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Abstract

London is probably host to the most diverse deaf community in Europe.

Project focus: deaf migrants who moved to London



ENCOUNTERS:

- assistance of (deaf and migrant) organizations,
- meeting deaf people in London
- gender, age, ethnicity, class, education
- barriers and privilege

LANGUAGE:

- communication strategies
- language learning - British Sign Language (BSL), English, International Sign (IS) - by immersion and in class
- working with sign language interpreters

Researchers:

Steve Emery

Sanchayeeta Iyer

Methodology

- Observations and informal conversations with deaf migrants at deaf events and places, and writing field notes about this, examples:

- City Lit College
- Deaf pub gatherings
- Deaf clubs
- Churches, Mosques
- Many others, e.g. Cryptocurrency investment meetings, Deaf Rave

- Interviews and focus groups
- Filmmaking
- Other visual methods

Countries of origin of deaf migrants we met for this project

Lithuania
Bulgaria
Poland
Ukraine
Ireland
Slovakia
Romania
Russia
Italy
Hungary
Estonia
Latvia

Albania
Portugal
Czech Republic
Somalia
Somaliland
Ghana
Kenya
Tunisia
Sierra Leone
Sudan
Algeria
Burundi

Tanzania
Kuwait
Lebanon
Iran
Iraq
Israel
Syria
Lebanon
Israel
India
Bangladesh
Pakistan

Sri Lanka
Nepal
Bengali
Mongolia
Venezuela
Guatemala
Brazil
USA
Canada
Australia

Mobile Deaf Team

Deaf mobilities across international borders:
Visualising intersectionality and translanguaging

