwork; though migrant test takers in my research project have often pointed out the obvious advantages of going to Ireland to take the test in their home language, immanent drawbacks, such as the high costs of air travel and accommodation, as well as more underlying legal constraints, such as the restricted freedom of movement (e.g. for asylum seekers), have frequently prevented this option from being used.

2. iTheory: an informal, mobile learning resource?

Building on the initial descriptive-analytical layer concerning Data Extract 2, in what follows, I investigate iTheory's potential and efficacy as an informal and

mobile learning resource for Rojan's theory test preparation; here, I explore the following question: how does iTheory prepare Rojan for the theory test and how does it enable and facilitate smartphone-mediated independent study?

First, as exchanges 1-4 highlight, iTheory provides multiple choice questions and answer possibilities organized in different categories (e.g. "Alertness", Exchange 1), similar to those of the actual theory test; with over 900 questions and respective answers, (iTheory, 2019), Rojan is given full access to the needed subject matter, comprised in one readily available mobile app. Moreover, the app's instant corrective feedback (Exchange 3) gives users instantaneous feedback on the accuracy of their answers. If questions have been answered incorrectly, the app offers detailed written explanations (Exchange 3) that provide additional support.

Second, the app's inherent multimodal character draws on a range of modes (Kress, 2010), such as text in bold and non-bold typeface (Exchange 1), image, for instance photographs of road signs and real driving situations (Exchange 4), and interactive features, e.g. moving levers or a progress bar (Exchange 3) that supports and facilitates the organization and presentation of subject matter. Especially language learners benefit from the app's integration of multimodal features; visual cues, for example the previously mentioned photograph depicted in Exchange 4, help to access and prompt specific questions and their respective answers.

Blommaert (2018a:81) points out that different modalities (e.g. a 'no-entry' traffic sign, opposed to Chinese writing below the traffic sign) can have different semiotic scope, as the modalities select different audiences and have different reach; "[w]hile the visual shape of the [traffic] sign is quite generally understood (the sign can be found across the world with the same meaning), the Chinese text [below the sign] is not understandable for all (even if the co-occurrence with the sign may offer plausible hypotheses about the meaning of the text)" (Blommaert, 2018a:80f). Following this line of thinking, we can theorize the different modalities used in Data Extract 2 from a new point of view; visual modes, such as the photograph in Episode 4 will have a higher 'semiotic scope' than text on its own, for instance the question in Episode 1. Therefore, when semiotic work is shared over different modes on iTheory, the

content's semiotic scope increases, thus making it easier to decipher its meaning, ultimately making it a more successful learning resource.

Third, as pointed out in Data Extract 1, similar to the theory test itself, iTheory solely operates in English. In Exchange 4, Rojan mentions the option of taking the test in Ireland, in a different language. Though this a promising and less time-consuming alternative, Rojan dismisses this option (Episode 4). Rojan's rationale for studying for the test and ultimately taking the test in English can be interpreted as follows: Rojan perceives the theory test and the entire process involved with it as a 'learning' opportunity within his reach (Episode 4, 01:09min: Cause, you learn). Although it remains partly speculative what exactly it is that he 'learns', it can be argued that Rojan sees obvious benefits in engaging with this particular English language register (theoretical driving test).

Moreover, the fact that Rojan is trying to pass the IELTS (International English Language Testing System) exam at the time of the recording of Data Extract 2, which is a requirement for most international students to enrol at university, helps to substantiate this claim. Through this app, Rojan immerses himself in meaningful English language and English literacy learning opportunities, which also serve another purpose, namely him studying for the theory test in English. For this objective, both the app and his smartphone become powerful tools: on the one hand, through iTheory, Rojan is able to study the appropriate course material in terms of content and language, in his own time, pace and spatial constraints. On the other hand, as shown in Data Extract 1, drawing on his smartphone, Rojan is able to extent the monolingual layout of iTheory by incorporating GT into his test preparation practices.

6.4 Part 2: Community Facebook-Mediated Study

This second analytical part of Chapter 6 shifts attention from autonomous smartphone-mediated practices to prepare for the theoretical part of the driving test, to a Facebook-facilitated, community-based approach, pursued by Mamoud and Aban. The data extracts that follow shed light onto how translocal Facebook groups, such as the Syrian Community of Leeds Facebook Group (SCOLFBG), are used to disseminate information concerning this driving context and how social media platforms facilitate an unprecedented blending and mixing of 'the online' and 'the offline'.

6.4.1 Data Extract 3: Saad's Facebook Posts

(a) Context

Data Extract 3 consists of four Facebook posts shared by Saad on the SCOLFBG over a period of six weeks. Saad, who has been introduced previously in Chapter 4.5 is a well-connected, Syrian-born Leeds resident; Saad is not only involved in several local, community-based projects such as the Syrian Café or the Syrian Kitchen, but also administrates the aforementioned SCOLFBG (Chapter 4.6). In the posts, which comprise Data Extract 3, Saad instigates, administers and lastly cancels informal, multilingual theory test preparation classes, which he offers at the Syrian Café, located at the Ebor Garden Community Centre. Both Mamoud and Aban join these classes.

During the fieldwork phase, Saad started to advertise these ad-hoc preparation classes on the SCOLFBG, as many Syrian newcomers were finding it difficult to study for the theory test in English. Yet, shortly after they started, they had to be cancelled again, due to difficulties securing a room at the Syrian Café; between December 2016 and March 2017, seven posts concerning 'driving in the UK' were posted on the Facebook group (c.f. Content Analysis, Chapter 4.6), with four of those being discussed in the following. Due to the spatial constraints of this thesis chapter, only a selection of the posts, those which drive the narrative, are integrated in this analysis.

The data is presented as follows: a table with three columns contain all four Facebook posts; the left column numbers each post (1-4) and shows their respective publication date on the Facebook group. The centre column contains a screenshot of the original post with Facebook-automated English translations. Here, Post 1 was further edited; the original post contained an image of the SCOLFBG logo, positioned between post and comments. This has been edited out, as the analytical focus lies elsewhere. Last, the column on the right provides an English translation of posts and comments.

(a) Data Extract 3: Facebook Posts

Nr.	Post	Translation
Post 1: **23.01.17**	Saad — January 23 سنبدأ في SWAT قريباً دروس السواقة باللغة العربية على الراغبين بالمشاركة تسجيل اسمهم ضمن الكومنت ليتم التواصل معهم We'll start in swat soon, the driving lesson in Arabic, who wants to share their name in comment to connect with them ⚙ · Rate this translation Mamoud and 26 others Like · Reply · ◐ 2 · January 23 at 5:06pm Mamoud — وين هي دكتور Where's doc? Automatically Translated Like · Reply · January 23 at 5:36pm Mamoud — سجلني Sign me up Automatically Translated Like · Reply · ◐ 1 · January 23 at 5:36pm	**Saad**: Preparation Lessons for sitting the driving test will start soon in the Arabic language at SWAT [Syrian Community]. For those who want to join, would you write your names in the comment section to be able to contact you. **Mamoud**: Where is it? **Mamoud**: Add my name to the list.
Post 2: **29.01.17**	جميع الذي سجلوا بدروس السواقة سنبدأ الدروس يوم الاثنين ٦ شباط من الساعة ١١-١٢:٣٠ All those who recorded driving lessons will start classes on Monday, 6 February 11-12:30 Automatically Translated Like · Reply · ◐ 1 · January 29 at 2:11pm	**Saad**: For those who registered for the driving lessons, the lessons will start Monday the 6th of February from 11 to 12:30.
Post 3: **06.02.17**	Saad شكراً لكل من حضر اليوم لدرس السواقة الأول الرجاء الحضور الاثنين القادم الساعة ١١ تماماً لأننا يجب أن ننهي ٥٠ سؤال مع المناقشة و سنبدأ الساعة ١١ مما يفقد المتأخر فرصة مناقشة بعض الأسئلة لمن يود المساعدة الشخصية برسائل الخ من الساعة ١٠-١١ قبل درس السواقة شكراً للتعاون و التفهم Thank you for everyone who came today for the first drive. Please come monday at 11 sharp because we have to finish 50 questions with the discussion and we'll start at 11, which loses the opportunity to discuss some questions. Who wants personal help with messages from 10-11 hours before driving lesson Thanks for the cooperation and understanding ⚙ · Rate this translation 👍 Like 💬 Comment ➤ Share Mamoud and 10 others Write a comment... 😊 📷 GIF 🏷	**Saad**: I would like to thank those who attended the first driving lesson. Please be present next Monday at 11 sharp because we have to finish 50 questions with discussions. We will start at 11, late comers will miss the opportunity to discuss some questions. Those who want personal assistance via messages, it will be from 10 to 11 before the driving lesson. Thank you for your cooperation and understanding.

| Post 4:

03.03.17 | Saad

March 3

لظروف خاصة تتوقف دروس السواقة النظري حتى إشعار آخر

For special circumstances, theoretical driving lessons stop until further notice.

⚙ · Rate this translation

👍 Like 💬 Comment ↪ Share

😊 Mamoud   and 4 others

Mamoud   لك ليش

For you
Automatically Translated
Like · Reply · 2 · March 3 at 6:05pm

Mamoud   خير انشاء الله

Good God willing
Automatically Translated
Like · Reply · 2 · March 3 at 6:05pm

Write a comment... | **Saad**: Due to special circumstances, the theoretical driving lessons are stopping until further notice.

Mamoud: But why?

Mamoud: Is everything alright? |

(b) Analysis

The analysis concerning Data Extract 3 is organized in two thematical sections; first, I investigate Saad's posts from a temporal viewpoint, drawing attention to this 'meaning making trajectory' (Kell, 2009) of Facebook posts, which demarcates the complete cycle, from the instigation to cancellation of informal driving test preparation classes. Second, I analyse Data Extract 3 from a spatial perspective, exploring the relationship between the translocal SCOLFBG and the Leeds-based Syrian Café.

1. Time

In order to find deeper meaning to the temporal elements of this data extract, it is helpful to visualize its components in relation to space and time; the figure below (Figure 4) organizes the four Facebook posts chronologically (x-axis), from Saad's first post advertising the classes in January 2017, to their abrupt termination in March 2017. Also, different spatial layers (y-axis) of this meaning making trajectory (Kell, 2009) illustrate the relationship and interdependence (black arrows) between the SCOLFBG and the Leeds-based driving classes at the Syrian Café (SC). Furthermore, an additional layer (Fieldwork) shows how the unfolding action was documented and recorded.
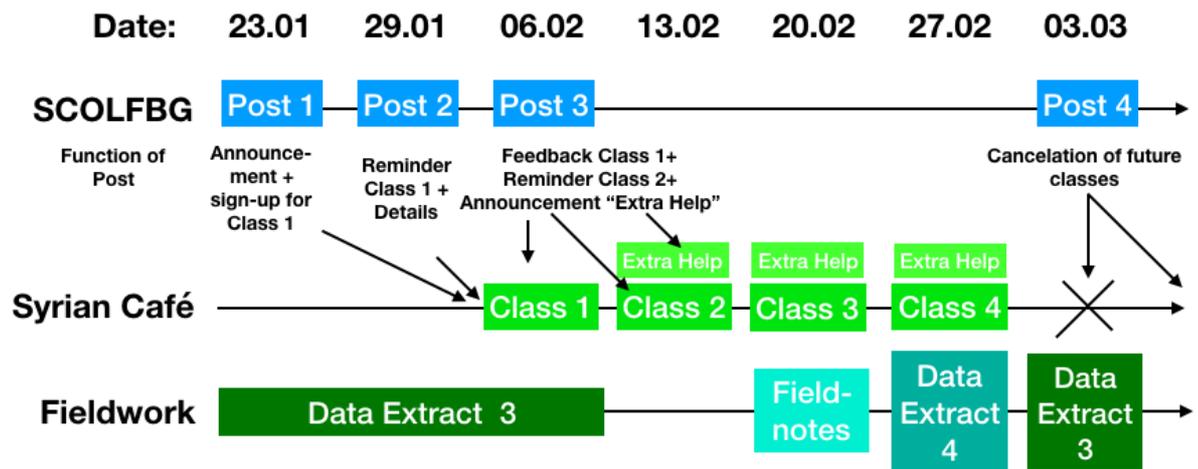
Figure 5: Chapter 6, Data Extract 3, Visualization

Figure 4 illustrates several temporal facets to Data Extract 3; first, it shows how a particular narrative theme, such as the commencement of informal classes, resurfaces multiple times over a stretch of time (six-weeks) with multiple interlocutors; Kell (2011) points out that "digital technologies enable literate communication to stretch between people, across contexts and over time. This applies to Data Extract 3; posts 1-4 (blue rectangles) are not mere repetitions or re-postings; in fact, each post accomplishes different semiotic work; whereas Post 1 advertises the class to the SCOLFBG audience (Class 1 – green) and takes attendance of potential students, including Mamoud (Post 1). Post 2 provides details on time and location of Class 1. Post 3 on the other hand announces a new aspect to the existing classes (Extra Help – green), an informal, one hour long drop-in session will commence before Class 2. Last, Post 4 informs students of the cancellation of all future classes.

Second, in a wider sense, Figure 4 brings to light how social media platforms are used to instigate, facilitate and cancel ad-hoc, bottom-up community efforts and engagement. This again is crucial; Data Extract 3 suggests that the SCOLFBG is an often-instantaneous space, where information is quickly disseminated, and members are swift to respond and react. Saad capitalizes on this deep-seated integration of mobile technologies into the quotidian lives of his group members, as he instantly responds to problems that arise or needs that need to be met. Post 3 provides an example to this fluid nature of the SCOLFBG; Saad points out that "those who want personal assistance via

messages, it will be from 10 to 11 before the driving lesson." This indicates that a need for additional assistance was identified during Class 1 (06.02), which was then responded to in Post 3 (06.02, published after Class 1). Saad chooses to announce this new aspect of his class on the SCOLFBG, as this Facebook group has an unprecedented reach (Vollmer, 2019). Or as Saad points out himself, "[It is] easier to communicate on Facebook, than sending an attachment. On Facebook you can reach about 800 members straight away" (c.f. Chapter 4.6).

2. Space

In what follows, I integrate a spatial layer to this analysis of the SCOLFBG posts. Here, I revisit the earlier introduced Figure 4, to investigate the relationship between the translocal Facebook group and the local, Leeds based, SC.

First, Figure 4 exemplifies, what Pegrum (2014:8) calls the increasing "overlap" of our "online and offline lives"; for instance, organizational and administrational aspects of teaching the preparation class (e.g. checking attendance) are outsourced to the Facebook group, rather than being dealt with in class. The consequence of this however is that to fully participate in and exploit these classes, students must be regular users of the SCOLFBG, as essential information, for instance the termination of classes (Post 4), are communicated solely via Facebook. This co-dependency between Facebook group and preparation class becomes clearer once we revisit Figure 4 and its timeline; the publication dates of the four posts suggest that the posts shared on the SCOLFBG are used to scaffold the events (Class 1-4), which happen on the local level. In other words, the posts are essential for the local classes to come into existence and to prevail.

Moreover, Higgins (2017:113) reminds us that "[a]n approach to language that foregrounds spatial practices and analyzes them within their historical and political contexts is essential for understanding the ways that migrants and other dislocated/relocated people navigate their new environments." This is clearly the case for Mamoud, who, until this point, has not yet been to the SC. The SCOLFBG was instigated with the intention of creating an online space

for Syrian newcomers to Leeds. However, as Data Extract 3 clearly shows, this online group is not free-flowing or disconnected; much of the narrative on the Facebook group directly correlates or penetrates the SC, the Syrian Kitchen (SK), and a collective of other 'real' and physical places in and around Leeds. A good example of this is Post 1, to which Mamoud replies. In his reply, Mamoud asks for the exact location of the preparation class. Hence, a new space, the SC, opens up for Mamoud, suggesting that in this instance, the Facebook group acts as a space-maker or facilitator, an important theme I revisit in Chapter 7 and Chapter 8.

Last, the termination of these preparation classes, announced in Post 4, is an interesting example of how informal educational spaces can collide and cease to exit; Blommaert et al. (2005:203) point out that "all spaces stand in some kind of relationship which each other – a relationship of power and value difficult to establish beforehand, but nevertheless real and in need of inquiry." As the driving classes clash with other events at the Ebor Garden Community Centre, namely additional ESOL classes, the driving test preparation classes have to stop. In a wider sense, the termination of these classes voiced in Post 4, exemplifies how much of the grassroots and volunteer-based community engagement, such as language tutoring, ESOL provision, or in this case, driving test preparation classes, are uncoordinated, unsustainable and short-lived efforts. I revisit this theme in more detail in Chapter 9.3.

6.4.2 Data Extract 4: Mamoud joins Saad's class

(a) Context

Data Extract 4 is a 1:50 minute excerpt of a longer, nine-minute, audio-recorded conversation between Mamoud, Aban and me that took place in the SC in February 2017 before one of Saad's driving classes (Class 4). While waiting for the session to begin, Mamoud enters the room. This is when the audio recording starts. After about five minutes, Aban joins the conversation. However, due to spatial constraints and the overall analytical focus of this chapter, Data Extract 4 solely contains the interaction between Mamoud and me. This is justifiable, as Aban's aspirations for obtaining a UK driving license widely overlap with Mamoud's. As with other transcription, this data extract has been transcribed verbatim.

(b) Data Extract

Transcription codes: M – Mamoud, S – Stefan

```
1    S- What do you think you can learn here <<preparation classes>>? Why
2    are you coming here?
3    M-I think, I think this class in Arabic – this class in Arabic, I
4    understand everything. Maybe I finish this class, maybe I study same
5    this in English, or after this I go the, maybe (2) driver, any, for
6    any man, for chauffeur (2), L driver.

7    S-L driver, yeah.

8    S-Is the question, is it the same in Syria? Same driving, same
9    rules?

10   M-Maybe 50 of 100, same.

11   S-Really?

12   M-Yeah, same.

13   S-Is it more, what's different here?
14   M-Different here: maybe <<laughs>> this I think 1100 questions <<for
15   the UK test>>. In my country, every question, I think 50-60 just,
16   but we have, look in my country, very, very different. Not a
17   question but he give me same photo. Same this, look, look, look
18   <<points toward EXIT sign>>. Fire exit

19   <<While Mamoud talks, Aban enters through the door>>

20   S-Yeah yeah. Oh signs!
21   M-This <<points to signs in the room>>.

22   S-You have to study the signs, the road signs.

23   M-Yeah
```

(c) Analysis

Data Extract 4 shifts attention to Mamoud and examines his rationale for joining the preparation classes outlined in Data Extract 3; first, I explore Mamoud's rationale for attending classes at the SC and position them within Mamoud's wider UK settlement trajectory. Second, I draw parallels between Tagg's (2015) observations of migrants' social media use to establish homogenous networks vis-à-vis ethnicity and language use and the role of the SCOLFBG for my participants.

1.Mamoud's rationale

As Post 1 of Data Extract 3 has shown, Mamoud is eager to join the informal classes once they are advertised on the SCOLFBG. The bilingual character of Saad's classes clearly speaks to Mamoud (Line 3f: "I understand everything"), which again strongly suggests that there is a real need for theory test preparation classes and resources in other languages than English. Moreover, in lines 4-6, Mamoud shares his strategy of obtaining a UK driving license; after taking Saad's preparation classes in Arabic, Mamoud considers preparing for the test again in English, "maybe I study same this in English" (line: 4f). This again hints that the bilingual classes offered at the SC are an important first steppingstone for Mamoud's driving trajectory in the UK.

Furthermore, once Mamoud has passed the driving test, he sees attainable career opportunities as a professional driver (Line 6: "chauffeur"); similar to the vignette in the chapter rationale (6.2), Mamoud's motivation for obtaining a UK driving license is strongly influenced by the prospect of economic gain. In other words, the bilingual preparation classes provide a crucial service for Arabic-speaking test takers, who are also foundational English language learners. Yet, although there is a palpable need for the service that Saad tries to provide, the classes have to terminate, based on logistical issues.

2. Homogenous Networks

Tagg's (2015) findings based on her research on the use of social media by migrant business people in three English cities offers useful insights on interpreting Mamoud's use of the SCOLFBG further; Tagg (2015:31f) points out that her "participants appear to use social media to establish and maintain

a remarkably homogenous network, in terms at least of ethnicity and language, in the otherwise superdiverse contexts in which they live and work. This portrait of mobile use contrasts with the assumption in the literature that the internet encourages superdiverse contexts […]." Similar to Tagg's observations, Mamoud and other newly arrived Syrians seem drawn to the SCOLFBG, which offers some sense of homogeneity in their new environments in regard to ethnicity and language.

More than that, given the obvious lack of available multilingual resources to prepare for the UK driving test by national or local stakeholders, and the dwindling acceptance of Arab speakers in public spaces in more general terms (Khan, 2013), it seems only obvious that newly arrived Arab speakers seek out language-inclusive spaces, might those be online or offline. Here, Soukup (2006:425) makes the argument that computer-mediated communication (CMC) can provide a "home away from home", which evokes sharing of information and different forms of informal community formation, a point which I revisit in the context of employment in Chapter 7.

6.4.3 Data Extract 5: Conflict between Saad and Mamoud

(a) Context:

In April 2017, I am invited to Mamoud's house. We haven't seen each other in a few weeks, since Class 4 at the SC. Mamoud's neighbour, who happens to be a trained interpreter, is present, too. She translates some of the interaction during our multilingual conversation. Among other things, I ask Mamoud on his progress with his driving license. The following fieldnotes, which were written on the day of the event, capture our interaction.

(b) Data Extract 5: Conflict with Saad

Fieldnotes, Mamoud's house, April 2017
[…] I ask Mamoud, if he's still going to the Ebor Garden Community Centre, to the driving classes run by Saad. He doesn't seem to understand the question; the interpreter helps me out. His reply is surprising; he tells me that he stopped going to the classes and other events, as he had an argument with Saad; Saad, according to Mamoud, apparently insulted a friend of his in an argument and said 'fuck all Syrians'. Mamoud tells me that Saad has a British passport, whereas he and his friends do not.
[…]. As Mamoud tells me this, I have to think about the MESH (Migrant English Support Hub) meeting I attended recently, where someone called Saad a 'community leader' for the Syrians in Leeds. Clearly, Saad's not Mamoud's leader. The story goes on. Mamoud tells me that he and his friends have been boycotting Saad's events. Aisha, Mamoud's wife joins in. I'm not quite sure what is being said but it seems as if they think that Saad thinks he's better than them, because of his British passport. Mamoud is very cross with him for swearing at his friend and insulting all Syrians.
We then talk about his ambitions to pass the driving test. What strategy will he pursue next? He tells me that he has been driving all types of cars and buses in the Middle East yet is not allowed to drive here. Then, he explains that it will be easier for his oldest son, who is 16, to pass the test, as his English is better.

(c) Analysis

Data Extracts 3 and 4 have shown the need for theory test preparation classes and resources in other languages than English, to which Saad catered for with informal, bilingual preparation classes. Although these classes had to end, the SCOLFBG continues to disseminate relevant content for Syrian newcomers on driving and other topics concerned with settlement processes (c.f. Content Analysis, Chapter 4.6).

However, the conflict between Mamoud and Saad described in Data Extract 5, creates an obvious imbalance; Mamoud is unable or unwilling to attend any other future events. This again is a direct loss for Mamoud; as there are no multilingual resources or classes available, he is left without any support. Instead, he now puts his hopes into his oldest son, whose English is more advanced than his. This again means that Mamoud is unable to regain his lost mobility, drastically lessening his chances of finding paid work (C.f. Chapter 7).

Fittingly, Blommaert (2005:73) argues that mobility is not mobility "[…] across empty spaces, but mobility across spaces filled with codes, customs, rules, expectations, and so forth. Mobility is an itinerary across normative spaces, and these spaces are always somebody's space." For Rojan, Aban, and Mamoud, who are all newcomers to Leeds, new spaces are opening up (e.g. the SC for Mamoud, Data Extract 3). However, existing spaces are also under threat of ceasing to exit or closing down; Data Extract 5 shows that spaces, both online and offline, can collapse, become no-go areas or remain inaccessible all together; Mamoud's conflict with Saad is a powerful example for this particular instance. After the breakdown of their relationship, Mamoud is no longer able or willing to access services and resources that are connected with Saad. Lefebvre (1991) argues that mental spaces are always spaces of power and authority: Saad, who is perceived as a 'community leader', for instance by attendees of the MESH meeting, has high symbolic and social power (Bourdieu, 1986). By opposing him, Mamoud has to face serious consequences.

In a wider sense however, Data Extract 5 highlights the structural and hierarchical flaws of informal, bottom-up community engagement; as there are

no regulations, no ombudsman, or steering groups, Mamoud has nowhere to turn to. Whereas formalized institutions follow protocols and have procedures in place (e.g. to file a complaint), Mamoud is left without any options, as Saad holds a position of power and monopoly.

6.5 Concluding Remarks

Chapter 6 captures and explores my participants' efforts and strategies of obtaining a UK driving license with the help of mobile technologies; whereas Rojan chooses a mobile learning resource to independently study for the driving test, Mamoud and Aban choose a different approach. Still, for all of my participants, the notion of loss (Blommaert, 2005) seems fitting; it becomes apparent that the driving license holds high cultural, symbolic and economic capital (Bourdieu, 1986). The license itself is perceived as a clear steppingstone into a higher socio-economic status, with the ability to drive acting as a doorway into a whole new range of employment opportunities.

Furthermore, the notion of capital is also helpful, when we revisit the data extracts of this chapter. Much of the decisions made, e.g. Rojan using iTheory, or Mamoud and Aban attending the preparation classes instead, can be explained through this lens of capital: whereas Rojan has much expertise in operating and manipulating mobile technologies, Aban and Mamoud seem to be more conscious of their English proficiency (limited linguistic capital) and thus opt for the bilingual classes. Further, it could be argued that mobile technologies are used to compensate for lack in various capital: the Facebook group itself is a multilingual and multimodal space, where Syrian newcomers with limited linguistic capital of the dominant language can communicate in their home language and access information and resources that might be unavailable elsewhere. This is a point I revisit in Chapter 7.

As Data Extract 3-5 have suggested, social media platforms seem to facilitate and enforce translocal social capital, particularly vis-à-vis building and joining linguistically and ethnically homogenous networks; Saad's Facebook group reaches out to newcomers and is used as a starting point to build professional and personal relationships. The content analysis positioned in Chapter 4 is an indicator of this; much of the content on the Facebook group is concerned with job opportunities, ESOL classes, and social events.

Last, Chapter 6 draws attention to mobile literacy practices concerned with the preparation for the UK driving test; Rojan's use of iTheory shows how monolingual smartphone applications like iTheory are being integrated into

wider multilingual, cross-platform mobile literacy practices; Rojan, an adult learner of English, engages in mobile learning, which touches upon the subject matter related to the driving test, as well as on a particular register of English. Data Extract 6.1 also shows how Rojan's smartphone mediated literacy practices inherently take place whilst being on the move (Rojan, Line 16-18: All the time [I use my phone]. Yeah, before you sleep, in bed, outside […] in the bus).

The data extracts concerning the SCOLFBG and Saad's informal driving sessions on the other hand point towards the wider relevance of social media platforms for newly arrived migrants, particularly vis-à-vis capitalizing on informal networks. Here, Mamoud's interaction with Saad's Facebook post (Data Extract 6.3) provides insights into how newcomers perceive and make use of information disseminated via social media sites. In this sense, Mamoud's digital literacy practices on Facebook suggest that new arrivals purposefully seek out and draw on informal networks to support their immediate needs and aspirations.

Chapter 7: Making Money (Analysis III)

Fieldnotes, Syrian Kitchen, (March 2017 "Scooter for Sale"

I'm at the Syrian Kitchen, waiting for Rojan. I sit down next to a Syrian man in his 40s called Tarek. I've seen him before but haven't talked to him yet. […] Tarek tells me about a motor scooter he bought. […] He keeps repeating the words EBEE, EBEE, which I don't understand at first. He then shows me an app on his phone: eBay! […] He bought a second-hand scooter in Germany on eBay, had it shipped to London and then further delivered to Manchester. Now, Tarek owns a scooter. He shows me pictures of it on his phone. […] I start to understand that he wants to sell it on, here in Leeds, for a profit. He tells me that he bought it for £600. […]. He wants to sell the motor scooter online and asks me for my help. I tell him about Gumtree, trying to explain that sellers don't have to pay fees [unlike with eBay]. Next thing, he downloads the Gumtree app (using the Syrian Kitchen Wi-Fi) and then we put an ad together. It's fascinating to watch him use his phone. Even though he doesn't seem to understand what all the buttons and icons mean on the app, he intuitively knows their functions, based on their design/colouring/outline, proximity, and spacing within the app. For instance, he's familiar with the concept of login details, e-mail address and password, or ticking the terms and conditions (without reading them - obviously).

Tarek is a quick learner, yet he still needs help to navigate his way through the app to create an ad; phrases such as "post an ad" are new to him. Tarek understands the hierarchical organizing-system of selling things online (e.g. Motors-Scooters-Suzuki-Burgman-125CC) and quickly positions his vehicle within the predefined framework of scooters in the Leeds area, again showing me that this is probably not the first time he's selling something online. He tries to sell the scooter for £1400, which I find as equally entertaining as outrageous. […].

7.1 Chapter Overview

Chapter 7, *Making Money*, investigates how newly arrived migrants find themselves in situations where their smartphones become important sources and facilitators of economic gain. In what follows, I discuss data that documents how my key participants draw on smartphone applications like Facebook to find, access and create ways of making money, to support themselves and their families within their new environments. On the one hand, this chapter explores how my participants utilize their smartphones in hope of finding employment opportunities through established and conventional 'top-down' channels, such as the Job Centre's online platform *Universal Jobmatch*[5]. On the other hand, as we have seen in the brief example above, Chapter 7 seeks to find deepened understandings of informal and often ad-hoc smartphone-mediated mobile practices, through which my participants hope to financially better their situation. The encounter with Tarek gives us a first glimpse of how smartphones can be utilized for economic gain. It is fascinating to see in this example, how the local (The Syrian Kitchen, Leeds) interplays with the translocal (Manchester) and the transnational (Germany), all afforded through global marketplace applications, such as eBay and Gumtree. More than that, we witness how a newly arrived person capitalizes on prior ICT and smartphone experiences, to navigate and manipulate a novel online platform, in hope of making a profit. In what follows, I explore my key participants' efforts in 'making money', both in the formal and the informal economy.

Chapter 7 is structured as follows; first, I lay out a rationale that argues for the analysis of employment-related data within this migration and technology context, a thread of contemporary migration scholarship that is currently underresearched (Baynham et al., 2015; Blackledge and Trehan, 2018; Tagg and Lyons, 2018). As the table below indicates, this chapter explores how newly arrived migrants use smartphones for economic gain from two particular

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[5] In May 2018, after this data was collected, 'Universal Jobsearch' has been replaced by 'Find a Job' (https://www.gov.uk/find-a-job).

viewpoints; I differentiate between *formal* and *informal* ways of making money, a distinction I elaborate on in more detail as the data unfolds.

In Section 7.3, I pay attention to mobile job searching and job application practices within the formal economy. Here, I analyse a multimodal transcript of a screen recording, which shows Rojan applying for warehouse and cleaning jobs via Universal Jobmatch (UJ). In Section 7.4 (Making Money through Facebook), I shift attention to temporary, sporadic and opportunistic means of making a profit, akin to Tarek's efforts in selling his motor scooter. Here, I primarily explore visual data, such as screenshots of Facebook posts from Mamoud and Aban, which show their ambitions and ingenuity to create and establish an income outside the formal economy. Last, in Section 7.5, I draw conclusions.

Actors, Platforms, Data. Device	Short Description	Analytical Concern
Data Extract 1: Rojan: Universal Jobmatch, Screen recording of smartphone	Rojan is applying for warehouse and cleaning jobs in Leeds through UJ on his smartphone.	Space: Leeds as the new home and point of reference. Capital: Loss of cultural capital
Data Extract 2: Mamoud: Facebook Group, Screenshots from smartphone screen	Mamoud responds to an informal offer to tutor Arabic on the SCOLFBG.	Capital: Shifts in Capital as economic opportunity. Space: Facebook as an informal, translocal marketplace
Data Extract 3: Aban: Facebook Group, Screenshots from smartphone screen	Aban promotes his plumbing services via the SCOLFBG	Space: A local job offer within a translocal context Bidets as a niche product.

Table 9: Overview Data Extracts Chapter 7

7.2 Chapter Rationale

Unsurprisingly, finding reliable sources of income is high priority for most newcomers to the UK. Yet, for many new arrivals, this is neither an easy nor a straightforward process; different factors can compromise or interfere with the prospect of finding permanent work. Often, qualifications and degrees from migrants' home countries hold little or no authority in the new host country and are not validated by local employers (Parker, 2009), which leaves many migrants unable to resume and reinstate their existing career paths. This is particularly true for qualifications from non-EU countries; as Duchêne et al. (2013) point out, these exclusionary practices result in newly arrived migrants being perceived as lacking in professional competence. More than that, newcomers may find that their previously acquired skills and specialized experiences are non-transferrable or that they hold little currency in their new environments. The following excerpts from my fieldnotes describe Mamoud's struggle to capitalize on his woodworking skills in Leeds.

Extract field notes (Mamoud's house): "Mamoud's woodworking"

12.02.17 Mamoud's House

[…] Mamoud tells me that he worked as a bespoke high-end carpenter. […] I ask about this previous carpenter work. Mamoud tells me to wait. He goes upstairs to talk to his wife. Moments later, he comes back, telling me that his wife will send him pictures of his work in a second via WhatsApp. […] The pictures show chests, wardrobes, tables and chairs. The furniture looks bespoke and of high quality. Every item is covered with intarsia - beautiful wooden, colourful mosaic pieces. Mamoud explains his craft (intarsia) to me: wooden mosaic pieces are cut out first with special and expensive saws. Next, he meticulously puts the tiny pieces together. […].

23.04.17 BBQ with Mamoud

[…] Mamoud has been trying to find work, keen to find a job based on his woodworking skills. She [Mamoud's neighbour who is also his interpreter] tells me that Mamoud can't find the right equipment and tools. He's been advised by the Job Centre to look for work at an antique dealer, but Mamoud is thinking of selling his products via the Internet (e.g. eBay). […].

Besides this loss of capital (Blommaert, 2005) which Mamoud experienced upon arriving in the UK, requirements and restrictive policies issued by the

government, local councils, as well as other stakeholders (e.g. the Job Centre) can further complicate, delay, and hinder the job seeking process for newly arrived migrants; whereas so called 'non-citizens' (Giurea and Lormier, 2015) such as asylum seekers are prohibited to work legally in the first place, others, such as EU migrants or recognized refugees (e.g. my key participants) can, in theory, freely access the job market. However, those entitled to work still need to be equipped with 'satisfactory' English language and literacy, numeracy, and ICT proficiency, to meet employers' and institutional (e.g. Job Centre) standards. This is particularly problematic for those adults who have received little, no, or interrupted formal schooling.

Moreover, as previously outlined in Chapter 4.2, in the UK, much of the adult education sector (e.g. the ESOL sector) is at times severely fragmented, underfunded or sporadically funded (Simpson, 2015), often leaving the bulk of teaching and even administration to volunteer teachers. More than that, as Pöyhönen et al. (2018:494) point out, increasingly, employment-related "language for work" syllabi influence ESOL classrooms, "[y]et while many newcomers do need to improve their language skills for employment purposes, it is not at all clear that the way to do this is to concentrate in class on generic employment-related concerns."

Thus, many newcomers find themselves in complex situations; although they are willing and able to work, have work experience, and sometimes hold advanced qualifications, they are required to match their language, literacy, numeracy and ICT skills, to the locally expected standard. As newly arrived migrants apply for jobs, attend ESOL classes, and invest in additional qualifications and training, many are under increasing financial pressure; benefit payments are limited and often take time to be processed. Moreover, it is likely that benefit recipients themselves financially support other family members, friends, and relatives through remittance payments (Collier, 2013). Furthermore, newly arrived migrants often have to pay back loans, which they took out to finance their journeys to the UK.

As conventional employment opportunities transpire to be restricted or completely out of reach (Piller, 2016), unconventional and sporadic means of income, such as selling a motor scooter for a profit, become not only an

alternative, but a necessity. Here, Alberti (2014:869) points out that migrants often apply "occupational mobility strategies", such as 'job-reskilling', 'job-jumping' and job-hopping', to move up the job ladder, towards better paid and more secure income. As Keeley (2009:90) argues, migrants are more likely "to do temporary and part-time jobs", with an increasing number becoming self-employed. However, Alberti (2014:877) also reminds us that we need to "deconstruct the common view of migrant workers as mere victims of precarious employment or otherwise complicit with employers' strategies of flexibility and low pay in sectors where they are in demand."

It is here that smartphones become crucial in increasing migrants' chances of finding and creating employment opportunities, both inside and outside of the formal labour market (c.f. Law and Peng, 2008; Pennycook and Otsuji, 2015; Giurea and Lormier, 2015). Giurea and Lormier (2015) for instance show in their research that smartphones can positively affect newcomers' employment opportunities; those who have to look for informal means of employment in areas of work, such as cleaning, construction, trade, removals or waste recycling, clearly benefit from smartphones. Then again, Giurea and Lormier argue that their success in finding and maintaining business opportunities is based on their expertise in manipulating ICTs; as sporadic work is often advertised through online platforms such as Gumtree or eBay, those hoping to make a profit require constant communication and negotiation with prospective clients, buyers and sellers through texting, calling, and emailing. This resonates with Tarek's example from the beginning of this chapter; his chances of making a profit rise and fall with his command over the platform (Gumtree), but also with his ability to apply the expected linguistic practices, such as describing items and negotiating with potential buyers. The data extracts that I discuss in the following, further bring to light how smartphones are being integrated into this context of migration and economic gain.

7.3 Formal Employment Opportunities

Stefan: So why do you want warehouse [jobs]?
Rojan: Because I can't work, I can't use my degree here. Because I need to change my degree, […] speak more English
*(Recorded conversation with Rojan, May 2017)*

7.3.1 Data Extract 1: Rojan, Universal Jobmatch

(a) Context

The Job Centre plays a vital role in newcomers' lives and holds high institutional power; it has the authority to release and sanction welfare benefits and to interfere with ESOL provision. The Job Centre can mandate additional classes, compel students to leave classes they might already be attending in order to take up places on the official employment-related courses, as well as push ESOL students into the labour market. For the latter, the Job Centre often refers those seeking work to Universal Jobmatch (UJ), an online platform for job seekers and employers, hosted by GOV.UK (2018).

The following data extract, a five-minute screen recording, documents Rojan's efforts in applying for warehouse and cleaning job offers via UJ on his smartphone, after he has been encouraged by the Job Centre to find work. The data was collected in May 2017, during one of our meetings at the 'Syrian Kitchen'.

(b) Data Extract: Screen Recording Rojan

Ex	Time-stamp	Screen	Transcription R= Rojan, S= Researcher		
		SC= Screenshot	Spoken	Movement	Smartphone
1	00:03 00:05 00:08 00:10 00:15 00:34 00:36 00:40 00:41 00:44		S: So, this is your account? R: Yeah, this is "Home", this is my "CV" S: Wow R: I have CV already inside S: Yeah. R: And mhh (2) when I want to apply for a job S: Yeah	Hovers right index finger over screen. Presses CV button. Scrolls up and down page. (15) Presses Menu button. Presses Menu button again. Presses 'Show Search Form' button.	UJ is open on Rojan's smartphone browser. New window opens up showing 'saved CVs'. Side bar appears again. Side bar disappears. New window with text boxes appears.
2	00:44 00:51 00:57 1:06		R: I want to put, sorry, postcode, where I live Leeds, S: Yeah. R: Leeds. I want in Leeds. S: Yeah, yeah, yeah of course. R: Leeds. I want work in Leeds. "Job title", which work I want warehouse. "Search".	Scrolls up page. Presses 'postcode' box and starts typing Presses 'Job title' box and starts typing	New type-in feature appears. Types 'Leeds' in text box, which appears in suggested text Types 'Warehouse in text box, which appears in suggested text

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3	1:07 1:11 1:23 1:24 1:28 1:30		S: So why do you want warehouse? R: Because (3) I can't work, I can't use my degree here. Because I need to change my degree, because I need to change that, speak more English S: Yeah. R: I think warehouse S: Is a good start? R: A good start. Warehouse or maybe in shop, shop assistant, waiter, restaurant, like that. S: OK. So now you have all the jobs here, OK.		New page with list of warehouse job opportunities is loaded.
4	01:37 01:40 01:43 01:49 01:53		R: Yeah. Now I look for where S: So, what are you looking for now? R: Warehouse. Warehouse in Leeds. "Warehouse Operative Nights" <<reads out>>. S: Yeah. Are you OK to work at night? You don't mind?	Scrolls up page with index finger. Scrolls up page with index finger.	
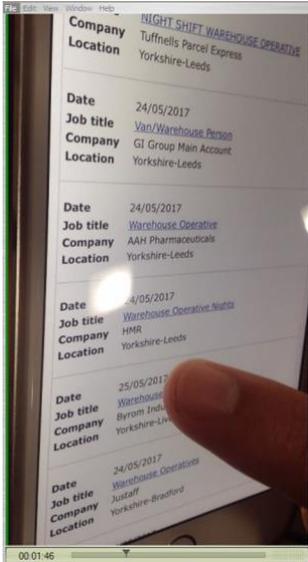
5	01:58 02:00 02:04 02:08 02:15 02:17 02:20 02:23 02:26		R: Yeah. I need to go this. Yeah. (4) Now I need to see. This job, "full time" <<reads out>>. Ah he need experience, I can't. S: Ah OK. R: I don't have experience. "One year" <<reads out>>. S: OK. OK. R: I <u>can't</u> do it. I look for other. S: But, plenty more <<laughs>>. R: <<laughs>> I look around S: Wow there's a lot of warehouses in Leeds	Scrolls through page with index finger and presses job offer, scrolls up page further and points with finger. Points with index finger and presses return button. Scrolls through page again.	New window with job description appears Window with job offers appears again.
6	02:30 02:34 02:41 02:47 02:51 02:52 02:58		R: This one, "HCG Services Warehouse & Offices" <<reads out>>. Maybe. Oh, this, I can apply for this. It's already. Look. S: You already applied for this one? R: Yeah. S: So, what happens after you apply? What's next? You've applied. R: Now he, I have CV in this, if he want me, he sends me message	Points with finger at offer and opens it. Scrolls up and down the page. Points with finger at grey 'Apply' button. Presses return button.	New window with job offer appears. Window with job offers appears again.
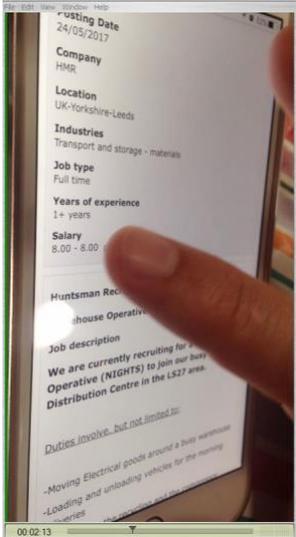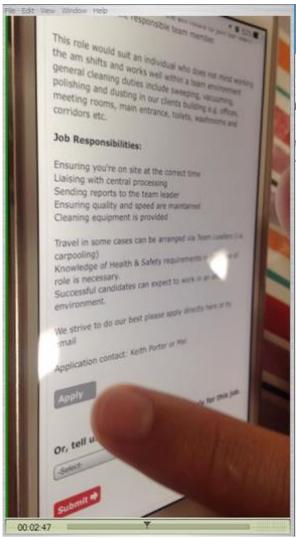
7	03:03 03:07 03:10 03:14 03:22 03:28 03:31		S: An email yeah. R: On my email. For appointment. For I can S: Or an interview R: An interview. S: Has that happened before? Do you have people reply? R: Mhh no no no. S: How many times have you applied? R: How many times? S: How often? Ten times? Five times? R: Yeah. S: Every day? R: Yeah. Every day. (3) Every day I look for work. I <u>look</u> for work.		
8	03:30 03:34 03:36 03:39 03:40 03:43 03:47 03:51 03:54 03:59 04:00		S: Yeah you look every day. Wow. So, you do this quite regularly? Every day, kind of, a few minutes. R: Yeah, every day. S: You only look for warehouse or? R: No no, I look for cleaner. S: Cleaner? Yeah. R: Because (2) I can do it. (2) Here, cleaner position. S: Why not this one?	Presses "Show Search Form" button. Then opens job search box. Deletes "Warehouse" Types in "Cleaner" Presses search button. Scrolls through page and clicks on offer then immediately presses return button.	Search boxes appear. Job search box appears. A range of jobs related to "clean" appear under search box. New window opens with cleaning job list. Job offer appears. List of cleaning jobs appears again.
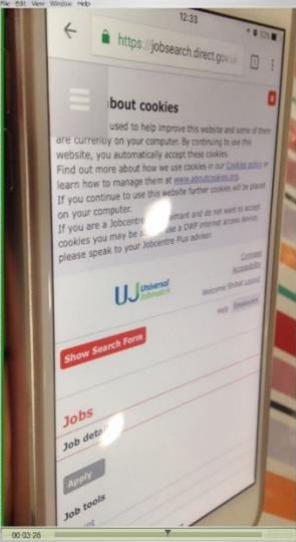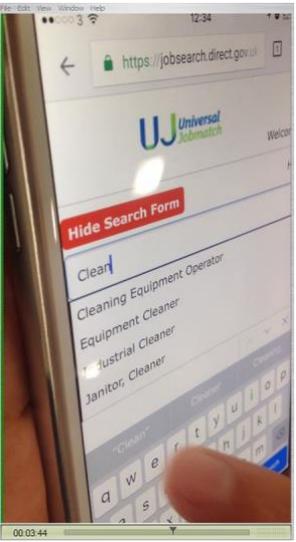
9	04:01 04:03 04:06 04:08 04:11 04:17 04:20 04:27 04:32 04:34		R: I applied for this one. S: Ah you applied for this. Ah OK. S: This one. Haha! R: Company in Leeds. "Business services". "Part time". Yes. "Wilkes". "The hours for work are Friday 5pm." <<reads out>> It's just two hours. S: A little job.	Clicks on another job offer. Presses return button then click on another offer. Scrolls through offer. Uses index finger to point. Uses index finger to point.	Job offer appears. List of cleaning jobs appears again. Job offer appears.
10	04:36 04:42 04:44 04:46 04:48 04:51 04:55 04:58		S: Maybe. Yeah why not. Ah OK. Put your CV in there. R: This <<undistinguish-able>>. And I go back now. S: Ah OK. R: Now it's done. It applies S: Wow. Done yeah. Wow. R: Applied to clean.	Presses "Apply" button. Presses button. Scrolls through page then presses "submit" and then "continue". Presses return button and points with finger. Presses return button again. Scrolls through list of jobs.	New page appears with application details. Adds "saved CV". New page titled "Job application submitted online" opens up. Back to Job offer page. List of cleaning jobs appears again.
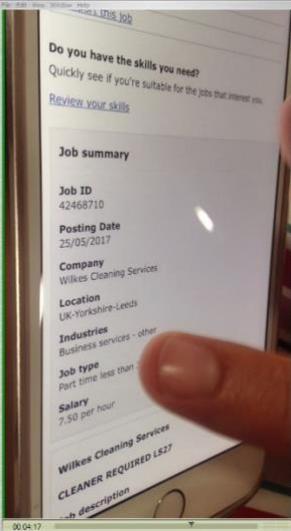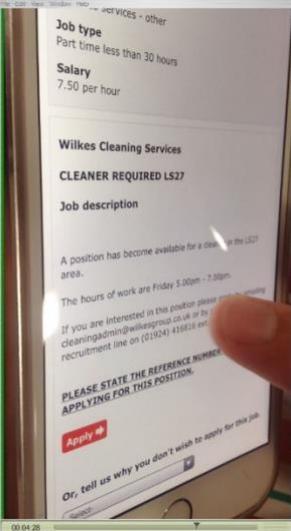
(c) Analysis: Data Extract 1

As this data extract has considerable length, I first revisit each exchange of the transcription, offering a descriptive summary, before scrutinizing this data through a spatial lens.