Dr Annelies Kusters

Dr Erin Moriarty

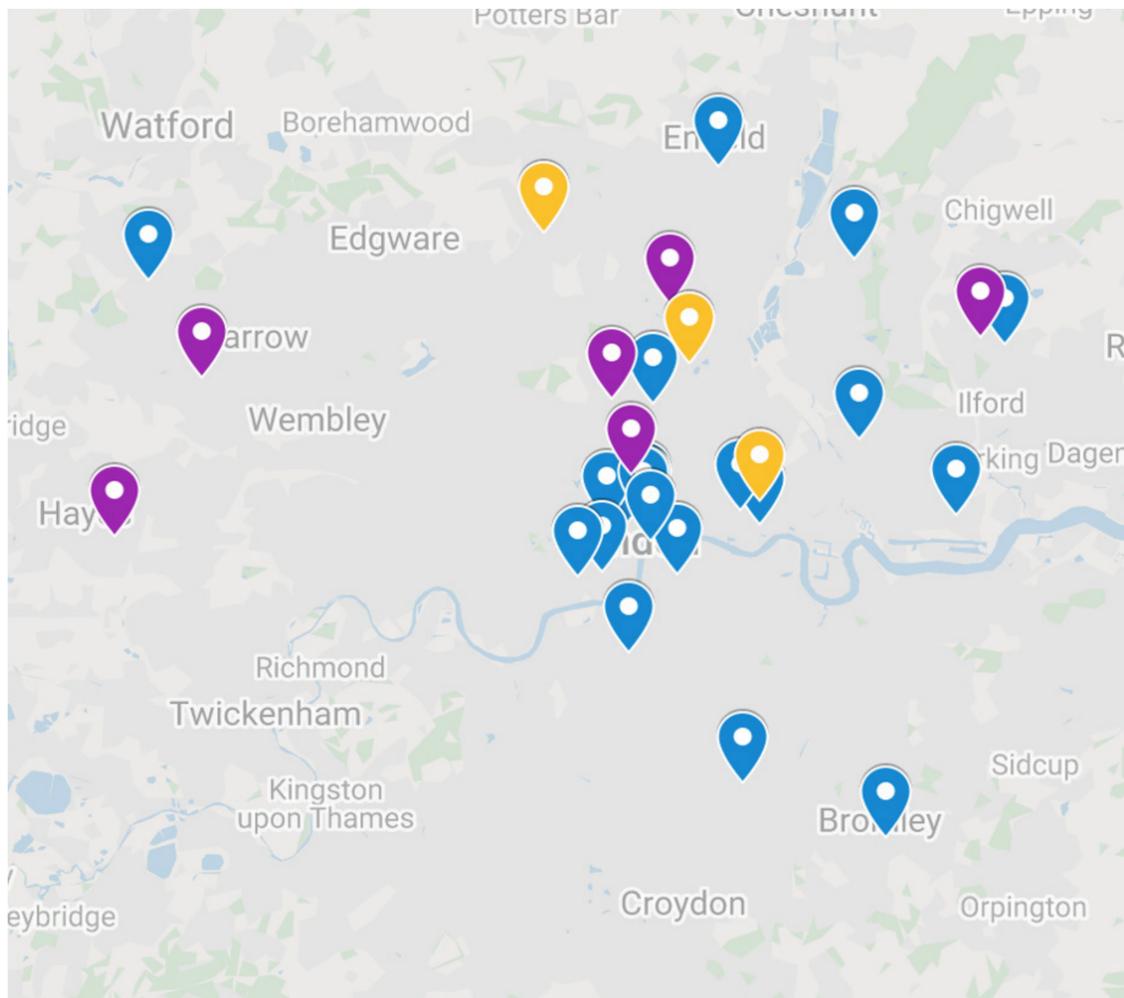
Dr Steven Emery

Sanchayeeta Iyer PhD student

Amandine le Maire PhD student



Deaf Migrants in London



This map provides a visual indicator of places and spaces where deaf Londoners frequent but which are also a vital means whereby deaf migrants socialise, make friends and find out information.

**Can you add
to the Deaf
Spaces?**

List of places where we met deaf migrants

Blue:

Redbridge Deaf Centre
Enfield Deaf Club
888 Club
Clapham Deaf Club
Harrow and Brent Deaf Centre/Diwali
Slug & Lettuce
Shakespeare's Head
Conduit Street
Deaf Church events
Saint Marks Church & Community Centre
City Lit
Deaf Day
BSL (Cafe) Social
The Rooted Forum & Al Isharah Deaf Club
Bromley Deaf Pub
The East London Mosque & London Muslim Centre
British Deaf Association
Deaf Unity Cafe
Deaf Social Event Victoria
Holy Trinity Church
BSL Social (Cafe) Meet up

Purple:

Deaf Rave
Deaf Street Party
Somaliland Event
Hare Krishna event
Cryptocurrency Investment Opportunity event
Somalia Event

Yellow:

St John's Deaf Community Centre
Jewish Deaf Association
DeafPlus

Types of Spaces

Yellow: Traditional (2) - Deaf Clubs or Buildings

Blue: Mainstream (13) - Deaf clubs or events held regularly in mainstream buildings, e.g. community centres, cafe's, education, pubs, etc. Includes organisations.

Purple: Temporal (8) - One off or temporary meeting places, e.g. Deaf Rave, Cryptocurrency meetings, ad hoc meetings, etc.



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Findings

- Deaf migrants are in London for a wide range of reasons.
 - looking for a job
 - escaping war
 - moving to be with their partner
 - wanting adventure
 - broaden their life experience
- Deaf migrants are from all classes, and
 - working in professional positions supporting other deaf people:
 - as tutors
 - in pastoral services
 - In mental health services
 - doing volunteer work
 - working in unskilled and skilled occupations
 - having their own business
 - working in the arts
 - being students
 - aspiring to making wealth
- No clearly marked migrant-specific groups or organisations in London
- Migrants are dispersed throughout the capital, visiting deaf spaces and places in the city and attending deaf themed events.
 - to socialise with new and known people
 - to learn British Sign Language
 - share and exchange knowledge
 - learn the cultures of the UK
- Challenges:
 - to adjust to the languages (BSL/English)
 - the culture of the UK
- Strategies of communication:
 - mixing their native language signs (e.g. Somalian Sign Language, American Sign Language), International Sign and BSL
 - using spoken languages (native and English)
 - pen and paper, typing text on mobile phones
 - using video relay services.
- While migrants found the environment to be generally welcoming there were incidents of hostility.

Dissemination of the findings:

- workshops at three locations in the UK: London, Manchester and Glasgow (2020-2021)
- ethnographic film will be streamed at the MobileDeaf website (2020) (www.mobiled deaf.org.uk)
- Vlogs and blogs on MobileDeaf website <https://mobiled deaf.org.uk/labour-migration/>
- Academic journal articles, and book on MobileDeaf project.

Check our website regularly for updates, or follow us on Twitter, Facebook or Instagram!

Special Thanks

We wish to express our deepest gratitude to all deaf migrants who agreed to be interviewed and filmed as part of this study. Thanks are also due to City Lit College, and all the Deaf centres, the clubs and spaces, places of worship, and organisations, who met with us and welcomed the researchers and enabled us to observe them and their social events and lives.

We wish to give special thanks to Jorn Rijckaert for recording and editing the ethnographic film.

The political climate in the UK when we undertook this study (2017-2019) was fraught with tensions due to the Brexit process and every little bit of solidarity counted. Thanks to everyone who offered advice, moral support, insights and expressed interest in the research, who participated in our events, and who are too numerous to mention.

MobileDeaf takes full responsibility for the results of the project, the findings and their interpretation.