Moment Analysis Data Extract 1

Exchange 1

Exchange 1 first introduces UJ, which Rojan accesses via his smartphone browser. Rojan confidently explains and demonstrates various features of this platform; in 00:05-00:08s, he refers to the 'home' button, as well as the 'CV' section, which clearly indicates that he has prior experience with applying for jobs via UJ. Transcriptions in the 'Movement' and 'Smartphone' columns in Exchange 1 show the fluidity and experience with which Rojan navigates through the various features of this application. Moreover, we learn that Rojan is a frequent user, with his personal account and with documents (CV) uploaded onto UJ.

Exchange 2

The second exchange yields information concerning Rojan's employment aspirations. He mentions the location ("Leeds, I want in Leeds.") and the type of potential jobs that he is looking for; on the one hand, he wants to work in Leeds, as this is where he lives. On the other hand, Rojan is looking for jobs in warehouses. This seems surprising for several reasons; not only has he got no prior experience in this field of work, but also, as Rojan has substantial formal education (university degree in Science) and extensive work experience (several years working as a laboratory technician in a hospital), he seems to be overqualified for these types of low-paid, manual-labour jobs.

Furthermore, Exchange 2 shows in more detail how UJ works. As the conversation between the participant and the researcher unfolds, Rojan starts to browse for available job offers in warehouses around Leeds. He is familiar with the design of the platform; this becomes more obvious, when Rojan starts to narrate the job application process with the help of the app. He takes the role of the expert, giving the researcher an introduction in how to manipulate the search filters to find relevant job opportunities in his area. Rojan leads the

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interaction in these first two exchanges and considerably draws on his smartphone to support and organize our conversation; for instance, Rojan incorporates many of the key words and phrases from UJ, such as *CV*, *home*, *apply for job*, *postcode*, *job title*, and *search* into his descriptions. Out of 52 words he speaks in these first two interactions, 12 can be clearly traced back to UJ.

Exchange 3

In this exchange, Rojan offers his rationale for applying for warehouse jobs; on the one hand, Rojan states that his prior qualifications from Syria have lost their warrant in the UK ("I can't work, I can't use my degree here."). On the other hand, he argues that his English proficiency is insufficient ("Speak more English."); this loss of cultural and linguistic capital (Blommaert, 2005) has significant consequences for Rojan's prospective career here in the UK. His lack of relevant and appropriate qualifications combined with his limited linguistic capital of the dominant language pushes Rojan towards the very bottom of the labour market. More than that, Rojan's potential career shift seems counterproductive vis-à-vis his English language and literacy development; working in a warehouse with little human/social interaction might not be beneficial.

More than that, the transcript for Exchange 3 documents changes in use of different modes to make meaning; as Rojan answers my fairly open questions at length, his engagement with his smartphone comes to a standstill (c.f. Movement column). This indicates that Rojan's smartphone does not offer him the linguistic support to structure and scaffold his spoken interaction, which stands in contrast to Exchanges 1 and 2. Rojan speaks 45 words in Exchange 3. Out of those, none can be linked to UJ. Rojan's lack of smartphone interaction in Exchange 3 therefore suggests that smartphones can support migrants' language practices to some extent (c.f. Exchanges 1 and 2), as long as the focus of interaction is closely linked to the affordances that mobile technologies provide. However, as the focus shifts away from technology towards questions of reasoning, Rojan's smartphone becomes less of a focal point (c.f. lack of activity in movement column in Exchange 3).

Exchange 4

As the conversation progresses, Rojan adds other potential jobs to the list ("Warehouse or maybe in shop, shop assistant, waiter, restaurant, like that."), which offer more obvious chances of social interaction, yet remain low-paid and manual jobs that demand unfavourable working hours. Thus, in Exchange 4, it becomes further evident how capital and more importantly its loss (Blommaert, 2005) mitigate chances of finding employment.

Exchange 5

Exchange 5 highlights the effects of Rojan's loss of capital in this employment context further; forced to opt for an alternative career path, Rojan's past work experiences become irrelevant. The implications of this become obvious, as Rojan browses through the profile of a warehouse job. As Rojan reads out the dimensions and requirements of one particular job offer ("full time" and "one year"), he instantly realizes that he is unsuitable ("I can't do it".), as Rojan lacks the required work experience on the job.

Hence, his lack of experience and novice status further lower his chances of meeting job requirements and ultimately finding work. Moreover, we start to see that Rojan is competent in employment-related language and literacy; job offers as well as the UJ platform design are only accessible in English. Further, this recorded interaction shows, how Rojan accesses and interacts with the specialized register of 'Employment English'. Rojan displays high levels of understanding, as he decodes, rejects, and applies for (Exchanges 9 and 10) job offers via UJ.

Exchange 6

Exchange 6 offers further insights into Rojan's digital literacy practices. As he scrolls through more warehouse job offers, he comes across one job opportunity he has already applied for. This indicates the following; first, Rojan regularly uses UJ on his mobile device to look for and apply for job openings. Secondly, it seems that he understands the different steps ("Now he, I have CV in this, if he want me, he sends me message.") that are involved in this job application process.

Exchange 7

Exchange 7 further substantiates the hypothesis that due to his loss of capital, Rojan finds himself at the bottom of the labour market; we learn that Rojan has applied for numerous jobs, on a daily basis ("Every day I look for work."). Yet, his efforts to find employment have been fruitless.

Exchange 8

Here, the data clearly shows that looking for and applying for jobs via UJ is part of Rojan's daily, routinized mobile practices; we learn that Rojan scouts current job offers in a range of fields (warehouse and cleaning jobs), which are, according to Rojan, within his reach ("I can do it."). The multimodal transcript visualizes the fluidity and pace in which Rojan interacts with UJ. He rapidly scrolls through job offers, opens them and then rejects them immediately, as he realizes that he has already applied for them or that he is not suitable. Moreover, the data suggests that the application process itself is a very fast process. This becomes more visible in the last two exchanges.

Exchange 9 & 10

Rojan finds a part-time cleaning job that he has not applied for yet. Although this is a part-time job, Rojan decides to apply for it. The application process itself takes less than 30 seconds to complete. In a matter of a few clicks, Rojan has attached his existing CV and applied for this job opening. The last two exchanges offer important insights regarding this; first, it seems that Rojan follows a 'maximum' approach. He seems to apply for any employment opportunity, as long as it fits his two parameters (location and type of work). Second, it becomes obvious that the application process itself is a rather generic process. The affordances of UJ support these 'quick-click', high quantity applications. As all relevant documents are already uploaded on the platform, Rojan's efforts to apply for jobs seems minimal. Yet, at the same time, it becomes obvious that his approach has been unsuccessful.

The preliminary examination of these ten exchanges yields the following insights; first, the data extract underscores Rojan's loss of capital (Blommaert, 2005), i.e. his inability to return to his previous career path. More than that, the exchanges highlight the importance of mobile internet access to find

employment opportunities, a point I revisit in the spatial analysis that follows. Last, Rojan's unsuccessful efforts to find work in the conventional labour market point towards wider questions of inequality and linguistic injustice (Piller, 2016), a further point I revisit in what follows.

Spatial Analysis Data Extract 1

Next, I further scrutinize Rojan's use of UJ within Data Extract 1 from distinct socio-spatial viewpoints. Here, I first return to the Syrian Kitchen (SK), which is located at All Hallows Church, and is the locus of this recorded interaction. I make the argument that as a local community centre, the SK is a crucial social space that affords Rojan's mobile job-searching practices. Moreover, I draw attention to aspects of day-to-day mobile practices, discussing how and why searching for and applying for jobs on a smartphone is unique and different, as opposed to computer-based job applications.

In previous chapters, I have discussed All Hallow Church as an important social space for its local community. Also, I have to some extent described the social, religious and pastoral services that All Hallows Church and the SK offer to their congregation as well as to the wider public. Now, within this employment context, I want to draw attention to the relevance of reliable Wi-Fi for newcomers' wider smartphone practices. Tarek's example from the beginning of this chapter has already indicated how newcomers benefit from freely accessible Wi-Fi, to carry out data-intensive smartphone tasks, such as downloading apps or uploading content. The following extract, stemming from a recorded conversation between Rojan and myself, further elaborates on this.

Extract recorded conversation (February 2017, Syrian Kitchen with Rojan) "Wi-Fi and Data Plans"
Stefan: Yeah, because I don't need a lot of Wi-Fi, sorry a lot of data, because I have Wi-Fi at home, at work, even here [All Hallows Church/Syrian Kitchen], they have Wi-Fi here. So, you don't need it much.
Rojan: Yeah you don't need it much. Sometimes I have 30GB, I just need 2 GB in month.

> Stefan: Yeah? Really? Then what happens? Nothing?
> Rojan: No. Because I don't need. I don't need that. I don't need, Wi-Fi. Or I come here for Wi-Fi. Yeah, just in I will sit here

This short extract shows how the SK enables and facilitates online mobile practices which might otherwise be restricted to predefined physical spaces such as the home or the workplace. For Rojan, the availability of an inclusive Wi-Fi infrastructure within his immediate environment means less dependency on mobile data plans and the home internet. Moreover, the fact that Rojan explicitly and deliberately frequents the SK to go online on his smartphone suggests just how important it is for him to retain digital mobility as much as possible. In this sense then, Rojan's day-to-day movements across physical spaces are starkly influenced by the urgency to remain connected to the digital. In other words, Rojan gravitates to and sojourns between defined spaces of connectivity; digital and physical space are neither congruent nor equal but seem hierarchical. Rojan's urgency for digital access shape his daily trajectories through Leeds.

Yet, there are more than 100 Wi-Fi hotspots in Leeds City Council buildings alone (Leeds.gov.uk, 2015), many of which are within reach of Rojan's surrounding. Therefore, we can presume that Rojan is not only frequenting the SK for its reliable Wi-Fi connection but also for other reasons; firstly, All Hallows Church is within short walking distance from Rojan's home. More importantly, the SK not only offers social, religious and cultural stimuli, but also provides economic, and technological relief. This overlap of pastoral care, services and incentives makes the SK a sought after and important space for newly arrived people, especially for those who lost capital.

Yet, how do these conceptualizations of space align with Rojan's use of UJ via his smartphone? The multimodal transcript provided above is a nexus of time, movement and interaction. I have described in some detail how Rojan seeks out job opportunities and applies for open positions. The transcript shows clearly that opposed to the traditional concept of applying for jobs, the processes of scanning for employment opportunities, as well as applying for suitable offers, are fast, fluid and prolific processes, which Rojan has

internalized within his wider digital literacy repertoire. This again suggests the following; first, as Rojan points out in Exchange 8, he looks for work every day. This indicates that, similar to the housing market or even the stock market, the UK job market is a fast-paced, ever changing transnational marketplace. This would then suggest that a prolific and extensive scanning of job offers is necessary, to access suitable job offers in due time.

Second, as finding suitable employment opportunities requires meticulous monitoring, Rojan's smartphone seems to be the best fit; UJ is a powerful platform that allows for customization and the management of data, such as CVs. Combined with the mobility and accessibility of smartphones, Rojan is able to closely keep track of offers at any given moment of the day. In this sense, the processes involved with pursuing job offers have shifted from the static and detailed to the mobile and frequent. Similar to checking messages or one's social media status, Rojan approaches finding work with an unprecedented frequency and regularity.

Still, Rojan's search for paid work within the formal job market remains unsuccessful. On first glance, this seems surprising, even unfair; given his substantial professional and academic background, his application track record, as well as his flexibility and openness to work in a variety of settings, Rojan appears to be a prominent and capable candidate for warehouse and cleaning jobs in Leeds. Yet, he seems to be missing out. Where does he go wrong? Revisiting Data Extract 1 hints several answers; the type of work Rojan is applying for is within the manual labour sector and 'below' his previous work experiences, a well-documented outcome for migrant workers; research by Colic-Peisker and Tilbury (2006:211) found that 60% of their refugee respondents (n=150) were "over-qualified for their current job." Still, Rojan struggles to access this field of work. The job adverts that Rojan browses through, bring this further to light; most adverts expect applicants to have previous work experiences in relatable fields (Exchange 5). This is a 'catch-22' for Rojan. In order to get a job, Rojan needs relatable work experience. Yet, he cannot gain work experience, as he is unable to find work in the first place.

De Vroome and Van Tubergen (2010:396) have shown that "education acquired in the host country is a more appropriate predictor of employment than education acquired abroad." This then might also be extended to the aspect of work experience; Rojan has work experience in various settings, just not in the UK.

Secondly, as Rojan applies for the part-time job at Wilkes in Exchange 10, it becomes apparent that he doesn't adjust his application portfolio for the specific job offer but submits his prefabricated documents. This is a flaw in his strategy. Although it remains somewhat unclear which documents Rojan submits and what they comprise of, it can be assumed that a superficial and generic application, for any type of job, will be less successful than a tailored application. Correa-Velez et al. (2013) point out that it is difficult to get degrees and qualifications recognized, as there is a lack of access to affordable or free translation services. This also applies to Rojan, who, as fieldwork has previously shown, has had problems in getting documents officially translated into English, for instance to apply to university for postgraduate study.

As previously pointed towards, this also raises more underlying questions of inequality and linguistic injustice; Piller (2016) points out that migrants often face systematic barriers to formal employment, such as linguistic stereotyping, which again is well documented in labour markets around the world. Studies situated in different countries, for instance by Pinkerton (2013) and Schneider (2014), have shown that last names which suggest membership of non-dominant ethnic groups are less likely to be invited to job interviews. In Rojan's case, this might be part of the reason that his applications have been unsuccessful so far. But this is not the only reason, as Piller (2016:73) points out:

> [L]anguage intersects with other forms of disadvantages and privilege. […] linguistic diversity can be conceived of as differentially valued pyramid and the value of a particular linguistic repertoire cannot be determined in isolation from that the value accorded to the speaker of that repertoire. Consequently, the linguistic repertoires of those disadvantaged in other ways – think, for example, race, country of origin, ethnicity, gender, education – will constitute an additional disadvantage and compound their vulnerabilities at work.

Piller's comment then suggests that Rojan is exposed to forms of disadvantage that go beyond language, a point I return to in Chapter 8.4.2.

7.4 Making Money through Facebook

When migrants are faced with limited employment opportunities, self-employment can be a necessary vehicle for upward mobility.

Blackledge and Trehan
(2018:300)

Section 7.4 explores how Aban and Mamoud make use of a Facebook group, *The Syrian Community of Leeds Facebook Group* (the SCOLFBG). Data Extracts 2 and 3 investigate how informal ways of making money are sought out, but also how Facebook groups are used to advertise specialized skills and services for a niche audience. I explore in this section how business-related content is created and shared via Facebook. Here, Data Extract 2 is concerned with the negotiation process of finding an Arabic tutor (Mamoud) through the SCOLFBG, which acts an informal online marketplace. To gain a deepened understanding of Data Extract 2 and the actors that are part of it, this series of screenshots is analysed through the lenses of capital and loss of capital. Furthermore, Data Extract 3 revisits the same Facebook group from a spatio-social viewpoint, as it follows Aban's efforts in advertising and marketing his plumbing services in the Leeds area. This data extract unearths the spatial layers (i.e. social, local, translocal) of this particular Facebook Group.

7.4.1 Data Extract 2: Mamoud, Arabic Lessons

(a) Context

In November 2016, as I was recruiting participants, I decided to take informal Arabic lessons, hoping to spend more time with the Syrian community in Leeds. I had already met Yara, Saad's wife at this point (c.f. Chapter 4.5). I told her about my plans. She again told Saad about this, who posted my Arabic tutor request on the SCOLFBG, in Arabic. The post received some attention (eight likes) as well as four comments by Saad, Yara and two further group members (H and M). A few days after the post was published, Mamoud got in touch with Saad, without publicly replying to the post. Saad forwarded my number to Mamoud, who called me to arrange a first meeting at his house. Over time, I recruited Mamoud as my third and final key participant. The table below shows an edited screenshot of the original post in the left column and its English translation in the right column. The original post, as well as the consecutive comments, were all written in Arabic. The English translation within the left column is an automated Facebook translation.

(b) Data Extract 2: Mamoud

Screenshot (11/2016)	Translation
November , 2016 Saad شب ألماني حايب يتعلم عربي مستعد يدفع ٨ باوند بالساعة ٥ ساعات بالأسبوع بجامعة ليدز اللي مهتم يتواصل معي A German guy who wants to learn Arabic ready to pay 8 POUNDS AT 5 hours a week at Leeds University Who is interested in communicating with me ✿ · Rate this translation 👍 Like 💬 Comment ↗ Share 👍 8 H مهتمة ودراسي هدف علم العربي بهي البلاد بس للاسف انا مو بليدز Like · Reply · See Translation · 1y M معلم تدريس ب ٨ باوند مع احترامي هاد اسمو بخس للحق اي مدرس ببريطانيا ما بيقل ساعة الخصوصي عن ٢٠ باوند وخصوصي لغة مثل الغربية بالمناسبة اخي انا مدرس لغة عربية Like · Reply · See Translation · 1y 👍 1 Saad انا طلب مني الشب الألماني انه لاقيله مين يدرسه يعني مجرد مرسال وقال هي إمكانيته Like · Reply · See Translation · 1y Yara والله بخس غريب يعني عنكرزة الشخص الالماني بيدرس مجانا و برضوا عرض يدفع لتدرسوا عربي. لاحظوا الفرق. وبعدين انا بدرس بمدرسة انكليزي و بعد الضرايب مايبصلني 8. Like · Reply · See Translation · 1y Write a comment... 😊 📷 GIF 🎨	**POST:** **Saad** A German guy would like to learn the Arabic language. He is looking for about five hours per week at the University of Leeds. He is ready to pay £8 per hour. Contact me if you're interested in this offer. **COMMENTS:** **H.** I am interest in this offer, because my goal in this country is to teach Arabic. But unfortunately, I don't live in Leeds. **M.** With all my respect, to teach for £8 per hour, this called minimization of rights. Any British teacher who gives private lessons will ask for no less than 20 pounds per hour, especially for teaching a language such as Arabic. And by the way my friend, I am an Arabic language teacher. **Saad** I am just a messenger. The German guy came to me and asked me to help him to find someone to teach him. Also, he said that this is what he is able to pay. **Yara** Can you see a strange waste of money? This German guy studies without getting paid, moreover he makes us an offer, so we may teach him Arabic for payment. Also, I teach at an English school and after tax, I receive less than £8 per hour.

(c) Analysis: Data Extract 2

In what follows, I discuss Data Extract 2 in more detail from two distinct viewpoints; first, I draw attention to the SCOLFBG. Here, I make the argument that Facebook groups such as the SCOLFBG can be perceived as overlapping local, translocal and transnational marketplaces for formal and particularly informal business opportunities, in which supply and demand come together in an unfiltered way. Second, I shift attention to Mamoud and his use of the SCOLFBG, as well as to his rationale in tutoring me in Arabic.

The SCOLFBG: An online marketplace?

As outlined in Chapter 4.6, the SCOLFBG was instigated by Saad and provides a freely accessible, multilingual and multimodal online space for newly arrived Syrians and others in Leeds and elsewhere. As other research has pointed towards (e.g. Tagg and Lyons, 2018:317), mobile technologies in this context of migration and business are often used to interact with people of "similar ethnic and linguistic background". The following two data extracts evidence this claim further.

Throughout fieldwork, I have closely observed activity on the SCOLFBG for approximately twelve months. During this time, I have witnessed employment-related content being posted and shared on a regular basis. A content analysis of 200 posts on the SCOLFBG (c.f. Chapter 4.6) confirms this; 28 of the 200 posts were concerned with employment, business and further education opportunities, while another ten posts promoted businesses, shops and restaurants (Vollmer, 2019). In total, 19% of all posts were concerned with advertising work or promoting new and already established businesses, both in Leeds and on a national and even on a transnational level. The job offers included mostly temporary, part-time and sporadic work, such as seasonal positions with the Royal Mail or sporadic work in construction. More than that, workshops on how to buy and sell for profit through eBay were disseminated on this group. The following extract from a recorded conversation with Saad provides us with more insights regarding the creation and sharing of work-related content.

Data Extract: Recorded conversation with Saad (January 2017)
[…] Mhh. It's like when you asked for a teacher for example, it was so, I don't [know] who's willing to do, so I put the advert on that said somebody needs a teacher and who's willing to do it, and the first one who came and said well I'm willing to do that. So, it's a kind of liaison; people with each other, people with other communities and mhh, it's about the group, so it's open for anyone. […]

In this short extract, Saad comments on the process of finding an Arabic tutor for me. As Saad points out, he sees the SCOLFBG as something similar to an open-access online noticeboard, where discussions are instigated and communication between group members in Leeds and elsewhere is facilitated. Interesting here is that Saad clearly demarcates between content and message; in the comment section of his post (I am just a messenger), Saad labels himself as a 'messenger', after M, another group member, criticizes the price of the hourly rate.

The discussion in the comments of his post further illustrate Saad's own understanding of his position; firstly, as we will see in more detail in Data Extract 3, the SCOLFBG has a translocal, even transnational audience. Members, such as H, who are not physically located in Leeds join and shape the interaction. In this case, H announces her interest but acknowledges that she does not live in Leeds. More than that, we learn that H has migrated to the UK from another country and that she is hoping to tutor Arabic in the near future. Here, her commentary offers insights into how group members might make use of the SCOLFBG within this employment context; H's remark not only reveals her aspirations to tutor Arabic in the near future, but also indicates that this might in fact be a new career path. Although it remains somewhat speculative if language tutoring is in fact a different career, it does resonate with the literature outlined in Section 7.2 on migration and employment, particularly with Alberti's (2014) notion of 'job-reskilling' and 'job-jumping'. More than that, H is using the SCOLFBG as a tool to track potential career opportunities, both formal and informal, within her chosen field of work. This then would suggest that Facebook groups like the SCOLFBG support the

facilitation of social mobility, towards more secure and better paid employment opportunities.

M's comment on the other hand is of a different nature; M criticizes the hourly rate of the advertised post and points out that £8 per hour is below the expected hourly rate of conventional language tuition. More than that, M brings to attention that there might be a discrepancy and racial bias in pay between British and foreign teachers ("Any British teacher who gives private lessons will ask for no less than 20 pounds per hour, especially for teaching a language such as Arabic"). Last, M legitimizes his commentary by positioning himself as an established Arabic teacher. Therefore, M clearly rejects the proposed offer. In this sense, M is unwilling to provide language tuition 'under market value'. M's comment, a rejection, provides a contrast to H's earlier remark; whereas H welcomes the offer and considers it as a potential career development, M clearly struggles to reposition himself.

As indicated earlier, this is followed by Saad's comment in which he clarifies his position as a messenger rather than as having any influence on its content. Last, Yara, Saad's wife, provides additional commentary; she justifies the lower hourly rate by providing further information on my status as a postgraduate student. More than that, she contrasts my offer of language tuition with her own official teaching role. Here, Yara points out that the language tutor of this advertisement wouldn't have to pay taxes and would, in real terms, in fact earn more than she would within the formal economy. In this sense, Yara provides a direct comparison between informal and formal language tutoring, between formal and informal work.

In this sense, potential language tutors either accept or turn down the offer of being paid £8 per hour to tutor Arabic. Here, the SCOLFBG acts as a translocal marketplace, where the equilibrium point of demand and supply is being negotiated and discussed as the offer is posted. More than that, it seems as if 'formal' versus 'informal' clearly oppose each other; whereas H and Yara seem to be appreciative and accepting, M is clearly in the opposition. The SCOLFBG acts as the locus of this negotiation process. Opposed to Data Extract 1, where the application procedure is rather covert and anonymous, the SCOLFBG is a transparent, but also a less structured process.

Mamoud: active agent?

Although Mamoud has no previous experience in language tutoring or teaching more generally, he offers to tutor me for the agreed rate. Throughout his professional career, Mamoud has been a furniture business owner and carpenter, a minibus driver, a restaurateur and chef. As discussed in Chapter 6 and also in Chapter 7.2, Mamoud has lost significant economic, social, cultural and symbolic capital since arriving in Leeds. Although, in theory, Mamoud's varied work experience might offer him more possibilities than others, Mamoud still struggles to find work; as he no longer holds a driving license (c.f. Chapter 6), Mamoud cannot resume a career in driving goods or people. Likewise, as there is little demand for bespoke wooden mosaic furniture in Yorkshire, returning to his carpenter career transpires to be difficult. Furthermore, as opening a restaurant or food outlet require considerable economic capital, Mamoud has to explore other career paths.

Tagg and Lyons (2018:313) point to migrants as neither "[…] victims nor passive users of the technology", a position researchers might easily fall into, but instead perceive migrants as "active agents able to exploit available technologies […] they deem necessary to navigate the superdiverse city spaces in which they live and work." This description by Tagg and Lyons resonates well with the observed mobile practices in this data extract and in Chapter 7 more generally; Mamoud, but also M and H exploit technology that is available and accessible to them, to scout and identify novel ways of making money within their new environments; on the one hand, Facebook provides its users with the necessary infrastructure, accessibility and functionality to consume, share and interact. On the other hand, Saad's role as group mediator and messenger channels and condenses relevant content for newly arrived people.

Correa-Velez et al. (2013:329) underscore in their research that newly arrived refugees heavily draw on informal networks to find various types of employment. They note that "[t]he most common job searching strategy was through family and friends […]." Obviously, it goes without saying that community efforts such as the formation of informal migrant networks predate the internet and social media platforms. In this migration and employment

context, it seems very likely that newcomers would seek out others with shared migration trajectories that also align to a "cultural sameness" (Tagg and Lyons, 2018), meaning that individuals with similar ethnic, cultural and linguistic backgrounds are likely to hold relevant information on potential job openings.

Historically, there has been a growing interest in informal migrant networks over the last thirty years, often from economic and sociological viewpoints (c.f. Fernández-Kelly and Garcia, 1989; Bhachu and Light, 2004; Light et al., 2004; Collier, 2013; Correa-Velez et al., 2013; Waite, 2017). Although this thesis chapter does not offer the space to accommodate an in-depth discussion on (pre-internet) informal migrant networks, it is still worthwhile to explore key characteristics of networks, particularly vis-à-vis a more refined understanding of contemporary mobile and translocal networking spaces, such as the SCOLFBG. Hence, I briefly revisit two characteristics of informal networks, *network size* and *network economy*.

First, Light et al. (2004:28) point out that when informal migrant networks grow, they also increase their efficiency; "[e]fficient networks expose every job and apartment that exist in some immigrant-receiving locality or region, thus maximally facilitating the introduction of new immigrant newcomers into them." The more individuals use and align with a particular network, the more powerful and resourceful the network becomes.

Second, Fernández-Kelly and Garcia (1989) argue that an informal immigrant economy *shields* immigrant workers from the mainstream labour market; Light et al. (2004:36) stress that through informal economies, immigrant workers are able to "exert some upward pressure upon the general labor market that, if it wants their services, must make offers that are not only superior to unemployment, but are also superior to what they could otherwise obtain in the immigrant economy, whether as employees or as self-employed." From this point of view, informal employment opportunities, which are disseminated through informal networks, offer crucial alternatives for migrant workers.

In a wider sense, this then suggests that for migrants, informal networks can be more effective ways into employment than that those offered by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and the Job Centre.

Yet, how do these particular network characteristics relate to online spaces such as the SCOLFBG? The SCOLFBG has consistently grown in size throughout and after data collection. Whereas in the beginning of this research project, the Facebook group counted around 890 members (11/2016), three years onwards, the group consists of more than 1450 (12/2019). However, has this Facebook group also become more 'effective' due to its increase in members? This is a difficult empirical question to answer; on the one hand, new members from various geographical locations (e.g. H, Data Extract 2) and from stratified institutions and employment contexts (e.g. myself, Data Extract 2) provide more refined collective capital, i.e. a growing consortium of links, networks, and skills, which benefits the entire group. On the other hand, most of the content creation and content dissemination (e.g. Data Extract 2 and 3) is still facilitated through Saad. His position as group administrator remains relatively unquestioned, regardless of how many new members join the group. This would then suggest that "more is better".

Furthermore, opposed to the well-documented view that the internet and social media foster superdiversity (Androutsopoulos and Juffermans, 2014), research by Tagg and Lyons (2018:317) on migrant business owners and their use of mobile messaging apps has shown that migrants draw on mobile technologies to "manage and navigate the superdiverse contexts in which they live and work." This perception of mobile technologies corresponds with the SCOLFBG; the earlier proposed notion of "cultural sameness" (Tagg and Lyons, 2018) clearly applies to Data Extract 2; all actors (Saad, Yara, H, M, Mamoud) of this data extract seem to share similar cultural, linguistic and migratory trajectories. From this point of view, Mamoud capitalizes on the cultural sameness found in the SCOLFBG, in order to ease the transition from a 'Syrian space' (i.e. the SCOLFBG) onto an English dominant space (tutoring me). Finally, as the financial benefits of language tuition "are superior to unemployment" (Light et al., 2004), for Mamoud, the SCOLFBG provides relevant and accessible employment opportunities within the informal economy.

7.4.2 Data Extract 3: Aban, Plumbing

(a) Context

Data Extract 3 is a multimodal (i.e. text, emoji, likes, image) Facebook post that appeared on the SCOLFBG in May 2016. Again, Saad is the composer of this post. The post promotes Aban's plumbing services in the wider Leeds area. Attached to the Arabic text is a stock image, showing a toilet with an add-on bidet attachment. The image has been visually edited (white circle and blue dotted lines) to foreground the bidet's features. It remains unclear if the photo has been edited particularly for this post. The two screenshots of this Facebook post were taken 35 minutes after its original publication and have, at this point, attracted some attention within the Facebook group: six users have liked this post and a discussion (also in Arabic) between three people, one of them being Saad, has emerged. Some of the replies have also been liked and users have been tagged in the responses. The table below shows the two screenshots in the left column and an English translation in the right one. The English translations of the original posts are Facebook-automated machine translations.

(b) Data Extract

Original post (May 2016)	Translation
Saad ▸ SYRIAN COMMUNITY OF LEEDS الجالية 35 mins · ⊙ S.W.A.T نعلن للأخوة الموجودين في ليدز وضواحيها عن وجود معلم صحية سوري للتصليحات المنزلية شطافة تواليت (كما في الصورة) السعر ٣٥ باوند و أجرة التركيب ١٠ باوند في مدينة ليدز و ١٥ باوند في برادفورد باقي الأعمال حسب الاتفاق ... See More S.W.A.T Declare to the brothers who are in Leeds and environs about a healthy teacher suri for repairs home Shṭafh Toilet (as in the picture) the price is 35 pounds and cab construct 10 pounds in the city of Leeds and 15 pounds in Bradford The rest of the work as agreed Connect with the number. ⚙ · Rate this translation	S.W.A.T. We want to inform those who live in Leeds and its suburbs about a Syrian plumber who specializes in repairing the toilet flushers [shattaf/bidet] as shown in the picture. The price for the repair service is 35 pounds. The installation fee in Leeds is 10 pounds, and 15 pounds in Bradford. The other repair requests will be agreed on time. Contact this number: xxxxxxxxxx.
👍 Like · 💬 Comment · ↪ Share ⊙ 6 A احلا دكتور في العالم الله محي اصلك كبير بيصل كبير See Translation Like · Reply · ⊙ 1 · 34 mins Saad حبيبي ألان اشتقتالك وين غاطط ؟؟؟ See Translation Like · Reply · ⊙ 1 · 33 mins A اهلين دكتور انا يوم الاثنين القادم بكون عندك مرضان شوي See Translation Like · Reply · ⊙ 1 · 32 mins Saad A سلامتك See Translation Like · Reply · ⊙ 1 · 31 mins Write a reply... 📷 ☺ جزاك الله خير دكتور See Translation Like · Reply · 10 mins K عفوا ويلي بغير مدينة .. شكرا لادارة الصفحة See Translation Like · Reply · 4 mins Saad اذا أقل من ١٠ ميل من ليدز ١٥ باوند التركيب ومن ١١ الى ٣٠ ميل ٢٥ باوند التركيب وحاليا فقط حد أعلى ٢٥ ميل من ليدز للخدمات See Translation Like · Reply · ⊙ 1 · 1 min K عفوا انا بغير مدينة .. طيب شكرا على كل حال . 😊 😊 See Translation Like · Reply · Just now Write a comment... 📷 ☺	**A:** The best Doctor in the world. May Allah raise your rank; a good man will always stay good. **Saad:** My beloved friend, now I begin to miss you even more. Where are you hidden? **A:** Hello Doctor, I am a little bit sick but next Monday I will visit you. **Saad:** I hope you will get better soon **A:** May Allah bless you Doctor. **K:** Excuse me, what if the customer lives in another city? Thank you for managing the web [Facebook] page. **Saad:** If the customer lives less than 10 miles from Leeds, the installation price will be 15 pounds. But if the distance to the customer is between 11 to 20 miles, then the installation price will be 25 pounds. At this moment the maximum covered distance to provide services is 25 miles from Leeds. **K:** Sorry, I live in a different city. Nevertheless, thank you for everything. [Smiley/Smiley].

(c) Analysis: Data Extract 3

In what follows, I analyse Data Extract 3 from two distinct viewpoints; first, I build on the previous discussion concerning the SCOLFBG (Data Extract 2) and discuss its affordances within this migration and employment context. Here, I scrutinize Saad's role as group administrator and foreground spatial aspects of locality and translocality. Second, I take a closer look at the plumbing services which Aban offers on the SCOLFBG; I make the argument that we can interpret the add-on bidets as 'indexically linked' (Silverstein, 2003; Blackledge and Trehan, 2018; Blommaert, 2018b) to wider socio-cultural and religious practices of Middle Eastern and Arab world.

The SCOLFBG: a spatio-scalar interpretation

Although all of the 1450 group members (12/2019) can create and disseminate content on the SCOLFBG, many posts are composed by Saad himself. The earlier mentioned content analysis (c.f. Chapter 4.6) reveals that out of 200 posts, Saad composed 86 (43%) (Vollmer, 2019). This again is not entirely surprising; firstly, Saad orchestrates and remediates (Bolter and Grusin, 1999; Adami, 2014) discourses with and in between different actors, such as newly arrived people, but also with local stakeholders (e.g. ESOL providers and charities). More than that, as group administrator, Saad is closely linked to many of the formal and informal spaces that newcomers to Leeds are drawn to, such as the SK and the SC. Here, Saad's deep-seated physical presence in these local spaces of arrival is clearly reflected on the SCOLFBG, manifested through Saad's posts and comments. The table below gives account of Saad's presence at my data collection sites during the fieldwork phase. Whereas the left column names the different data collection sites, the right column shows how many times Saad has been at each site during fieldwork. The number in brackets shows how often I frequented each data collection site during the fieldwork period.

Data Collection Site	Saad's physical presence
Syrian Kitchen	10 (17)
Syrian Café	6 (13)
St. Vincent's Support Centre	0 (32)
Mamoud's house	0 (7)
Total	**16 (69)**

Table 10: Saad at different Data Collection Sites

The numbers confirm Saad's strong physical presence; out my 69 visits to various sites, Saad was present 16 times (23%). The percentage is even higher (26%), when private spaces to which Saad would only have limited access, such as Mamoud's house, are subtracted.

Second, Saad and his wife Yara regularly run informal events, such as the driving classes discussed in Chapter 6. For the advertisement as well as pre and post-organization of these events, the SCOLFBG is posited as the default communicative platform. More than that, a phenomenon that we might describe as *in medias res showcasing* can be identified as part of the wider digital literacy repertoire (Tagg and Asprey, 2017) observable with this Facebook group: photos, videos and live-streams that document the aforementioned events are fed back to the remaining Facebook audience by Saad and others who are present at these events. Often, this broadcasting and back-feeding of primarily multimodal and visual content onto the SCOLFBG triggers further discursive interaction (e.g. comments and likes) from the observing group audience. This cyclical back and forth between new content and their reactions, bears resemblance with what Scollon and Scollon (2004) refer to as 'cycles of discourse'; the Scollons (2004:15) argue that "[…], we need to expand the circumference of our analysis in time and space from the current situation by looking at the discourses present and how they relate to past discourses and discourses which anticipate the future and to extend geographically beyond the site of the current engagement […]".

Third, as we have observed in Data Extract 2, Saad often acts as a messenger rather than as a content creator, remediating (Adami, 2014) both virtual and physical discourses onto the Facebook group. As Adami (2014:224) argues, online environments such as Facebook and Twitter "foster remediation to an unprecedented extent [.]" This applies to our context; I have described elsewhere (Vollmer, 2018b), how Saad draws on the SCOLFBG, on his smartphone, while accessing different social spaces, to share and disseminate content which he deems useful and appropriate for the Facebook audience.

However, these realizations vis-à-vis Saad's foregrounded position within the SCOLFBG do not necessarily explain why Aban doesn't advertise and communicate his emerging business endeavours himself. On the contrary, they raise questions of access, hierarchy and power. To explore and demarcate the roles of Saad, Aban and other group members in clearer terms, I interweave Bourdieu's concepts of *hiatus* and *capital* into this discussion of Facebook mediated communication.

Bourdieu (1988:163) coined the term *hiatus effect* in the context of educational qualification as he describes the structural break between expectations and actual provided job opportunities in the labour market after students graduate from school. Bourdieu argues that particularly for privileged students, "who have not managed to reconvert their inherited high cultural capital into academic capital", the hiatus effect is the greatest. Therefore, a lack or loss of capital precipitates in greater hiatus effects. Once we transfer Bourdieus' notions of capital (1986) and hiatus (1988) onto the SCOLFBG, we are able to make the following observations: based on unequal distribution and the significant loss of capital (Blommaert, 2005) experienced by many SCOLFBG members (including Aban), a hiatus is noticeable among newly arrived migrants and their expectations to create and share content on the SCOLFBG, opposed to their actual use of it. Following this train of thought, this Facebook group would then in fact not be a level playing field, where all members equally participate, but would rather be a reflection of its members' various capital, both online and offline. Moreover we could argue that based on Saad's high social, symbolic and linguistic capital, Saad is more endowed to communicate Aban's business proposal, than Aban himself.

However, this line of thinking raises further questions regarding conceptualizations of the group: how can we theorize the SCOLFBG and other groups, where local and translocal actors, bestowed with unequal capital, interact with each other? Here, we touch upon existing debates within current sociolinguistic, ICT and migration scholarship, where the internet, but social media platforms in particular, have been regarded as *superdiverse* ethnic and linguistic spaces (Vertovec, 2007). Although the concept of superdiversity is somewhat contested, as there are ongoing debates on how the terminology should be applied (Flores and Lewis, 2016), particularly in the realm of trade and 'doing business', superdiversity has been brought in as an analytical lens; Pennycook and Otsuji (2015:3) for instance argue that "[m]arkets, more than any other city space, perhaps define human engagement with difference." Yet, does the notion of superdiversity apply to trade and business, facilitated through the SCOLFBG and through smartphones of newly arrived migrants?

Tagg and Lyons (2018:313) show in their research that "entrepreneurial migrants are able to draw resourcefully and purposefully on their mobile phones in order to get things done, maintain relationships and establish identities as entrepreneurs of a particular heritage background, within and beyond a superdiverse city space." However, they (2018:314) remind us that there is nothing "inherently superdiverse about the internet" and that we should in fact judge the superdiverse nature of specific online spaces, based on each particular context, rather than pressing for general assumptions about the Internet as a whole.

Regarding the SCOLFBG, we can identify superdiverse characteristics, such as the use of multiple languages and the diverse ethnic, cultural, socio-economic and religious backgrounds of its members (Vollmer, 2019). More than that, as pointed out earlier, members, both new and old to Leeds, make use of this Facebook group. Data Extract 2 has highlighted this clearly; for some group members, interactions with others are clearly motivated by the prospect of economic gain. Saad identifies the open and inclusive character of the SCOLFBG group as a key characteristic of the group ("people with each other, people with other communities").

At the same time, as mentioned earlier, the SCOLFBG shares homogenous features of a "cultural sameness" (Tagg and Lyons, 2018), which do resonate with Oldenburg's (1996/7;1999) concept of the 'third place'; as initially outlined in Chapter 2.4, third places are "nothing more than informal public gathering places" that serve important purposes for local community formation (Oldenburg, 1996/7:6). Here, Soukup (2006:425) argues that computer-mediated communication (CMC) can provide a "home away from home." Soukup argues that neither physical nor virtual third places eliminate status and power, yet they might open opportunities for obtaining social capital. Can this notion of third place be applied to the SCOLFBG? The analyses following Chapter 6 have clearly shown that this Facebook group plays a central role for many Syrian newcomers to Leeds. Although there are also non-Syrian members, most members associate and link to the country or the wider region in one way or another. Therefore, the 'home away from home' notion resonates well with the SCOLFBG. This again also explains why Aban promotes his plumbing services on this Facebook group rather than on more ethnically diverse and neutral online spaces, such as Gumtree or Craigslist.

Research discussed earlier by Tagg and Lyons (2018:318) on Polish shopkeepers underscores this further; the researchers point out that there is "a focus on cultural sameness between the shopkeepers and their customers, and the prevalence of the Polish language in their business transactions. In some ways, their digital interactions via mobile messaging apps constituted an extension of this Polish space, enabling their network to expand beyond the shop and to transgress traditionally conceived boundaries." Similarly, the SCOLFBG extends a translocal 'Syrian space' in Leeds and elsewhere, a point I explore further in the following.

Aban, the Syrian-space plumber?

Similar as we have seen with Mamoud in Data Extract 2, accessing this Syrian space through the SCOLFBG seems to offer Aban a real alternative; although he has decades of work experience in plumbing, Aban struggles to find work within his field of expertise. Yet, the specialized audience of this particular Facebook group is interested in Aban's niche services. My fieldnotes confirm his economic success further.

Fieldnotes, Conversation with Yara, March 2017
Yara mentioned Aban and his success with installing bidets in people's bathrooms ("he's a good plumber").

More than that, the argument can be made that Aban's plumbing services, but particularly the installation of add-on bidets, can be interpreted as "indexically linked" (Blackledge and Trehan, 2018; Blommaert, 2018) to a wider *Syrianness*, which subsumes socio-cultural and religious practices of the Middle Eastern and Arab world. Research by Blackledge and Trehan (2018:303) investigated the "everyday practices" of migrant business owners at the Birmingham Bull Ring Indoor Market. A Chinese couple, Meiyen Chew and Kang Chen, who run a butcher's stall at the Bull Ring reveal that a key part of their business strategy is to sell blood curd and 'Fuzhou Fish Balls'. The following excerpt from Blackledge and Trehan (2018:305) explains this in more detail:

> Meiyen Chew described how selling 'fish balls' was a means of attracting customers from China. She said there was no local supplier in Birmingham, so 'Kang drove to London every Sunday with a gigantic empty suitcase and came back with the luggage full of fish balls each time. […] Fuzhou fish balls, from Kang Chen's home region of Fujian, became a mobile, translocal product, recontextualised from southern China to the Midlands of England.

The researchers (2018:305) argue that blood curd and 'Fuzhou Fish Balls' that Meiyen Chew and Kang Chen sell in their stall are "indexically linked" to a "particular taste, global region, and, perhaps, set of cultural practices." Following this line of thinking, Aban's plumbing services, but especially the installation of bidet features onto UK toilets is indexically linked to a set of cultural but also religious practices of Syria and the wider Arab world. Similar to blood curd and 'Fuzhou Fish Balls', add-on bidets can be understood as culturally significant products that are not necessarily available in the UK mainstream economy. From an economic point of view, this then shows, how the SCOLFBG provides a culturally sensitive and culturally relevant space, to which Syrian expatriates can turn to, in order to find niche products, such as add-on bidets.

7.5 Concluding Remarks

The three data extracts discussed in this thesis chapter offer crucial insights into how mobile technologies are being used by newly arrived migrants to find and secure employment opportunities, both in the formal and informal economy. All three extracts resonate with findings by Tagg and Lyons (2018:313) who show that "entrepreneurial migrants are able to draw resourcefully and purposefully on their mobile phones in order to get things done, maintain relationships and establish identities as entrepreneurs of a particular heritage background, within and beyond a superdiverse city space."

More than that, the data extracts clearly point towards a shift away from formalized and isolated job application procedures, towards more fluid, opportunistic and network-centred practices. These latter practices might be further characterized as follows: first, there is a clear recognition of the blending of home and work (Blackledge and Trehan, 2018; Tagg and Lyons, 2018). On the one hand, Data Extract 1 highlights the fluidity but also intensity of Rojan's job searching and job application practices. This example clearly shows, how looking for work has become a quotidian and routinized practice for Rojan. Similarly, Data Extract 1 indicates Rojan's struggle to succeed in finding paid work through official channels. On the other hand, Data Extracts 2 and 3 point toward the importance of a translocal network of 'cultural sameness'. Within a specialized and mostly homogenous audience, relevant information is disseminated, shared and commented on, in hope for economic gain.

Furthermore, all three extracts account for the significant loss of capital (Bourdieu, 1986,1992; Blommaert, 2005) that Rojan, Aban and Mamoud are exposed to as they search for work, a point I revisit in the succeeding chapter; as Colic-Peisker and Tilbury point out (2006:213), "the loss of occupational status among refugee arrivals in reality means that doctors and engineers drive taxis, previous lecturers work as teacher's assistants, a sociologist works as an underground miner, a helicopter pilot becomes a courier, economics, accountants and teachers work as cleaners and an engineer holds a semi-skilled job in the building industry."

Last, the digital literacy practices scrutinized in this chapter reflect my participants' efforts in creating and finding employment opportunities; first, Rojan's use of UJ whilst at the SK highlights how seeking out potential job opportunities is part of his digital literacies repertoire. This is an argument I revisit further in the succeeding chapter.

Second, resonating with the findings of Chapter 6, the literacy practices of this chapter underscore the importance of informal online networks, such as the SCOLFBG. Here, Mamoud's willingness to tutor Arabic, as well as Aban's business efforts hint towards the wider relevance of informal, day-to-day mobile literacy practices, to identify and create job opportunities amongst a plethora of posts and various types of information disseminated online. Mamoud is perusing posts that have been shared on the SCOLFBG, to seek out meaningful content for him. This again suggests a strong link between my participants' mobile literacy practices and their efforts to settle and belong to Leeds.

Following the three analytical chapters, Chapter 8 aims to accomplish the following two tasks; first, it is in this chapter where the two research questions, posed in Chapter 3.7, are answered. Second, I identify and foreground the original contributions to knowledge made in this PhD thesis, by critically reflecting on the findings of Chapters 5-7. Here, I discuss the notion of belonging through the SCOLFBG as well as explore how smartphones affect space. The themes to be discussed in the following are original contributions, partly empirical, partly theoretical and practical, which stem from the data extracts analysed in this research project.

Chapter 8: Discussion

8.1. Chapter Organization

Chapter 8 (*Discussion*) is organized as follows: first, in 8.2, I revisit Analytical Chapters 5-7 and summarize each chapter's key findings. Next, in 8.3-8.5, I integrate and synthesize these thesis findings within a wider discussion of newly arrived Syrian refugees' spatio-mobile literacy practices, to address the research questions posed in Chapter 3.7.2.

Here, to pinpoint and underscore the original theoretical and empirical contributions of this PhD thesis in as much clarity as possible, I construct the points of discussion against the backdrop of existing, relevant theory, which has previously been identified and outlined in Chapter 2 as well as in the analytical chapters.

In Section 8.3, I address RQ1 (*How do Aban, Rojan and Mamoud, three newly arrived Syrian refugees to Leeds, draw on mobile technologies and particularly on their smartphones, to engage with and support notions of belonging in their everyday lives?)* and conceptualize the role of smartphones for new arrivals vis-à-vis their settlement trajectories to their new place of home, Leeds, particularly in regard to the notions of 'belonging' (Yuval-Davis et al., 2005; Yuval-Davis, 2006) and 'non-belonging' (Vallius et al., 2019); I develop the argument that the observed and investigated smartphone practices of Chapters 5-7 yield novel insights into how adult migrants establish a sense of belonging through smartphone-mediated literacy practices. To illustrate this further, I show how concrete articulations of belonging are facilitated via the SCOLFBG and other smartphone-mediated literacy practices.

Second, Section 8.4, which is concerned with RQ2 (*How does my participants' smartphone use affect and impact the physical, virtual and hybrid spaces they traverse through and reside in within their newfound environments?*), shifts focus away from one spatial example of belonging towards the wider mechanics of spatiality and mobility.

Here, I interweave Data Extracts 7.1 and 5.2.3 into this emerging discussion, which pay attention to the spatial implications of my participants' mobile smartphone practices; whereas 7.1 exemplifies how different spatial threads, for instance physical, social and virtual spaces intersect into one unique hybrid space, 5.2.3 foregrounds how smartphones bring the potential to expand the communicative reach of mobile contexts (Blommaert, 2017), particularly as my participants traverse between city spaces.

Last, in 8.5, I synthesise these novel theoretical insights of 8.3 and 8.4 and summarize their implications for my participants. Here, I propose the notion of smartphones as spatial instruments that have the potential to impact and capitalize on the immediate physical spaces my participants find themselves in and traverse throughout their settlement trajectory.

8.2. Summary of Findings

In the following, I present the findings of Chapters 5-7 in a condensed summary.

8.2.1 Findings: Analytical Chapter 5 (*Journeys*)

The three data extracts (5.1-5.3) of Chapter 5 draw attention to how smartphones are utilized as vehicles of transnational, translocal and local spatio-temporal and translingual movements; against the backdrop of immense loss of capital (Blommaert, 2005), smartphones and mobile internet become indispensable currency for my participants to enable their movements across novel spaces of legality (5.1), the multilingual neighbourhood (5.2) and translingual and trans-spatial communication (5.3).

Data Extract 5.1 shows how Rojan draws on his smartphone to navigate his perilous journey to the UK from Calais on the back of a lorry; the discussed data indicates how access to smartphones reinstates lost agency to undocumented migrants, as they make undocumented border crossings arranged by traffickers and smugglers. In a wider sense, 5.1 shows that for migrants tangled up in border crossings, smartphones contribute to a perceived sense of safety, ontological security (Witteborn, 2015) and agency.

Data Extract 5.2 on the other hand highlights how Mamoud gains access to the English language dominant Leeds public transportation system, with the help of Google Maps (GM), as he plans a bus journey from his house to Leeds station. 5.2 thus shows, how through fluid translanguaging processes, monolingual spaces become accessible to migrant language learners. Last, Data Extract 5.3 gives evidence to how the multimodal and transmodal WhatsApp messenger app (WA) is utilized by Aban to arrange a meet-up while he is on a Leeds bus, chaperoning his children to school. Moreover, this data extract offers novel insights into how adult English language learners strategize in selecting different modes on WA, such as recorded speech or the sharing of GPS data, to maintain informal smartphone-mediated conversations and disseminate meaning.

8.2.2 Findings: Analytical Chapter 6 (*Driving*)

Chapter 6 is organized in two subsections which bring attention to how Rojan, Aban and Mamoud integrate mobile technologies and particularly their smartphones, to prepare for the theoretical part of the UK driving test. Similar to Chapter 5, the conceptual starting point of this analytical chapter revolves around the theme of loss of capital (Blommaert, 2005); the chapter underscores on the one hand, how the UK theoretical driving test itself acts as a significant linguistic gatekeeper, as test takers must take and pass the test in English, Welsh or British Sign Language in order to drive on UK roads. On the other hand, Chapter 6 gives evidence of how smartphone applications facilitate facets of informal language learning as well as the learning of subject matter.

In the chapter's first section, Data Extracts 6.1 and 6.2 evidence how informal, independent smartphone-mediated study prevail as an effective and successful strategy to access English-dominant tests and study materials; in 6.1, Rojan describes in detail how he prepares for the theoretical driving test with iTheory, an English-only theory test preparation app, in conjunction with Google Translate. Effectively, Rojan circumnavigates iTheory's 'English-only' layout by synthesizing the Google Translate app into his mobile learning practices, all facilitated on his smartphone.

The second section of Chapter 6 (Data Extracts 6.3 and 6.4) on the other hand has its focal point on a Leeds-centred, community-based approach in regard to the preparation for the UK driving test; 6.3 shows how multilingual and translocal Facebook groups such as the SCOLFBG offer localized, bottom-up, grassroots support to newly arrived Syrians to Leeds; 6.1 explicates how the SCOLFBG acts as an effective, multilingual platform, capable of instigating and organizing localized community support, such as Saad's spontaneous multilingual test preparation sessions, frequented by Mamoud and Saad.

Last, Data Extract 6.4 brings attention to the pitfalls of informal and bottom-up community support; after a dispute between Mamoud and Saad, Mamoud's access to the SCOLFBG and its associated services become out of reach. This again interferes with Mamoud's efforts of taking the UK driving test.

8.2.3 Findings: Analytical Chapter 7 (*Making Money*)

Last, Chapter 7 draws attention to how my participants turn to mobile technologies, and particularly to their smartphones, to find paid work, as well as to create informal economic opportunities via the SCOLFBG.

Data Extract 7.1 is concerned with Rojan's use of Universal Jobmatch (UJ) on his smartphone to find paid work in Leeds. The data shows how Rojan engages in informal, routinized mobile job-searching practices via UJ. His unsuccessful application trajectory brings the loss of symbolic and economic capital (Blommaert, 2005) to light, as newcomers try to enter the UK job market; Rojan's Syrian qualifications and existing work experience are only partly recognized by UK institutions. Therefore, Rojan has to discontinue his previous employment trajectory and is forced to apply for menial work below his previous qualification level.

Data Extract 7.2 illustrates how Mamoud seeks out alternative means of work online, as the conventional labour market transpires to be out of reach for him, too; 7.2 shows how the SCOLFBG acts as a translocal marketplace, where the equilibrium point of demand and supply are being negotiated as offers, in this case Arabic lessons, are posted. In a wider sense, 7.3 contests the notion that refugees are passive and without agency, as it shows how Mamoud, an "active agent", exploits available technologies within his reach, to navigate the superdiverse city space he lives in.

Last, Data Extract 7.3 is concerned with Aban's use of the SCOLFBG to promote his extensive vocational experience as a plumber to a largely Syrian audience. As the conventional labour market remains out of reach, Aban promotes his plumbing services online, with a particular focus on the installation of a bidet feature to conventional UK toilets. Again, data from this chapter rejects the notion that refugees are passive and without agency. More than that, 7.3 contests the notion of the internet as an inherently superdiverse space (Vertovec, 2007), with the SCOLFBG showing "indexically linked" (Blackledge and Trehan, 2018; Blommaert, 2018) characteristics of "cultural sameness" (Tagg and Lyons, 2018).

8.3 Belonging through Smartphones

The following section (8.3) positions the mobile literacy practices discussed in Chapters 5-7 within a wider discussion of newcomers' smartphone use vis-à-vis their capacity to support and facilitate a sense of belonging. First, I outline what it means 'to belong' and how the practices observed on my participants' smartphones can be conceptualized as concrete articulations of belonging. To illustrate this point of discussion further, I revisit the SCOLFBG, to highlight how the Facebook group provides a space for belonging for newcomers. Second, I build the argument that as newly arrived people navigate through their settlement, they draw on resources within their reach and develop them as they go on, sometimes, but very rarely with the support of formal communication and formal spaces of learning.

8.3.1 What it means to 'belong'

> *Belonging is about emotional attachment, about feeling 'at home' and, as Michael Ingnatieff points out, about feeling 'safe'.*
>
> Yuval-Davis (2006:197)

Yuval-Davis' quote (2006) adds two pertinent points to the discussion that follows; first, unlike other terminology that describes people's efforts in residing in a new place, such as settlement or integration, Yuval-Davis (2006:197) points out that 'belonging' foregrounds an "emotional attachment". This again means that the notion of belonging necessitates a distinct emotional and social component, which, in this discussion of migration and mobile technology use is crucial, in order to understand migrants' ICT practices on a deeper level.

Research (Gifford and Wilding, 2013; Witteborn, 2015; Smets, 2017; Kaufmann, 2018; van Eldik et al., 2019) has repeatedly identified the upkeep of existing transnational social ties, as well as the instigation of new personal contacts, as integral components to people's lives, particularly while on the move or in the process of relocating to a new place. In other words, as people try to start again somewhere new, besides securing shelter and finding work, establishing and reinstating interpersonal relationships is crucial.

As the maintenance of these local and translocal contacts happens to a large extent through social media apps on smartphone screens, thinking about my participants' trajectories of arrival in terms of belonging, with a concern for "emotional attachment" (Yuval-Davis, 2006) in place, is bound to shed light on the role smartphones play for Rojan, Aban and Mamoud. Therefore, the concept of 'belonging' offers a "thicker" (Crowley, 1999:22), more holistic construct than citizenship or settlement to explore newcomers' settlement trajectories, as it highlights not only the notion of membership and their affiliated rights and duties, but also takes the emotions, which such a membership evokes, into consideration (Crowley, 1999).

Second, as Yuval-Davis' quote further hints, the notion of belonging distinctly relates to ones' home. However, this is problematic for many; for instance, for forced migrants who had to give up their homes or for 'failed' asylum seekers who have been denied the right to establish a new home, experiences of belonging, and more often of 'non-belonging' (Vallius et al., 2019), stand in stark contrast to those of recognized mainstream citizens. bell hooks (1991:148) aptly summarizes this, as she writes that "[a]t times, home is nowhere. At times, one knows only extreme estrangement and alienation. Then home is no longer one place, it is locations."

Then again, for others, including my participants, issues of agency arise in this context of belonging; as officially recognized refugees (c.f. Chapter 4), Rojan, Aban, Mamoud and their respective families are entitled to (temporarily) reside in the UK. However, their new place of dwelling, Leeds, as well as the houses they live in, were not of their own choosing, but allocated to them by Leeds City Council. This procedure of allocating people to particular places results in many finding themselves in previously unknown areas, in unfamiliar cities and neighbourhoods, and in houses, flats and more often in precarious types of accommodation (Moorehead, 2006) they have not chosen for themselves and their families. This, of course, shapes experiences of belonging in profound ways, as I will exemplify in more detail at a later point of this discussion (8.4.3).

Thus, it becomes apparent that the notion of belonging in migratory contexts entails complexity which cannot be oversimplified. The much-debated notion

of superdiversity (Vertovec, 2007) substantiates this realization further; the same city evokes different connotations on the spectrum of belonging and non-belonging to each resident of that city, as living conditions, personal biographies, migration trajectories, legal and socio-economic statuses, etcetera, differ from resident to resident. This again means that *place* itself is not neutral but an active agent, making individuals feel as if they belong to a place or "making them feel alienated from [that] place" (Abbott, 2019:57f).

As Rojan, Mamoud and Aban find themselves in Leeds, against this backdrop of not belonging to their new 'home', mobile technologies, including the smartphones in their pockets, take on a newfound importance; as previously outlined in Chapter 2, newly arrived migrants increasingly draw on the internet to create and foster a sense of belonging (Witteborn, 2015), with virtual spaces providing refugees beyond the nation state (Gifford and Wilding, 2013). Following Witteborn (2015:363f), "[s]tudies on transnational migration have highlighted the importance of the virtual for creating a sense of belonging, safe spaces for information gathering and expression, and construction of common experiences for migrants […]." In other words, as people restart their lives in unfamiliar environments, they draw on the resources available to them and capitalize on networks, online and offline, to find people in relatable situations and to feel more at home.

On the one hand, aligning with others (Tagg and Lyon, 2018; Scheibelhofer and Täubig, 2019), this contradicts the notion of the 'passive refugee', who lives a seemingly passive life, due to his or her fragile legal status and partial exclusion to participate in society; Tagg and Lyons (2018:313) make this point and argue that migrants are neither "[…] victims nor passive users of the technology – a position which is often easy to fall into" but instead perceive them as "active agents able to exploit available technologies […] they deem necessary to navigate the superdiverse city spaces in which they live and work."

On the other hand, this also suggests that newly arrived migrants look elsewhere and find more accessible spaces online, in which they can fully participate in and belong to; Johns and Rattani (2016) for instance show how

those marginalized from formal decision-making, use ICTs to enact or renegotiate traditional features of democratic participation, ranging from modes of speaking and representation to forms of activism.

Moreover, Swerts (2014) points out that (undocumented) migrants tend to participate in political activities, such as demonstrations, community events or petitions, organized and disseminated via social media. Then again, others keep a distance from various types of online participation, for fear of arrest and deportation. The following section, 8.3.2, shows how Facebook becomes a crucial space for my participants, as they arrive in Leeds, not only in terms of information sharing, but also for engendering feelings of belonging.

8.3.2 Belonging through the SCOLFBG

Through the virtual, forced migrants have the opportunity to speak for themselves and maintain a sense of belonging through a common purpose.

Saskia Witteborn (2015:364f)

In this subsection, I conceptualize the SCOLFBG as a crucial space of belonging for my participants, who are new residents to Leeds. As Witteborn (2015) suggests in the above quote, for those who are not given full access to participate in society, virtual spaces can afford unique means to connect with people and places, in ways which would otherwise remain obstructed. The discussion that follows further builds on this argument.

The SCOLFBG, which has been instigated for Syrian newcomers to Leeds, is a translocal Facebook group that is tightly linked and interconnected with local, Leeds-based organizations, NGOs, as well as more loosely organized groups and people. Although superdiverse (Vertovec, 2007) characteristics can be identified within this group, such as the use of multiple languages and various ethnic, cultural, socio-economic and religious backgrounds of its members (Vollmer, 2019), the SCOLFBG also shares distinct homogenous features of a "cultural sameness" (Tagg and Lyons, 2018), which I have discussed in more detail in Chapter 7.4. These features resonate with Oldenburg's (1996/7; 1999) concept of the 'third place'. As described previously in Chapter 2, third

places, are "nothing more than informal public gathering places" that serve crucial purposes for local community formation (Oldenburg, 1996/7:6). I will return to this point at a later stage of this discussion.

Outlined in more detail in Chapter 4.6, the SCOLFBG has provided the starting point to several Data Extracts of Chapters 5-7 (Data Extracts 6.3, 6.4, 7.2, 7.3). This alone suggests that the Facebook group is of significance to my participants. In what follows, I develop the idea that activity on the SCOLFBG can be conceived as concrete articulations of belonging. Here, I revisit two examples from my dataset (6.3-4 and 7.3), to pinpoint, how and where notions of belonging are instigated and facilitated through the SCOLFBG.

1. Saad's Test Preparation Classes (Data Extracts 6.3-4)

Saad's informal driving test preparation classes, attended by Mamoud and Aban (Data Extracts 6.3 and 6.4), are vivid examples of how the overlap of "online and offline lives" (Pegrum, 2014:8) is facilitated through the SCOLFBG; the merging of real-life needs (i.e. needing to pass the UK driving test) with open-access, multilingual and translocal discourse (i.e. Saad's Facebook posts, Data Extract 6.4), sets in motion concrete articulations of place-bound belongings on different levels.

First, the SCOLFBG demarcates an accessible and translocal space that can be entered, visited and resided in, regardless of geographical location, level of formal schooling, or legal status. Due to its multimodal and multilingual layout, members with wide-ranging literacies can consume information, create messages and other artefacts, as well as interact with others. Moreover, the Facebook group signposts potentially relevant Leeds-based places, such as the SC, to its audiences (Vollmer, 2018b). Data Extract 6.3 underscores exactly this, as Mamoud finds out about the SC, while commenting on a Facebook post concerning Saad's classes. Goode (2010) argues that the online sphere has made new modes of membership possible within communities that may or may not have had an offline existence before. This seems to ring true for the SCOLFBG; as newcomers arrive in Leeds and join this Facebook group, they are likely to find others in similar situations, who they might then physically meet and interact with as a result of the socio-spatial

information (e.g. Saad's driving sessions at the Syrian Café), shared on the group's thread.

In a wider sense then, the SCOLFBG provides newcomers with a comprehensible, translocal, hybrid infrastructure, deeply seated within a localized Leeds network of services, charities and events. Taken together, it supplies fertile ground for informal meetups, community engagement and other forms of interactions to take place. That these interpersonal connections foster feelings of belonging among its interlocutors seems only plausible. Yet, perhaps more importantly, this again suggests that the dichotomy between the 'virtual' and the 'real', which implies a form of 'digital dualism' (Vivienne et al., 2016), is to be rejected, as 'virtual' and 'real' life blend together into one reciprocal hybrid. Instead, as Vivienne et al. (2016: 3) propose, "emergent digital norms – including literacies, surveillance, resistance and creativity – are intrinsically intertwined with the fluid actors of being and meaning making […]."

Second, returning to Goode's (2010:528) notion of virtual "membership", the SCOLFBG was set up by Saad as an informal grassroots space, *from Syrians for Syrians*, where newcomers from Syria and neighbouring regions could connect, share information and so on. The group's name itself, the "Syrian Community of Leeds Facebook Group", underscores this further. As mentioned previously, though the Facebook group shares some superdiverse characteristics, content on the SCOLFBG largely aligns with discourse of "cultural sameness" (Tagg and Lyons, 2018) (c.f. Chapter 4.6: Content Analysis). Data Extract 7.3, which highlights Aban's use of the Facebook group to promote his plumbing services, and particularly the installation of add-on bidets, is a good example of this, which I revisit at a later point.

Thus, the Facebook group promotes a distinct sense of *Syrianness*, which discourse markers such as language, religion and food reinforce (c.f. Content Analysis, Chapter 4.6). In this way, the SCOLFBG might be understood as a "home away from home" (Soukup, 2006:425), where Syrians in Leeds can belong to, regardless of their previous migratory trajectories and formal statuses. This then suggests that for my participants, who are refugees, a sense of "home", which Yuval-Davis identifies as a crucial component to

belonging, might not be absent completely, but to be found elsewhere, namely in an online group. Therefore, thinking about this Facebook group as a fairly homogenous, 'Syrian space', characterized by its cultural sameness (Tagg and Lyons, 2018), yields more evidence to why Saad's bilingual driving sessions were so appealing to Aban, Mamoud and others, particularly when seen against the backdrop of living in Leeds as a Syrian refugee, a multi-ethnic, superdiverse city (Simpson and Bradley, 2017), not necessarily known for its Syrian community.

The idea to conceptualize virtual space as an alternative 'home' has been articulated before and has previously been introduced in Chapter 2.4; Soukup (2006) for instance argues that so called 'third places', which are "informal public gathering places" (Oldenburg, 1996/7:6) are more and more to be found online, as they are disappearing in 'real' life. On the other hand, Gee's (2004) notion of affinity spaces, where people are drawn together, mostly online, based on shared interests to promote and exchange knowledge, resonates to some degree with the SCOLFBG. Yet, both Soukup and Gee seem to conceptualize virtual space as fairly autonomous and separate systems. This is not the case for the SCOLFBG, which is deeply intertwined with the city of Leeds, its people and places. This again is important and telling, for why Facebook groups like the SCOLFBG engender such strong notions of belonging witnessed throughout the analytical chapters.

Last, besides its infrastructure and its potential as a new home to Syrians in Leeds, the SCOLFBG shapes notions of belonging in this context of "the driving license" in a third way; with his classes, Saad helps Syrians to practice for and ultimately pass the UK driving license, in English. Importantly, this happens against a vacuum of non-existent multilingual learning materials and multilingual preparation classes for migrant test takers. In a wider sense, thus, the SCOLFBG is effectively providing crucial language provision that official, government-affiliated stakeholders and providers lack to offer. This again serves as a pertinent example of the voluntary sector's significance in providing crucial day-to-day services, including ESOL provision. As Simpson (2019:28) points out, the government's "[…] piecemeal and partial approach to the funding of ESOL at the scale of national policy means that much

responsibility for ESOL provision has become shouldered by the voluntary sector." This notion of 'stepping in' will reappear at a later stage of this chapter.

Although the bilingual classes were only available for a limited time, they nonetheless supported people's settlement processes; not only did the classes help test takers to comprehend the subject matter, therefore increasing chances of holding a UK driving license, in itself a significant gatekeeper for employment and mobility (c.f. Chapter 6), but also, the classes underscored a sense of togetherness and unity, as passing the test was a common underlying goal.

2. Syrian Bidets for Leeds Toilets (Data Extract 7.3)

In what follows, I revisit Data Extract 3 of Chapter 7, to illustrate how Aban's plumbing services, promoted online, fit into this discussion of belonging vis-à-vis the SCOLFBG.

First, as previously established, the SCOLFBG is characterized by features of "cultural sameness" (Tagg and Lyons, 2018). The example of Aban, promoting to install add-on bidets to conventional UK toilets on the Facebook group, substantiates this further; Aban offers a niche product, which has limited relevance for the mainstream UK market. However, the add-on bidet can be interpreted as "indexically linked" (Blackledge and Trehan, 2018; Blommaert, 2018) to a wider *Syrianness*, which subsumes socio-cultural and religious practices of the Middle Eastern and Arab world. The bidet itself can therefore be understood as a culturally significant product, which is not necessarily available in the UK.

This again shows how the SCOLFBG provides a culturally sensitive and culturally relevant space, to which Syrian expatriates can turn to, in order to find specialized products, such as add-on bidets. Furthermore, this substantiates the notion of the SCOLFBG being a home away from home, as "Syrian discourse", in this instance a marketplace of "Syrian" products, is communicated via the Facebook group. More than that, the notion of the SCOLFBG as the "new home" explains why Aban promotes his plumbing

services on the SCOLFBG rather than on more ethnically diverse and neutral online marketplaces, such as Gumtree or Craigslist.

In broader terms then, it is probable that seemingly small indexically linked artefacts, such as add-on bidets, help newcomers to feel more comfortable and "at home" in their fairly alien new environments. More than that, the fact that through the SCOLFBG, specific, culturally sensitive products are accessible in Leeds, is likely to have a positive impact on newcomers' feelings towards their new habitat, thus supporting notions of belonging towards their new home. This again builds on our understanding of virtual spaces, as discussed in the literature review of this thesis, as crucial spaces for belonging.

Second, at this stage of his settlement trajectory, Aban is not allowed to move freely and has not reinstated his right to drive yet. Still, against this backdrop of restricted mobility, he actively pursues a career as a plumber in Leeds. Data Extract 7.3, a Facebook post promoting his plumbing services, exemplifies this further; though Aban has no car and can only take on jobs which are within the Leeds area, his business still thrives. Thus, similar to findings of other research (Tagg and Lyons, 2018; Scheibelhofer and Täubig, 2019), Aban's use of the SCOLFBG contests the notion of the passive refugee and perhaps more importantly, shows how the SCOLFBG actively circumnavigates people's restricted legal statuses, in order to support their new lives in Leeds. This again suggests that online spaces like the SCOLFBG help newcomers to better their standing in ways that government-affiliated stakeholders fail to do. In this sense, the Facebook group is compensating and reinstating lost capital, by giving people, who are partly excluded from mainstream life (e.g. the mainstream labour market), voice and agency.

8.3.3 Spaces for Belonging

The domestic, the local, the public, the urban, the national and the transnational form an interconnected spatial matrix, where possibilities for belonging, for choosing not to belong and for combining belonging in multiple communities emerge.

Myria Georgiou, (2010:23)

Georgiou's comments on belonging resonate well with the SCOLFBG and its interconnected nature of the physical and the virtual. As Georgiou (2010:23) stresses, "possibilities for belonging" can emerge not only in the immediate physical spaces we would expect, but also in transnational and hybrid spatial constructs. So far, the discussion of Chapter 8 suggests that informal and volunteer-run spaces are of significance to my research participants, also in the capacity that they cater for notions of belonging; on the one hand, this signifies a crucial shift from top-down, government-affiliated provision, towards grassroots, mostly volunteer run, support structures. As the aforementioned vacuum grows and newcomers to the UK receive less and inconsistent aid from the government, to learn English (Simpson, 2015), to find work, etcetera, people naturally turn to other resources, including those informal and accessible online. The SCOLFBG is a vivid of example of how a handful of volunteers provide tailored support to a growing migrant population. The data extracts have clearly highlighted the advantages of this Facebook group, particularly vis-à-vis its flat hierarchy, easy access to information and overall reach.

Yet, at the same time, my ethnographic fieldwork has repeatedly signposted the limits and weaknesses of such volunteer-based efforts, for instance in the field of ESOL, where volunteers absorb much of the work. As Simpson (2019:28) points out, "[…] volunteer teachers are often inexperienced and untrained, centres are poorly resourced, and provision itself lacks cohesion within and beyond local areas." This certainly rings true for the data collection sites I engaged with for this research project. For instance, Saad's driving session, which can be framed as content-specific multilingual language provision, were discontinued due to lack of available teaching space. This

provides a compelling example of the flaws of ad-hoc community engagement, a point I revisit in Chapter 9.3

On the other hand, this development also raises more critical questions of authority, equal provision and transparency; the less national and local government are concerned with migrants' needs, the more 'successful integration' of newcomers is left to chance as well as their own determination; it remains rather opaque, to which extent and with whom newly arrived migrants organize themselves online, to support each other. The SCOLFBG' discourse has shown a strong 'Syrian' dimension, where membership and affiliation to this group are embedded, at least to some extent, to ones' ethnicity. Yet, it is unclear, if other migrant communities in Leeds, for instance from Eritrea, have similar online presence and level of organization. If this is not the case, access to information is under threat of becoming fragmented and racialized.

As Facebook groups are fairly unfiltered spaces with little moderation and supervision, the possibility of consuming false or tempered information, but also of newcomers being exposed to racism, hate speech, and radicalization are likely. Data Extract 7.4, which highlights Mamoud's dispute with Saad and his subsequent exit from the group, is a fitting example of this; as informal, grassroots networks appear to fill the vacuum and to assist people with their needs, questions of leadership and hierarchy remain somewhat unanswered.

Noteworthy is that the Leeds City Council (LCC) in fact relies on voluntary engagement to a substantial extent in regard to their local migration and diversity policies. As a recent LCC publication (Mahmood et al., 2019:13) highlights, "[…] working in collaboration with and funding the migrant third sector" […] and "growing our award winning approach to engaging new and settled communities through volunteers; and most importantly, spending time to develop trusting relationships with the communities that we welcome to Leeds has been and remains fundamental to the success of our approach[.]"

However, the LCC approach towards supporting newcomers to Leeds raises concerns; firstly, conceptualizations of 'communities' as tight-knit and homogenous ethnic groupings, particularly in urban centres such as Leeds,

are problematic and contested by emerging thinking about superdiversity (Vertovec, 2007) and superdiverse neighbourhoods; my fieldwork in ESOL centres around Leeds points towards the diverse and ever-changing multi-ethnic composition of ESOL classes (c.f. Chapter 9.3). This then suggests that newcomers to Leeds can't be overgeneralized or subsumed into 'imagined communities' in terms of their ethnic backgrounds.

Secondly, provision itself is not a level playing field, as peoples and communities are being supported differently. For instance, those who entered the country through the VPRS are given more substantial and generous support (e.g. financially) than those who achieved their status via a more established route, such as asylum seekers or asylum seekers whose claims have failed. This again might lead to tensions not only between various ethnic groups but also within the same communities, as, for instance, Syrians with similar experiences in their home country are given different migration statuses and are effectively treated differently.

8.4 Spaces & Smartphones

The previous section, 8.3, discussed how notions of belongings emerge and are facilitated via spaces such as the SCOLFBG; as my participants draw on mobile technologies to partake in the above-mentioned Facebook group, they enter, navigate, and make use of a unique hybrid space (Vivienne et al., 2016) which is both translocally connected online, as well as deeply seated within a demarcated, local, Leeds based, informal network of people and places.

As Georgiou (2010:29) argues, "[…] the potential of communication technologies to connect people in the locale and across boundaries, in shared attempts to seek citizenship, to find a location in the city and the world, and to shape identity in a cosmopolis are revealed in intensity rarely observed elsewhere." On first glance, Georgiou's comment resonates well with the previous discussion on the SCOLFBG. But, perhaps more importantly, it also directs us towards wider questions of spatiality and mobility within this context of migrant mobile literacy practices; Georgiou (2010) suggests that for newcomers like Rojan, Aban and Mamoud, mobile communication technologies afford an unprecedented blended multi-spatial reality, which continuously permeates the local, the translocal and everything in between. This again corresponds well with ideas discussed in the literature review of Chapter 2.4 (Spatial Literacies), which suggests that newcomers traverse between and take residence within a plurality of spaces (Lefebvre, 1991), including physical spaces (e.g. the new flat), social and educational spaces (e.g. the new ESOL class), legal and authoritarian spaces (e.g. the Job Centre), but also virtual and hybrid spaces (e.g. the SCOLFBG).

So far, however, Chapter 8 has predominantly foregrounded one singular thread, the SCOLFBG, of the manifold spatio-social realities that encompass and constitute my participants' lives. Thus, the discussion that follows (8.4) expands its focal point towards the wider mechanics of spatiality, as it is concerned with how my participants' mobile literacy practices influence and affect the relationship and interplay between multiple spaces – physical, digital and hybrid – that yield the underlying foundation for social interaction, meaning-making, notions of belonging, etcetera.

In other words, then, 8.4 moves away from a primary concern of what bounded smartphone-mediated spaces of interaction and belonging, such as the SCOLFBG, might look like, to focus on how different spaces intersect and behave, as my participants traverse between them through mobile mediated practices.

First (8.4.1), I outline key characteristics of intersecting physical, digital and hybrid spaces and foreground the role of mobile technologies in order to enable and facilitate the intersecting and blending of spaces. I construct and develop this point of discussion against the backdrop of current migration, mobility and socio-spatial scholarship, by briefly revisiting central concepts such as *Thirdspace* (Soja, 1996) and *chronotopes* (Bakhtin, 1981; Blommaert, 2017; Lyons and Tagg 2019), previously introduced in the Literature Review of Chapter 2.

Second, in Sections 8.4.2 and 8.4.3, I illustrate this blended multi-spatial reality further, by revisiting Data Extracts 7.1 and 5.3, to situate them within the initiated spatio-temporal discussion of migrant mobile technology use and mobility. Last, in Section 8.5 I propose the notion of smartphones as spatial instruments.

8.4.1 Intersecting Spaces: Unravelling Realities

Some spaces are affluent and prestigious, others are not, some are open to all, while others require intricate and extensive procedures of entrance. And all spaces stand in some kind of relationship with each other – a relationship of power and value difficult to establish beforehand, but nevertheless real and in need of inquiry.

Blommaert et al. (2005:203)

As the analyses of this thesis have shown, Rojan, Aban and Mamoud act, reside in, and traverse within a plurality of spaces as they navigate and broker their new lives in Leeds. Here, the quote above by Blommaert et al. (2005) suggests that the spaces that my participants occupy and draw on are neither static nor monolithic but fluid, with ranging levels of accessibility and thresholds of entrance, a point of argument that I will elaborate on in the following section. Moreover, Blommaert et al. (2005) argue that spaces, regardless of their composition, i.e. being physical, digital or hybrid, vary in their authority, jurisdiction and power and are thus "in need of inquiry" (Blommaert et al. 2005:203). In what follows I pursue this need of inquiry, particularly vis-à-vis those multifaceted spaces that are mediated by my participants' mobile practices.

The previous analyses, as well as the discussion concerning the use of the SCOLFBG so far, suggest that physical and virtual spaces are not separate entities or systems, which might occasionally collide or come in contact with each other, but rather, they blend into holistic hybrids with unique potential for semiosis, as individuals draw on online resources via their mobile technologies in countless everyday life situations. This again corresponds well with Soja's notion (1996) of "thirding", where material (Firstspaces) and mental spaces (Secondspaces) amalgamate into unprecedented Thirdspaces (c.f. Chapter 2.4), a point of argument I revisit again at a later point of this chapter.

Yet, as Androutsopoulos and Juffermans (2014:4) bring to attention, that it is not to say that "virtual spaces are merely equivalents or copies of urban spaces. They are not, and herein lays the relevance of studying virtual spaces of interaction in superdiverse settings. Social networking sites, virtual environments, online-gaming spaces etc. enable by virtue of their translocal

accessibility a flow of semiotic resources that by far exceeds the resources that individual members bring along […]."

This then suggests the following; on the one hand, spatial descriptions and analyses, particularly those that are concerned with hybrid, smartphone-mediated spaces, must go further than to merely identify or label their physical, virtual or hybrid composition, but instead provide thick descriptions (Geertz, 1973) of their socio-spatial and semiotic potentials. On the other hand, as my participants draw on the internet through mobile technology use, they don't just enter yet another space, but actively shape and widen their communicative reach and meaning-making potential, for instance by integrating a translocal community space into an existing social situation (Goffman, 1964). The data extracts that I revisit in the following (8.4.2 and 8.4.3), exemplify this more clearly.

Furthermore, as the sojourning and dwelling in spaces is temporarily fixed (e.g. Aban's bus journey described in Data Extract 5.3), and spaces themselves can become void or cease to exist (e.g. Mamoud discontinuation of using the SCOLFBG after a dispute with Saad, Data Extract 6.3), spatiality must be conceptualized with a temporal dimension in mind. This is particularly pertinent in regard to this project's eminent theme of migration, where mobility, i.e. the repeated movement across space and time, is inherently characteristic to my participants' day-to-day life experiences; as Baynham (2009:135) reminds us, "narratives of migration and settlement emphasize particularly strongly the dislocations and relocations in space and time […]." Data from this research project, for instance Data Extract 5.1, which illuminates Rojan's perilous journey from Calais to the UK, are poignant examples of just this.

Thus, informed by the analyses of Chapters 5-7, we arrive at chronotopic understandings (Bakhtin, 1981; Blommaert, 2017,2018b) of socio-spatial mobile practices, where space, time and mobility become key parameters of inquiry, referred to by Blommaert (2017) as 'mobile context'.

But how does my participants' mobile technology use, described in detail in the analytical chapters shape these 'mobile contexts' within their everyday settlement practices? And, perhaps more importantly, what does this add to

empirical and theoretical understandings of migrant mobile practices in more general terms? The discussions that follow (8.4.2 and 8.4.3), aim to answer these questions in more detail.

8.4.2 Data Extract 7.1: Intersecting Spaces

To concretize this discussion on smartphone-mediated intersecting spaces that has emerged through the data analyses further, I first revisit Data Extract 7.1. This extract is a screen recording concerned with Rojan's efforts to find work through Universal Jobmatch (UJ) on his smartphone, while being at the SK at All Hallows Church. On first glance, 7.1 captures a quotidian situation, which shows an individual using his smartphone to apply for jobs while being at a nearby community centre. Through a chronotopic lens, however, the data yields a pertinent example of how the use of mobile technologies affect and expand spaces of settlement and belonging for newcomers. To illustrate this point more clearly, I first identify the spatial threads that comprise this particular data extract.

a) All Hallows Church

All Hallows Church is within close proximity of Rojan's house and provides much of the infrastructure to Rojan's settlement trajectory in Leeds; the church is a well-connected support hub that runs its own foodbank and community café, holds frequent community engagement events and connects volunteer congregation members, including Mary (c.f. Chapter 4.8), with people of different needs. In Rojan's case, Mary, an EFL teacher, offers free English language tuition to Rojan and his family. Also, Mary helps Rojan and his family with legal aspects of their settlement trajectory, such as supporting communication with the Job Centre, or assisting Rojan with university enrolment.

Furthermore, All Hallows Church is a well-known Wi-Fi hotspot in the Hyde Park area that provides informal access not only to free internet, but also to some ICT hardware, such as desktop computers, printers and scanners. Data Extract 7.1, and my fieldwork throughout this project overall, suggest that Rojan, a smartphone-dependent user (Mossberger et al., 2016), partly frequents All Hallows because of its readily available Wi-Fi connection.

More than that, for the often non-religious and interfaith community events that take place here, including those affiliated with the Syrian Kitchen, All Hallows Church makes its main worship room, adjacent kitchen and café, as well as other premises available. In this sense, All Hallows constitutes both the physical space that houses the aforementioned support infrastructure for the local community, but also it facilitates the ever-changing social meeting point that people of many backgrounds within the wider Leeds area seek out on a regular basis.

Importantly, opposed to more informal and grassroots community spaces, such as the Syrian Café (c.f. Data Extract 6.3 and 6.4), with fragmented accessibility and somewhat contested legitimacy, All Hallows Church is a well-established and reliable space that is "open to all" (Blommaert et al., 2005:203).

b) The Syrian Kitchen (SK)

The SK takes place twice a week at All Hallows Church and is an inherently social space that, although taking place in an obviously non-Syrian physical setting, signifies a strong sense of *Syrianness*; authentic food prepared and served by Syrian newcomers, in combination with the prolific use of spoken Arabic (e.g. by customers and volunteers), but also of written Arabic (e.g. the daily menu written on big chalk boards), indicates a periodically recurring 'Syrian' social space in Hyde Park, Leeds (c.f. Chapter 4.1.1) that attracts a distinct audience.

Interestingly, many of the wider organizational aspects of the SK, such as notifications on opening times, as well as updates on the latest menu choices, happen exclusively via the SCOLFBG. On the one hand, this underscores the SK's translocal reach, which surpasses that of All Hallows Church and its congregation. On the other, it points towards the deeply intertwined hybridisation of online (the SCOLFBG) and offline (the SK) spaces. In this sense then, the SCOLFBG acts as the communicative space for the SK, a periodically returning (i.e. twice weekly), demarcated social space housed within the physical setting of All Hallows Church.

c) Universal Jobmatch

I have argued in Chapter 7.1 that the UK job market yields similarity to the housing and stock market, in the sense that they are fast-paced and ever-changing transnational marketplaces. This suggests that a prolific and extensive monitoring of job openings is needed, to access attainable job offers in due time. Here, Universal Jobmatch (UJ), a government-affiliated website, referred to by Job Centre to jobseekers, provides a mobile and constantly updated online resource to support this task of finding work. Thus, UJ is a crucial online space to those seeking work in the UK, as it acts as a brokering tool for finding employment. In a broader sense, however, UJ can also be conceptualized as a capitalist and inherently English-dominant, monolingual space that reflects the government's "monolingualist ideology" (Simpson, 2019a:28) and its "[…] emphasis on the English language as a condition of citizenship and as a marker of integration […]" (Simpson, 2019a:26). Again, I return to this point at a later stage of this discussion.

d) Intersecting spaces: All Hallows – Syrian Kitchen – UJ

In a forthcoming publication concerning the settlement trajectory of an Iraqi tailor, Tailor F, to Finland, Pöyhönen and Simpson (forthcoming) juxtapose the notions of belonging and multi-spatiality; they (forthcoming:11) describe how in this particular case, different physical "domains" of settlement, such as employment and language education, intersect in one clearly-identifiable demarcated space, the tailor's workshop: "[s]o for Tailor F the domains of self-employment, language education and immigration policy intersect in the space of the workshop […]" (Pöyhönen and Simpson, forthcoming:11).

Similarly, for Rojan, it could be argued that different domains of settlement and belonging, such as informal networking or English language tuition, intersect within the social space of the SK; whereas some of these domains, including English language tuition, offered by Mary, a member of the church's congregation, can be traced back to All Hallows Church, other domains, such as informal networking opportunities with other newcomers, align more closely with the SK. Importantly, however, domains that are of significance to Rojan's settlement trajectory and which are neither permeated or made available by

the socio-physical spaces he occupies and traverses (i.e. the SK / All Hallows Church), are thus interspersed and woven into through his mobile mediated smartphone practices.

Applying this line of thinking then to Data Extract 7.1, the domain of (finding) employment is incorporated into the existing mobile context (Blommaert, 2017) through Rojan's use of UJ on his smartphone; as Rojan is on the move, traversing through multiple spaces, so are his efforts and attempts to belong to Leeds, in this instance by his attempts to apply for warehouse jobs. In other words, then, as Georgiou (2010) argues, belonging happens not only in the obvious, clearly signposted spaces of ESOL classrooms and community colleges, but can occur anywhere, at any time.

This then suggests that given the right circumstances, smartphones yield the potential to open up and export practices of settlement and belonging, regardless of the physical spaces their users occupy at a given moment, and more importantly, regardless of the domains these spaces align with or hold on offer. Returning to the domain of (finding) employment then, Rojan's approach of finding work stands in stark contrast to the job searching practices of the pre-smartphone age, where finding work would have been largely affiliated with clearly-bound, hierarchical and institutional spaces, including Job Centres, but presumably not informal grassroots spaces like the SK.

For Rojan, this then means that through his smartphone-mediated action, he is able to access the domain of employment, while being situated in a surrounding of his choosing, one that offers support, familiar food and a sense of home. I return to this notion of smartphones as space-creators at a later point of this discussion (8.5).

8.4.3 Data Extract 5.3: Movements across Urban Spaces

The second Data Extract (5.3) I draw on and interweave into this discussion of migrant smartphone practices and spatiality foregrounds the link between mobile technologies and mobility in more explicit terms; Data Extract 5.3 is concerned with a multimodal WhatsApp communication between Aban and myself, which takes place as Aban chaperons his children to school on a Leeds city bus. 5.3 highlights everyday and routinized smartphone practices, which we frequently observe in urban spaces. Similar to the previous snippet of data, I first identify the spatio-temporal threads to 5.3 and then point out, how Aban's smartphone use expands and affects the spatio-social and communicative reach of this particular situation.

a) On the Bus: Harehills to Armley and Back

To understand the dynamics between mobile technologies and mobility of Data Extract 5.3 on a deeper level, it is helpful to first take the underlying motives for Aban's mobility, i.e. being on a bus, into consideration; as newly arrived refugees to Leeds, Aban's family was initially placed in council housing in Armley, a district in the west of Leeds. Yet, after only a few months of their arrival, Aban's family had to relocate to a different house in the Harehills area, an inner-city area of east Leeds. By that time, however, two of his children were already enrolled at a primary school in Armley. Thus, on schooldays, Aban and his children commute across Leeds neighbourhoods, as they take the bus from Harehills, where they live, to Armley, where his children go to school.

First, Data Extract 5.3 exemplifies how access to adequate housing can be problematic for newly arrived refugee families, as suitable, family-sized homes are high in demand, particularly in urban areas. Thus, for newcomers, housing arrangements may be short-lived and temporary, which obstructs chances to initiate and deepen processes of settlement and belonging. More than that, for some, including Aban and his family, mandated and unforeseen relocation within and across city spaces remains a constant threat (Sanyal, 2012).

Second, 5.3 indicates that migrant movements across urban spaces become integral to uphold processes of belonging and settlement, such as attending

school or going to work; as registering pupils to a new school is a lengthy procedure that might cause additional stress on children, Aban has few options but to accompany his two sons on the hour-long journey each morning, particularly as he lost his right to drive upon arriving in the UK (c.f. Chapter 6).

Third, whereas in 7.1, the potential to perform practices of belonging (i.e. Rojan's efforts in finding work via UJ) were brought into previously unmarked physical spaces (i.e. All Hallows Church and the SK) through mobile technologies, 5.3 suggests that practices of belonging are also clearly signposted to particular physical spaces, such as a primary school in Armley. More than that, at least to some extent, this urban mobility is initiated, even dictated, by high status, institutional stakeholders, such as LCC that has the authority to relocate families.

In other words, then, Aban has little agency vis-à-vis his housing circumstances and has to arrange with a type of dictated mobility, where movements across city spaces, often via public transport, are needed and expected from him and his family to maintain commitments of settlement and belonging.

b) The Bus: a Social Space?

In what follows, I shift attention from the spatio-physical aspects of Aban's bus journey to the social and communicative implications of being on a Leeds city bus. This additional focal point provides the needed depth to develop this emerging discussion of migrant mobile technology use and spatiality.

In Chapter 5, I analyse Data Extract 5.3 through a chronotopic lens (Bakhtin, 1981; Blommaert, 2017) and incorporate the notion of the 'social situation' (Goffman, 1964). Goffman's social situation comprises a physical setting and a situational social occasion; whereas the former is concerned with the place of encounter, the latter draws attention to the appropriate and normative (communicative) behaviour within these physical settings. Taken together, Goffman (1964) argues, they describe 'the social situation'. Applied to 5.3, the physical situation would be set at around 8am, on a moving bus, and the social occasion might entail that the bus operator asks new passengers for tickets, whereas bus passengers sleep, read, listen to music, look out the window, talk

to each other, interact with their mobile devices, etcetera. Taken together, the social situation (Goffman, 1964) of 5.3 would suggest limited or fragmented potential for interaction between passengers, who are likely to not know each other.

Similarly, through a chronotopic lens, the bus ride's 'mobile context' (Blommaert, 2017) could be conceptualized as one where the "moralized behavioural scripts" of this particular time-space yield little communicative potential between bus passengers (Blommaert, 2017:96). Compared to the SK's social situation of Data Extract 7.1, this becomes more obvious, as the bus Aban is on offers scarce chances of meaningful social interaction for him, particularly on the return journey, where he is without his children and most likely to be surrounded by strangers.

It is here then, in these physical spaces of mobility, where face to face interactions are restricted if not minimal (e.g. strangers on public transport) that the smartphone enables the interactional space to expand. As Pegrum (2014:10) reminds us, "[i]t's only when we shift away from fixed places and times that we begin to fully exploit the affordances of mobile devices. It's about using them on the move." The subsection that follows underscores Pegrum's (2014) point further.

c) WhatsApp

5.3 thus exemplifies how smartphones and the applications they afford expand the communicative potential and reach of mobile contexts (Blommaert, 2017), for instance, of early morning public transport commutes, where the social situation of such time-spaces would index commuters to act in a reticent and quiet way and largely keep to themselves. This then suggests that smartphones fundamentally change the dynamics and expand the boundaries of migrant mobility in multiple ways:

First, smartphone-mediated translocal communication supports their users in keeping up intimacy and closeness between geographically spread-out interlocutors and audiences (Christensen, 2009; Kaufmann, 2018). This is particularly crucial in this context of migration and mobility; my participants are simultaneously maintaining translocal ties with family members, friends and

acquaintances in Syria and its neighbouring countries, as well as developing new social and professional relationships with Leeds-based people, communities and stakeholders. 5.3 is a pertinent example of this; Aban and I engage in a multimodal, at times synchronous, mobile WhatsApp conversation, where we arrange for a future meeting at his house. Of course, the interaction between us is only one strand of many possible translocal and transnational interactions Aban might be engaged with while being on the move.

Second, mobile communication, particularly text-based types of mobile interaction offer high levels of privacy, regardless of interlocutors' physical settings and surroundings. This becomes evident in this data extract, too, where Aban is on a bus, a confined space amongst strangers. As Pöyhönen and Simpson (forthcoming:14) point out in the previously mentioned example of Tailor F, an Iraqi refugee to Finland, "WhatsApp afforded the privacy that a public space could not." In the case of 5.3, the public space is a Leeds city bus and the notion of privacy is evident in the sharing of sensitive information during our WhatsApp interaction, such as Aban's home address (c.f. Data Extract 5.3, line 51).

More than that, the notion of smartphone-afforded privacy has far-reaching implications for vulnerable people more generally, including refugees, asylum seekers and undocumented migrants; as refugee populations often lack immediate physical privacy, for instance as they are placed in unsafe and overcrowded housing circumstances, such as refugee camps (Moorehead, 2006), or are under threat of political persecution and face deportation (Sanyal, 2012), having access to safe spaces of translocal communication is of particular significance. This again ties in well with the notion of 'ontological security' (Giddens, 1990; Leurs, 2014; Loveluck, 2015; Witteborn, 2015) introduced in Chapter 2.6, which refers to the factors that are needed for a person to feel safe in a new environment. Data from this research project, for instance Data Extract 5.1, concerned with Rojan's living circumstances in Calais' 'Jungle' and his subsequent journey to the UK on the back of a lorry, clearly relate to this aspect of smartphone use and therefore substantiate the

claim that smartphones add towards the perceived ontological security of refugees.

Third, given the inherently multimodal layout of contemporary mobile messaging platforms, including WhatsApp, the availability of multiple modes to make meaning, such as written text, audio messages and various forms of image and video, afford users to select appropriate forms of semiosis based on ranging mobile contexts of particular time-spaces. Again, Data Extract 5.3 gives evidence to this in particular detail; Aban makes use of an extensive 'digital literacy repertoire' (Tagg and Asprey, 2017) that includes written text, emoji, voice message and the sharing of GPS location during our approximately hour-long interaction.

The data comprising 5.3 strongly suggests that Aban's rationale for using various modes to make meaning are not arbitrary, but sensitive to particular mobile contexts in particular space-times of his journey. This again suggests that multimodal meaning-making applications are of particular relevance for mobile communicative practices, where mobile contexts (Blommaert, 2017) are fluid and interlocutors traverse through different spaces with everchanging meaning-making potentials.

(d) Smartphones on the Move

Interweaving these individual spatial threads (i.e. physical, social, virtual) of Data Extract 5.3 into the developing discussion on mobile technologies, spatiality and mobility of this chapter, we arrive at a more nuanced understanding of migrant mobile literacy practices in urban contexts that suggests the following; given the growing "urbanization of refugees" (Sanyal, 2012:633), refugees tend to be housed in the peripheral parts of cities (Sanyal, 2012), where public transport is heavily relied upon to access central services, such as education or healthcare. More than that, as Chapter 6 (*Driving*) has brought to attention, many newcomers to the UK, particularly those of "low-status" countries, lose their right to drive upon their arrival and thus substantially rely on public means of transport. Therefore, for many, mobility via public transport is deeply engrained into daily life. And it is here, while on

the move, while waiting to arrive, where mobile technologies fully reveal their potential.

As it has emerged through the analyses within this thesis, smartphones levitate the communicative potentials of everyday movements across and through urban spaces, such as daily bus commutes; particularly in time-spaces where social situations (Goffman, 1964) index restrained and taciturn behaviour, smartphones add a translocal, social and communicative dimension to these given situations. This, so 5.3 indicates, is of importance to Aban and presumably others, who, as new arrivals, broker social ties both in their home and host countries. Thus, smartphones shape trajectories of today's refugees, as they support notions of perceived ontological security (Witteborn, 2015), by catering for translocal communicative practices, within space-times that might otherwise be left in seclusion and isolation.

8.5 Smartphones: Spatial Instruments

This chapter has scrutinized selected data extracts of Chapters 5-7 from distinct socio-spatial viewpoints; Section 8.3 revisited the SCOLFBG, a hybrid and translocal space of belonging for newly arrived Syrians in Leeds, which equally links to a Leeds-based network of people, services and providers, as well as is frequented by a translocal audience. Then again, Section 8.4 paid attention to the wider dynamics of smartphone-mediated hybrid spaces and the ways they intersect, particularly in regard to daily urban mobility.

Through this spatiality-informed discussion, it was this chapter's intention to seek underlying meaning among the analysed data extracts, beyond the previously established themes of J*ourneys* (Chapter 5), *Driving* (Chapter 6) and *Finding Work* (Chapter 7); on the one hand, a spatial conceptualization of data from this research project has provided more nuanced and fine-grained descriptions of my participants' everyday mobile literacy practices, as it has unearthed when, where and why my participants engage with their smartphones within their new environments. On the other hand, this re-examination of data has brought novel theoretical insights to light, in regard to the spatial understandings of my participants' mobile smartphone practices, which I summarize in the following:

Creating Spaces

Section 8.3 has highlighted, how mobile technologies, in this instance a translocal Facebook Group concerned with Syrians to Leeds, is apt in the creation of a meaningful space of belonging for my participants; the discussion concerning the SCOLFBG suggests that for those who had to leave their homes behind, notions of belonging manifest not only in their immediate newfound physical surroundings, but also in hybrid and virtual environments they frequent and traverse. This again aligns with wider thinking on the possible manifestations of (virtual) spaces and notions of belongings (Soukup, 2006; Georgiou. 2010).

Further, the discussion concerning Data Extract 5.2 indicates that for new arrivals to the UK, mandated resettlement within city spaces and neighbourhoods is an eminent possibility, which interfere and hinder

processes of settlement and belonging. Thus, within this context of migration and mobility, mobile technologies afford newly arrived people to create, join, and link in with easily accessible spaces of togetherness and belonging, regardless of their physical location, legal and socio-economic status, etcetera.

Penetrating Spaces

Moreover, smartphones have the potential to penetrate hierarchical spaces that are "affluent and prestigious […]" and that "require intricate and extensive procedures of entrance" (Blommaert et al., 2005:203), including legal spaces and spaces of "monolingualist ideology" (Simpson, 2019a:28). My participants' smartphone practices, observed in detail in Chapters 5-7, underscore this clearly; for instance, Rojan's use of mobile GPS tracking (Data Extract 5.1), to monitor and navigate his perilous journey from Calais to the UK, hidden as a stowaway on the back of a lorry, highlights in stark terms how smartphones procure access to seemingly unreachable spaces. In this case, Rojan's physical movements across state borders are strongly shaped and informed by his smartphone practices, i.e. GPS tracking.

Furthermore, Rojan's integration of Google Translate into his mobile driving test preparation practices via iTheory (c.f. Data Extract 6.1) exemplify, how smartphone practices penetrate powerful spaces, such as spaces of monolingualism. Data Extract 6.1 thus not only contests the monolingual, English language dominant space of the iTheory app, but also offers key insights into how multilingual learners circumnavigate English-only learning resources in informal learning environments in creative ways.

Transforming Spaces

Furthermore, as shown in Chapter 8, smartphones have the capacity to transform unmarked spaces (8.4.3) into meaningful loci of interaction and belonging for refugees; Rojan adds the domain of employment to the SK's existing social space by applying for jobs via UJ on his phone. As previously mentioned, this suggests that smartphones allow practices of settlement and belonging to be exported, regardless of the physical spaces their users occupy and regardless of the domains these spaces align with. This capability to

transform familiar physical spaces within reach, where newcomers feel safe and welcomed, into concrete spaces of belonging, all through smartphone-mediated practices, is crucial for newly arrived refugees and particularly for smartphone dependent users (Mossberger et al., 2016).

This becomes more obvious, once we return to the notion of "feeling at home" (Yuval-Davis, 2006:197); as the discussion of Chapter 8 brings to light, my participants are effectively transforming everyday urban time-space, such as daily bus commutes (8.4.3) into meaningful communicative spaces of translocal interaction, which again facilitate and foster notions of ontological security (Witteborn, 2015) and belonging. As my participants' newfound homes might be fragile and somewhat temporary, public spaces, including community centres and buses become the loci of interaction, meaning-making and belonging.

Data from this PhD project thus brings to attention, how mobile technologies and smartphones in particular act as crucial *spatial instruments*, which have the potential to impact and capitalize on the immediate physical spaces my participants find themselves in and traverse through during their settlement trajectory, either by creating and joining translocal hybrid spaces, or by penetrating and transforming existing spaces.

Next, in the last chapter of this thesis (Chapter 9: Conclusion), I summarize the thesis findings and comment on their implications for practice and policy.

Chapter 9: Conclusion

9.1. Chapter Organization

Chapter 9 (Conclusion) is organized as follows; first, Section 9.2 presents a summary of this doctoral thesis that outlines its original theoretical, empirical and methodological contributions.

Second, Section 9.3 signposts practice and policy-related implications of this PhD project to various stakeholders, including the voluntary sector. In addition to the findings that have emerged through the analytical chapters and subsequent discussion of Chapter 8, this subsection is further informed by experiences in the field, for instance while observing adult migrant language and literacy provision, which were crucial in informing this ethnographic project.

Last, Section 9.4 returns one more time to the key participants and their trajectories of arrival and belonging.

9.2. PhD Project: A Summary

In Chapter 3.7.2, the following research questions were posed in regard to three newly arrived Syrian refugees' mobile literacy practices.

Overarching RQ: How do newly arrived Syrian refugees' digital literacy practices support processes of settlement?

Sub-RQ 1: How do Aban, Rojan and Mamoud, three newly arrived Syrian refugees to Leeds, draw on mobile technologies and particularly on their smartphones, to engage with and support notions of belonging in their everyday lives?

Sub-RQ 2: How does my participants' smartphone use affect and impact the physical, virtual and hybrid spaces they traverse through and reside in within their newfound environments?

Throughout this thesis, these research questions have been addressed at various stages, in multiple ways and from different viewpoints; Analytical Chapters 5-7 have scrutinized a number of data extracts, covering distinct themes of settlement and belonging from my participants' lifeworlds. The analyses have uncovered how my participants draw on mobile technologies and especially on their smartphones in urban contexts. Furthermore, Chapter 8 brought to attention how through their smartphone-mediated practices, my participants create, join and draw on distinct hybrid spaces, which are deeply seated within their newfound places of residence, as well as cater for translocal audiences.

The underlying ethnographic framework applied to this project allowed for prolonged engagement with research participants and data collection sites, but also enabled me to not only collect highly contextualized and meaningful qualitative data, but also to channel and interweave these ethnographic insights into the consequent analyses. This again provided the needed analytical depth, to do justice to the complex smartphone practices observed throughout this research project.

9.2.1 Contributions Made by This Thesis

The theoretical, empirical and methodological contributions made by this doctoral thesis are threefold and can be summarized as follows:

First, this research project has provided novel theoretical points of discussion concerning the fields of spatiality, urban mobility and contemporary migrant mobile literacy practices; Chapter 8 has illuminated how in the example of the SCOLFBG, a translocal, multilingual Facebook Group, the local, the translocal and transnational merge into one distinct hybrid space. Through the in-depth chronotopic analyses of this project, it emerged that smartphones yield the potential to instigate and export practices of settlement and belonging, regardless of the physical spaces their users occupy at a given moment, and more importantly, regardless of the domains these spaces align with (Pöyhönen and Simpson, forthcoming) or hold on offer.

Thus, in this context of migration and mobility, smartphones act as crucial *spatial instruments* which have the potential to impact the immediate physical spaces my participants find themselves in and traverse through during their settlement trajectories, either by creating and joining translocal hybrid spaces, or by penetrating and transforming existing spaces.

This again has pointed towards the growing significance of readily available, freely accessible and mobile social media platforms, such as Facebook, for newcomers' trajectories of settlement and belonging. Further, this study has underscored the potential of mobile platforms vis-à-vis the instigation and administration of informal, multilingual and ad-hoc community engagement efforts, such as the multilingual driving test preparation classes described in Chapter 6.

Second, this thesis has brought forward in-depth descriptions of newly arrived Syrians' mobile literacy practices, particularly in regard to their emerging practices of settlement and belonging, such as finding work or obtaining a UK driving license. Here, the ethnographic nature of the project has identified and captured quotidian mobile literacy practices in authentic life situations that further build on existing ethnographic scholarship concerning migrant mobile literacy practices.

The data extracts of this study suggest that smartphones support and widen the reach of everyday communicative and social practices, such as using public transportation to traverse city spaces or applying for jobs. More than that, the analyses strongly suggest that my participants' modal choices of semiosis are not chosen in an arbitrary way but are in fact sensitive to the mobile contexts and space-times they find themselves in. This also hints that multimodal meaning-making applications are of particular relevance for my participants' mobile communicative practices.

Moreover, this research project has brought attention to informal and everyday digital literacy practices of newly arrived refugees, which have largely not been the focus of academic attention. In broader terms, thus, this thesis contributes to contemporary conceptualizations of new arrivals, especially in terms of their immediate wants and needs, such as reconstituting their right to drive or finding paid work in their new place of residence.

Last, regarding methodological aspects vis-à-vis the acquisition, transcription and analysis of mobile technologies data, this thesis has added towards more refined understandings of mobile, multimodal data collection procedures especially vis-à-vis smartphone-mediated practices. The screen recordings and multimodal transcripts of Data Extracts 5.2, 6.2 and 7.1 have exemplified in particular, how ethnographic data extracts concerned with quotidian, multimodal and multilingual smartphone practices can be transcribed, analysed and interpreted in informal urban contexts.

9.2.2. Limitations

Section 9.2.2 draws attention to the constraints and overall limitations of this research project, of which I want to foreground two aspects, (A) the project's participant gender and (B) language, in greater detail.

A: Participant Gender

All participants of this research project are male Syrians in their thirties; although it was not my intention, initially, to exclusively recruit male participants from one particular country, in this case from Syria, it quickly transpired that working with participants from one ethnicity had several advantages, particularly in regard to overall project feasibility and access to

data collection sites (c.f. Chapter 4.). However, at the outset of this project, it was my hope to recruit male and female participants. Yet, as the participant recruitment process commenced, it became obvious that the prolonged, in-depth and at times intimate relationship between researcher and researched needed for ethnographic fieldwork would be difficult to initiate and to maintain with female participants from the Middle East, including from Syria. The following fieldnotes, which document my early efforts in recruiting participants for my Pilot Study in 2016, exemplify this further.

Fieldnotes, St. Vincent's (Participant Recruitment Phase), April 2016
I'm at St. Vincent's Support Centre teaching Pre-Entry ESOL. I approach an Iraqi woman at the end of class today, hoping to recruit her as a participant in my Pilot Study. She is very outspoken, in her mid 30s and has been in the UK for three months. She seems to have gone through a lot of formal education. Her language and literacy proficiency are excellent and the class [Pre-Entry ESOL] was too easy for her. I approach her and give her my participant information sheet (both in English and Arabic). She reads it and initially seems interested, as she carefully peruses the information sheet. However, after a short time, she has made up her mind – she doesn't want to take part. I tell her that she can think about taking part or not, after she replies she "doesn't know" if this would be something she would want to do. Some moments later, her husband, who has come to pick her up, comes to talk with me. She is standing next to him (and me) and he leads the conversation. With the participant information sheet in hand, he tells me that his wife is not interested. This is when I first start to really think about the implications of my proposed ethnography; in my context, is it even appropriate for a married woman to engage with a male researcher in prolonged fieldwork? I'm starting to think it will be very difficult to find female participants.

Thus, from a viewpoint of gender, my research project inherently forefronts male discourse, where a male researcher predominantly engages with male key participants to inquire and analyse male smartphone practices. This absence of female voice matters, for several reasons:

First, research suggests (GSMA, 2019) that women draw on mobile technologies differently to men, partly due to the fact that, as a recent report by the GSMA (Global System for Mobile Communications Association) points out, there is an ongoing mobile gender gap: "While mobile phone ownership and mobile internet use have increased significantly among women, there is

still a persistent gender gap. Women's lower levels of mobile ownership and use not only reflect existing gender inequalities, but also threaten to compound them. If the mobile gender gap is not addressed, women risk being left behind as societies and economies digitise" (GSMA, 2019:2).

Within this study's context of migration and mobility, this becomes crucial, as female refugee narratives are underrepresented in current migration scholarship (Wallis, 2011), even though their experiences differ, at times greatly, from those of their male counterparts (Moorehead, 2006; Refugee Council, 2012).

Then again, a study (Alencar, 2017) that includes both male and female refugees from the Middle East, which is concerned with their social media practices, argues that "age and gender differences did not play a role in determining the participants' frequency of social media use" (Alencar, 2017:8). This then hints that the lack of female participants in this research project might not have the far-reaching effects on this study's representation of migrant experiences. I return to this point of gender shortly in Section 9.2.3.

B: Language

The inability to converse in Arabic with my key participants meant that all spoken and written interaction with Aban, Mamoud, Rojan and their respective family members was navigated in English, a third language, as well as a foreign language to all of us. This had obvious consequences; first, as Kaufmann (2018:894) points out in her work with Syrian newcomers to Austria, "[…] all data were gathered in a third language which probably restricted the expressivity of participants compared to using their mother tongue and may have obscured culture-specific subtleties, especially as research was conducted in cross-cultural manner."

Kaufmann's experiences resonate, at least to some extent, with this study; the reliance on English as a medium of spoken and written interaction affected the relationship with my participants considerably. In Aban's case, for instance, English was, at the time of initial recruitment in April 2016, a very new language. This of course had obvious consequences vis-à-vis his ability to express himself and interact with other English speakers, including myself.

Especially during the early stages of fieldwork, communication between Aban and myself remained often at a superficial level, where the exchange of information was somewhat limited or in the hands of other language brokers.

Similarly, at the start of data collection, Mamoud was a novice learner of the English language and English literacy, who was still finding his voice in this new language. Throughout fieldwork, Mamoud preferred to communicate in spoken English, either over the phone or within face-to-face situations. This again had an impact on the varieties of data I was collecting from Mamoud, which was less text based and often included fluid episodes of translanguaging between Arabic and English (e.g. Data Extract 5.2).

However, the reliance on English as the prime medium of interaction also meant that my participants were mostly eager to practise and to engage in informal conversations with me, in English. Especially Rojan was keen to manoeuvre our meetings exclusively in English, with many of our conversations exploring linguistic aspects of the English language. In this sense, my professional background as a trained English language teacher and ESOL practitioner came to be an asset for my participants; on several occasions, my participants enquired about language-related issues they had come across or asked me to assist with filling out forms.

Second, as previously stated, data concerning this project was exclusively collected in English, for instance through informally audio-recorded conversations. Importantly, however, this favouring of English discourse obviously fails to reflect my participants' full multilingual repertoires, where much of their everyday communicative practices, as well as their smartphone-mediated interactions are navigated in Arabic, Kurdish, or within more fluid multilingual environments, such as on social media platforms.

This lack of access to multilingual discourse yields noticeable drawbacks to this study, as my participants' smartphone practices, as well as their efforts to belong to Leeds, could solely be scrutinized within the linguistic boundaries accessible to me. Again, this matters; as Tagg and Lyons (2018:317) argue, mobile phones are predominantly used to "interact with people of similar ethnic and linguistic backgrounds [.]" This then suggests that much of the translocal

interaction, for instance between my participants and their extended translocal networks, as well as locally occurring communicative practices between my participants and other Arabic speakers in Leeds remained mostly opaque to me or hidden altogether. Though, where possible, I relied on automated machine translations, such as Facebook translation features. Yet, these often lacked the needed linguistic accuracy. Other times, as previously mentioned (c.f. Chapter 3.6.4), I consulted professional translators, to make spoken and written language accessible to me. This again was a time-consuming process, which didn't allow me to fully access the instantaneous and quotidian moments I was most interested in.

9.2.3 Further Research

The previous subsection, (9.2.2.) points towards limitations of this research project, which consecutive research endeavours could address and aim to level out; first and foremost, further ethnographic inquiry into the mobile literacy practices of newcomers to the UK should therefore include female participants, but perhaps also participants from more varied age groups and various ethnic backgrounds. As has emerged through the data analyses and the discussion that followed, it remains unclear how other ethnic groupings in Yorkshire, for instance newly arrived Eritreans to Leeds, draw on social media and other mobile communication tools to organize and facilitate community engagement and belonging. More than that, consecutive research should further build on the ethnographic principle of recruiting and enabling co-researchers, who are also expert speakers of the participants' mother tongue(s). This again could lead to a more holistic and deep-seated study of mobile literacy practices, particularly in regard to aspects of gender and multilingualism.

9.3. Implications for Practice and Policy

Section 9.3 addresses potential implications for practice (9.3.1) and for policy (9.3.2) that stem from the findings of this study; 9.3.1 discusses implications for practice that derive from a newfound understanding of mobile technologies and especially smartphones as *spatial instruments*. Section 9.3.2 on the other hand is concerned with this study's implications for policy, particularly in regard to newcomers' efforts and endeavours to settle and belong to Leeds. This section draws attention to my participants' difficulties in obtaining a UK driving license.

9.3.1 Smartphones as Spatial Instruments: Implications for Practice

The findings of this research project point towards mobile technologies and smartphones in particular as crucial *spatial instruments* (c.f. Chapter 8.4) through which my participants create, penetrate and transform physical, virtual and hybrid spaces. The prolonged ethnographic enquiry of this project among multiple data collection sites has produced detailed descriptions of how Rojan, Mamoud and Aban integrate their devices as such spatial instruments in various contexts of arrival, settlement and belonging (c.f. Chapters 5-8).

Although the in-depth, ethnographic character of this migratory study of three male Syrians is not designed to generalize its findings beyond its intended situated scope, it can still be assumed that the mobile literacy practices scrutinized throughout this project resonate with those of other new arrivals to the UK and elsewhere. This then suggests that the day-to-day mobile literacy practices analysed and discussed in this thesis reflect the wider realities of newly arrived people, at least to a certain extent. Yet, how can these thesis findings then be interpreted vis-à-vis wider implications for practice?

First and foremost, the project findings suggest that my participants create meaningful spaces of belonging in a range of different loci, including informal social spaces, such as local community centres (c.f. Chapters 6 and 7). This is of relevance to practitioners and everybody concerned with migrants' initial stages of settlement, as social, legal and educational services for adult migrants provided by the UK government and its government-affiliated stakeholders have over the last years become increasingly inconsistent and

fragmented in their overall availability, funding and delivery; the defunding of freely accessible ESOL provision in recent years is a pertinent example of just that (Simpson, 2015, 2019a).

Thus, as new arrivals are given fewer opportunities to consult and draw on official aid through government-affiliated services, for instance to learn English or to receive assistance in finding employment, the previously mentioned informal social spaces (e.g. the SK and the SC) gain a newfound importance; the data discussed in this thesis strongly suggests that grassroots, informal spaces increasingly have to address the vacuum left by the lack of official services, in hosting and facilitating various 'domains of settlement' (Pöyhönen and Simpson, forthcoming), such as the provision of language-specific driving test preparation classes (c.f. Data Extract 5.3).

Importantly, however, it remains opaque, at least to some extent, which domains migrants bring into these social spaces through their smartphone-mediated practices, and how exactly they address them. Data Extract 7.1, which discusses Rojan's efforts in finding work through UJ, whilst being at the SK, underscores this point further; it is unlikely that anyone at the SK but Rojan was aware of the fact that he was unsuccessfully applying for jobs with his smartphone. Thus, stakeholders concerned with adult migrants, might not be aware of the essential smartphone-mediated actions (e.g. applying for work) that migrants engage with, whilst being together. I argue that this lack of awareness should be addressed for several reasons:

First, returning to Rojan's unsuccessful job applications, it is likely that Rojan could have attained a more positive outcome, if he would have had been supported throughout the smartphone-mediated application process by a member of staff or a member of the All Hallows Church congregation, whilst at the SK. Thus, a lack of awareness of migrants' mobile practices leads to less efficient support.

Second and more generally speaking, as the previously mentioned defunding and fragmentation of freely available social, legal and educational services for migrants in the UK is unlikely to change for the better in the near future, newcomers have to be more independent and resourceful in their own ways

in order to address their needs. More than that, as the 'digital-by-default' imperative (Vivienne et al., 2016) is very likely to intensify in the years to come, for instance to access social, legal and financial services, newly arrived migrants are very likely to be relying on mobile technologies in even greater capacities than they are already doing today. Hence, practitioners who are supporting migrants in their everyday lives, need to develop strategies to also support migrants' digital needs, or in other words, the needs that can only be addressed or solved through the use of mobile technologies.

For instance, the ESOL provision I encountered in Leeds, particularly for newly arrived people who were in the initial stages of their English language and literacy learning trajectory (i.e. Pre-Entry ESOL) was passive towards the integration of mobile technologies into learning and teaching practices, as the use of mobile technologies was neither promoted nor condemned. Here, ESOL practitioners and others, who delivered professional, social or pastoral care, rarely encouraged newcomers to use mobile technologies in class settings or face-to-face interactions. This again is understandable, as the classrooms and teaching spaces lacked to a large proportion the needed internet infrastructure. Thus, it was up to the ESOL students themselves, to integrate their devices into their learning trajectory. Yet, exactly this unawareness of students' mobile literacy practices is problematic, as many of the ESOL students I encountered throughout fieldwork and beyond, including my participants, engaged in highly situated and informal mobile language and literacy learning practices (c.f. Data Extract 6.1) outside the ESOL classroom.

9.3.2 Implications for Policy

In the following, I elaborate on policy implications which have emerged through this research project and its findings; here, I address the issue of obtaining a UK driving license for newly arrived people.

Chapter 6 of this thesis is concerned with my participants' efforts in obtaining a UK driving license. The analyses clearly suggest that the government's 'English only' policy, which obliges prospective drivers to take the theoretical and practical test in either English, Welsh, or English Sign Language, is a serious challenge for newcomers to the UK, who are also English language learners.

The analyses from this chapter bring to light, how a lack of particular registers of English language related to driving a vehicle, prevails people from taking and passing the test, regardless of their previous driving histories. Thus, the UK driving test is as much a test of the English language as it is a test of actual driving proficiency and resonates with Piller's (2016) notion of monolingual habitus, which again points towards the "ways in which institutions organize linguistic diversity".

For my participants, for instance for Mamoud, who has worked as a professional bus driver in a range of countries, this is frustrating and unfair. More than that, this situation is further exacerbated, as the lack of multilingual learning materials and multilingual preparation classes leaves test takers with little support to prepare for the various tests. More generally speaking, the "monolingualist ideology" (Simpson, 2019a) of the UK driving test has tremendous implications for newcomers' chances to reclaim agency and mobility. Further, as I have argued elsewhere (Chapter 6.2), chances of employment correlate clearly with the warrant to drive people and goods.

Thus, although people are willing and wanting to work and have driving experiences in other countries, they can't drive or apply for jobs that require a driving license, as their English language proficiency does not suffice the dictated standard. However, at the very same time, there is little to no support from official stakeholders to help those same people in acquiring the language proficiency they need to pass the driving test.

9.4. Final Thoughts: Returning to Rojan, Aban and Mamoud

The hardest feat for any fieldworker is not getting in; it's leaving.

Matthew Desmond (2016:336)

Though a PhD thesis is a well-organized and fairly cohesive document, the lives of those who submit them tend to not reflect that same sense of orderliness. This certainly applied to me; throughout my research endeavours, I moved to a different country, started a new job and became a father. All of these changes inherently affected me, the research process and my relationships with my participants; whereas I was able to maintain fairly close ties with Aban, Mamoud and Rojan throughout the time I lived in Leeds, it became increasingly difficult once I had moved to Germany.

Suddenly, weekly meetups turned into sporadic exchanges on Facebook Messenger and WhatsApp. Though I had hoped to keep in touch with the three men I had seen so much of, the relationships slowly changed and became more distant; I have last heard of Mamoud through Facebook Messenger in December 2019. Mamoud and his family still live in Leeds and are well. He has found work in the culinary industry at a Syrian restaurant in the South of Leeds. During our conversation, Mamoud shared a family photo of him, his wife and his four sons in the restaurant. The photo shows a happy and proud family.

Aban continues to capitalize on his plumbing and building skills. Similar to Mamoud, Aban and his family still live in Leeds. Aban regularly posts impressive 'before and after' photos of his latest redecorating projects on his Facebook profile. Aban has found and developed a niche market that he navigates through social media. More than that, to my joy, Aban has become an eligible UK driver and owns his own car.

Though Rojan played a central role in this research project and he was the person I met most often with, I have not been able to get in contact with him. Saad on the other hand continues to run the SCOLBG and the group has further grown close to 1500 members (March 2020). Similar to the previous findings of the Facebook page's content analysis (Chapter 4.6) conducted in

December 2016, a plethora of diverse topics, ranging from the effects of Brexit on new arrivals, to advice on how to prevent the spread of the Coronavirus, are discussed and shared.

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Appendices

A: Ethics Review Form (Pilot Pilot)

UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

ESSL, Environment and LUBS (AREA) Faculty Research Ethics Committee

University of Leeds

10 September 2020

Title of study: **Exploring digital literacy practices of ESOL students (Preliminary Sample Study)**

Ethics reference: **AREA 15-092**

I am pleased to inform you that the above research application has been reviewed by the ESSL, Environment and LUBS (AREA) Faculty Research Ethics Committee and following receipt of your response to the Committee's initial comments, I can confirm a favourable ethical opinion as of the date of this letter. The following documentation was considered:

Document	Version	Date
AREA 15-092 revised ethics form Stefan Vollmer.docx	2	31/03/16
AREA 15-092 revisied Participant Information Sheet.docx	2	31/03/16
AREA 15-092 Participant Information Sheet Arabic.docx	1	04/04/16
AREA 15-092 WP12_Tagg_C._Lyons_A._Hu_R._and_Rock_F..pdf	1	04/04/16
AREA 15-092 general_risk_assessment_form stefan vollmer.doc	1	04/03/16

The reviewers asked me to pass on their thanks for engaging so positively with the committee's previous comments and providing detailed responses/ amendments. Please notify the committee if you intend to make any amendments to the original research as submitted at date of this approval, including changes to recruitment methodology. All changes must receive ethical approval prior to implementation. The amendment form is available at http://ris.leeds.ac.uk/EthicsAmendment. Please note: You are expected to keep a record of all your approved documentation. You will be given a two week notice period if your project is to be audited. There is a checklist listing examples of documents to be kept which is available at http://ris.leeds.ac.uk/EthicsAudits. We welcome feedback on your experience of the ethical review process and suggestions for improvement. Please email any comments to ResearchEthics@leeds.ac.uk.

Yours sincerely

Jennifer Blaikie

Senior Research Ethics Administrator, Research & Innovation Service

On behalf of Dr Andrew Evans, Chair, AREA Faculty Research Ethics Committee

B: Participant Information Sheet English (Pilot Study)

Contact Details:

Stefan Vollmer

Email: edsv@leeds.ac.uk

UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

Participant Information Sheet

Exploring digital literacy practices of ESOL students

You are being invited to take part in a research project. Yet, before you agree to take part, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what you will be asked to do. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Ask me if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part.

What is the purpose of the project?

The purpose of this project is to find out, how ESOL students use smartphones to learn English and to learn to read and write.

Why have I been chosen?

I am interested in students, who have not been in England for a long time. Also I want to find out, how students, who do not speak English as a first language use their smartphones to learn English, but also learn to read and write.

What do I have to do?

In the end of April we will meet for one interview. Here I will ask you a few questions. The questions I ask you will focus on technology and what you do with your phone. I am interested, when and how often you use technology in your life. If you do not want to talk about something, we can move on to other questions. This interview will be recorded with a video camera. The audio and video recordings will be used only for analysis and for illustration in conference presentations and lectures. Also, as I am interested in how you use your smartphone, I would like to record, what you show me on your smartphone. This means that a second video camera will record what you are doing with your phone. Also, I might ask you to take screenshots, which you can look at after the interview and then decide, if you want to share them or not. You might want to show me apps you use to communicate with family and friends, or websites you visit to learn English. The interview should not take longer than one hour. If you take part in this project, you have the chance to be part of an exciting project and your voice and your ideas will be heard.

Do I have to take part?

No, you choose, if you want to part in my research. If you change your mind later and you do not want that I use your recordings, you can still withdraw until 15.05.2016.

What will happen to the results of the research project?

Your identity will be anonymized; that means that private information about your person will not be shared. Also, I will not use or mention your given name. The results of the interview will be shared and might be published. The data (for example the video that is recording during our interview) will be stored and archived in a secure place. However, other researchers might be interested in our interview, too. That means that the data will be shared with others.

Who is organizing the research?

I am a PhD student at the University of Leeds. Also, I'm being funded by the ESRC (Economic & Social Research Council). *This study has been reviewed and given a favourable opinion by the University of Leeds Research Ethics Committee on [04.04.16], ethics reference [***AREA 15-092***].*

C: Participant Information Sheet Arabic (Pilot Study)

Contact Details:

Stefan Vollmer

Email: edsv@leeds.ac.uk

Version 3: 25/04/16

UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

استكشاف ممارسات محو الأمية الرقميه لمتحدثي اللغة الانجليزية كلغة ثانية

انت مدعو الى المشاركه في مشروع بحث. وقبل الموافقة على ذلك. من المهم شرح لماذا اخترنا هذا المشروع وماهو متطلب منك بالتحديد. من فضلك خذ الوقت الكافي لقراءة المعلومات بتمعن ويمكنك ايضا مشاركتها مع الاخرين اذا كنت تود ذلك. اسألني اذا كان هناك شيء غير واضح او مبهم او اذا كنت تود المزيد من المعلومات. خذ الوقت الكافي للتفكير سواء ان كنت تود المشاركة ام لا

ماهو هدف هذا البحث؟

الهدف من هذا البحث هو معرفة كيف لمتعلمي اللغة الانجليزية يستخدمون هواتفهم لتعلم اللغة الانجليزية والقراءة والكتابة.

لماذا اخترت انت تحديدا لحوض هذا المشروع؟

اني مهتم في الطلبة الذين لم يمض عليهم الكثير من الوقت في انجلترا. اريد معرفة ما مدى استفادة الطلبة

(لغتهم الانجليزية ليست الاولى) في كيفيه استخدامهم لهواتفهم لتعلم اللغة الانجليزية والقراءة وبالكتابه ايضا.

ماهو متطلب منك كمشارك؟

مع نهاية شهر أبريل الحالي, اود ان نتقابل لعمل مقابلة سوف اقوم بطرح الاسئلة. سوف تكون الأسئلة بخصوص التكنولوجيا وطريقه استخدامها في هاتفك النقال. وماهو تأثير التكنولوجيا في حياتك اليوميه وما مدى استخدامك لها. للعلم ليس هناك اي شي الإلزامي اذا شعرت انك لا تود الاجابة على اي سؤال يمكننا ان ننتقل الى السؤال التالي. سوف تكون المقابله مسجلة بالصوت والصورة. وذلك لحاجتي ان احلل البيانات وتكون بمثابة مرجع لي وأيضا استخدام

الفيديو لعرضها في المحاضرات.وكما انني مهتم لمعرفة كيفية استخدامك لهاتفك الذكي ولذلك سوف تكون الكاميرا الاخرى بتسجيل ما تقوم به في الهاتف. وربما سوف اطلب منك تصوير شاشة هاتفك. ويمكنك مراجعة المقتطفات المأخوذة من هاتفك ولك كامل الحرية ان تقرر ما اذا ان تود المشاركة بها ام لا.

ربما هناك برامج تستخدمها للتواصل مع عائلتك او أصادقك وتود ان تعرضها لي حيث اني اريد ان اعرف ماهي هذه البرامج المختارة وماهي اهم المواقع التي تستخدمها لتعلم اللغة الانجليزية ان وجدت. اريد التنويه ان هذه المقابلة لن تأخذ أكثر من ساعة من وقتك و مرحب بك جدا ان تقدم اي أفكار ممكن ان نستفيد من خلالها في هذا المشروع او البحث.

هل المشاركة في هذا البحث اجبارية؟

كلا, ان مشاركتك في هذا البحث غير اجبارية ابدا. حيث يمكنك الانسحاب وقت ما تشاء وأيضا اذا غيرت رأيك في المشاركة لك كامل الحرية في ذلك. حيث اذا لا تريد ان استخدم تسجيلاتك لك الحق بالانسحاب حتى تاريخ 15 \05\ 2016

ما سيحدث في نتائج هذا المشروع؟

هويتك سوف تكون محفوظة. ولن نقوم بالافصاح عن هويتك او اسمك ولا حتى المعلومات الخاصة بك. النتائج فقط هي التي سوف يتم نشرها ومشاركتها مع الاخرين. وكل التسجيلات سوف يتم التحفظ عليها. ولكن لربما باحثون اخرون في المستقبل يودون التطلع على هذه النتائج.

من هو منظم هذا المشروع؟

أنا طالب دكتوراه في جامعة ليدز. وأيضا هذا البحث ممول من قبل مجلس البحوث الاقتصادية والاجتماعية. وتم الاطلاع على هذا المشروع والموافقة عليه والرد الايجابي من قبل لجنة أخلاقيات البحث.

D: Ethics Review Form (Main Study)

Research and Innovation Service

Level 11, Worsley Building

University of Leeds

Leeds, LS2 9NL

Tel: 0113 343 4873

Email: ResearchEthics@leeds.ac.uk

UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

ESSL, Environment and LUBS (AREA) Faculty Research Ethics Committee

University of Leeds

Title of study: **An ethnography informed multiple case study: exploring newly arrived adult migrants' digital literacy practices on smartphones**

Ethics reference: **AREA 15-154**

I am pleased to inform you that the above research application has been reviewed by the ESSL, Environment and LUBS (AREA) Faculty Research Ethics Committee and following receipt of your response to the Committee's initial comments I can confirm a favourable ethical opinion as of the date of this letter. The following documentation was considered:

Document	Version	Date
AREA 15-154 reviewed Ethics Form Main Study Stefan Vollmer.docx	1	13/10/16
AREA 15-154 Ethics Form Main StudyStefan Vollmer.docx	1	27/06/16
AREA 15-154 Participant Information Sheet Arabic Translation.docx	1	27/06/16
AREA 15-154 Participant Information Sheet Main Study.docx	1	27/06/16
AREA 15-154 general_risk_assessment_form Main Study stefan vollmer.doc	1	27/06/16
AREA 15-154 WP12_Tagg_C._Lyons_A._Hu_R._and_Rock_F..pdf	1	27/06/16

Please notify the committee if you intend to make any amendments to the information in your ethics application as submitted at date of this approval as all changes must receive ethical approval prior to implementation. The amendment form is available at http://ris.leeds.ac.uk/EthicsAmendment.

Please note: You are expected to keep a record of all your approved documentation, as well as documents such as sample consent forms, and other documents relating to the study. This should be kept in your study file, which should be readily available for audit purposes. You will be given a two week notice period if your project is to be audited. There is a checklist listing examples of documents to be kept which is available at http://ris.leeds.ac.uk/EthicsAudits.

We welcome feedback on your experience of the ethical review process and suggestions for improvement. Please email any comments to ResearchEthics@leeds.ac.uk.

Yours sincerely

Jennifer Blaikie

Senior Research Ethics Administrator, Research & Innovation Service

On behalf of Dr Kahryn Hughes, Chair, AREA Faculty Research Ethics Committee

CC: Student's supervisor(s)

E: Participant Information Sheet English (Main Study)

Contact Details:

Stefan Vollmer

Email: edsv@leeds.ac.uk

UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

Participant Information Sheet

Exploring the digital literacy practices of Syrian refugees

You are being invited to take part in my doctoral research project. Yet, before you agree to take part, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what you will be asked to do. Please take the time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others, if you wish. Ask me if there is anything that is unclear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part.

(1) What is the purpose of the project?

The purpose of this project is to find out, how Syrian refugees use smartphones to communicate and to learn English.

(2) Why have I been chosen?

I am interested in students, who have not been in the UK for a long time. Also I want to find out, how students, who do not speak English as a first language use their smartphones to learn English and learn to read and write.

(3) What do I have to do?

From November 2016 until April 2017, I would like to meet with you once a week. I am interested, how you use your phone in daily situations (e.g. when you go shopping, or when you use the bus). During our meetings, I might ask you questions, which focus on technology and what you do with your smartphone. I would like to conduct a series of interviews, which will be recorded with a video camera. The audio and video recordings might be used for analysis and for conference presentations or lectures. Also, as I am interested in how you use your smartphone, I might record, what you show me on your smartphone. This means that sometimes, with your permission of course, I will take pictures / videos of your phone. Also, I might ask you to take screenshots, which you can look at after our meetings and then decide, if you want to share them or not. You might want to show me apps you use (e.g. google translate) to communicate with family and friends, or websites you visit to learn English. The interviews should not take longer than 30 minutes. If you want to take part in my research, you have the chance to be a part in an exciting project. You will be able to share your ideas and thoughts. Also, as we will meet regularly for several weeks, you will have a lot of time to practice your English with me.

(4) Do I have to take part?

No, of course not. You choose, if you want to be a part in my research. If you change your mind later and you do not want that I use your recordings, you can still withdraw until **18.01.2017**.

(5) What will happen to the results of the research project?

Your identity will be anonymized; that means that private information about your person will not be shared. Also, I will not use or mention your name. The findings of the interviews and our meetings might be shared or published. The data (e.g. pictures / videos from an interview) will be stored and archived in a secure place. However, other researchers might be interested in this data, too. That means that the data will be shared with others.

 (6) Who is organizing the research?

I am a PhD student at the University of Leeds. Also, I'm being funded by the ESRC (Economic & Social Research Council)

*This study has been reviewed and given a favourable opinion by the University of Leeds Research Ethics Committee on 21.10.16 , ethics reference [*AREA 15-154*]*

F: Participant Information Sheet Arabic (Main Study)

Contact Details:

Stefan Vollmer

Email: edsv@leeds.ac.uk

UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

استكشاف ممارسات محو الأمية الرقميه للاجئين السوريين

انت مدعو الى المشاركه في بحث لرسالة الدكتوراه. وقبل الموافقة على ذلك. من المهم شرح لماذا اخترنا هذا المشروع وماهو متطلب منك بالتحديد. من فضلك خذ الوقت الكافي لقراءة المعلومات بتمعن ويمكنك ايضا مشاركتها مع الاخرين اذا كنت تود ذلك. اسألني اذا كان هناك شيء غير واضح او مبهم او اذا كنت تود المزيد من المعلومات. خذ الوقت الكافي للتفكير سواء ان كنت تود المشاركة ام لا

ماهو هدف هذا البحث؟

الهدف من هذا البحث هو معرفة كيف للاجئين السوريين يستخدمون هواتفهم لتعلم اللغة الانجليزية والقراءة والكتابة.

لماذا اخترت انت تحديدا لحوض هذا المشروع؟

اني مهتم في الطلبة الذين لم يمض عليهم الكثير من الوقت في انجلترا. اريد معرفة ما مدى استفادة الطلبة

لغتهم الانجليزية ليست الاولى في كيفيه استخدامهم لهواتفهم لتعلم اللغة الانجليزية والقراءة وبالكتابه ايضا.

ماهو متطلب منك كمشارك؟

مـن شهر اكتـوبـر الـقـادم 2016 وحتى شهى أبـريـل 2017, اود ان نتقابل لعمل مقابلة سوف اقوم بطرح الاسئلة. سوف تكون الأسئلة بخصوص التكنولوجيا وطريقه استخدامها في هاتفك النقال. وماهو تأثير التكنولوجيا في حياتك اليوميه وما مدى استخدامك لها. للعلم ليس هناك اي شي الإلزامي اذا شعرت انك لا تود الاجابة على اي سؤال يمكننا ان ننتقل الى السؤال التالي. سوف تكون المقابله مسجلة بالصوت والصورة. وذلك لحاجتي ان احلل البيانات وتكون بمثابة مرجع لي وأيضا استخدام الفيديو لعرضها في المحاضرات.وكما انني مهتم لمعرفة كيفية استخدامك لهاتفك الذكي ولذلك سوف تكون الكاميرا

الاخرى بتسجيل ما تقوم به في الهاتف. وربما سوف اطلب منك تصوير شاشة هاتفك. ويمكنك مراجعة المقتطفات المأخوذة من هاتفك ولك كامل الحرية ان تقرر ما اذا ان تود المشاركة بها ام لا.

ربما هناك برامج تستخدمها للتواصل مع عائلتك او أصادقك وتود ان تعرضها لي حيث اني اريد ان اعرف ماهي هذه البرامج المختارة وماهي اهم المواقع التي تستخدمها لتعلم اللغة الانجليزية ان وجدت. اريد التنويه ان هذه المقابلة لن تأخذ أكثر من ساعة من وقتك و مرحب بك جدا ان تقدم اي أفكار ممكن ان نستفيد من خلالها في هذا المشروع او البحث. هذه فرصة جيده لك للماشركه في هذا المشروع الشيق. يمكنك المشاركه بأرائك الخاصه ومقترحاتك وايضا سوف نقوم بالتواصل اسبوعيا بصوره انتظامية وهذا سوف يعطيك فرصه جيده لتطوير لغتك الانجليزية.

هل المشاركة في هذا البحث اجبارية؟

كلا, ان مشاركتك في هذا البحث غير اجارية ابدا. حيث يمكنك الانسحاب وقت ما تشاء وأيضا اذا غيرت رأيك في المشاركة لك كامل الحرية في ذلك. حيث اذا لا تريد ان استخدم تسجيلاتك لك الحق بالانسحاب حتى تاريخ 31 \01\2017

ما سيحدث في نتائج هذا المشروع؟

هويتك سوف تكون محفوظة. ولن نقوم بالافصاح عن هويتك او اسمك ولا حتى المعلومات الخاصة بك. النتائج فقط هي التي سوف يتم نشرها ومشاركتها مع الاخرين. وكل التسجيلات سوف يتم التحفظ عليها. ولكن لربما باحثون اخرون في المستقبل يودون التطلع على هذه النتائج.

من هو منظم هذا المشروع؟

أنا طالب دكتوراه في جامعة ليدز. وأيضا هذا البحث ممول من قبل مجلس البحوث الاقتصادية والاجتماعية. وتم الاطلاع على هذا المشروع والموافقة عليه والرد الايجابي من قبل لجنة أخلاقيات البحث.

This study has been reviewed and given a favourable opinion by the University of Leeds Research Ethics Committee on [21.10.16], ethics reference [AREA 15-154]

G: Collected Data: Overview

	Main Study	
	Type of Data	**Quantity (total)**
Aban	Fieldnotes	13.5k words
	Interviews/ recorded conversations	90min
	Photographs and Screenshots	60 photos
	Screen recordings	7 recordings
	Video production about Syrian Kitchen with Aban being interviewed	6min
	WhatsApp Log	1k words
Mamoud	Fieldnotes	11k words
	Interviews/ recorded conversations	30min
	Photographs and Screenshots	30 photos
	Screen recordings	5 recordings
	SMS Screenshots	15 screenshots
	WhatsApp Log	0.5k words
Rojan	Fieldnotes	22k words
	Recorded conversations	3h
	Photographs and Screenshots	70 screenshots
Rojan	Screen recordings	15 recordings
	Facebook Page Screenshots	20 screenshots
	SMS Screenshots	15 screenshots
	WhatsApp Log	2k words
	Mapping Activity with Rojan	1 co-drawn map
Other	St. Vincent's Volunteering Journal	5k
	Reflexive Journal	8k
	recorded conversations with Saad	40min

	recorded conversations with Mary	20min
	Radio Interview with Mary	15min
	All Hallows Facebook Page Screenshots	25 screenshots
	Syrian Community of Leeds Facebook Page Screenshots	150 screenshots
	Syrian Community of Leeds promotional videos	10min
	Newspaper articles about All Hallows Church and Syrian Kitchen	2